

CEFEDM

Rhône-Alpes

The profession of music teacher
in the specialised sector

Attempted description of skills
and assessment procedures

2003

Draft document

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Introduction

The following draft document states a number of proposals of criteria and methods for the training and certification of music teachers.

The present document is not yet a finalised one, ready to be implemented as it is; it consists rather in work proposals opening a debate on the issues related to the changes in the profession, in the framework of the Charter on artistic teaching specialised in dance, music and drama.

As will be seen throughout the document, we think that describing more precisely the tasks carried out by music teachers within their institutions implies to link more closely together certification criteria and training processes.

Some principles

On a methodological point of view, our work was guided by a reflection on the problem of 'recognition of professional experience', for tackling this problem implies coherent restructuring of all possible ways of entering the music profession.

When a professional circle looks into the meaning of the professions it takes in, it is necessary to agree on:

- the values it is built upon and intends to promote,
- the specification of a set of professional skills that are necessary to the development and durability of its social role,
- the appropriate way of assessing these skills so that the first two requirements make sense for candidates and guide them in their development.

These three issues bring out a few possible aspects to study.

1. The professional skills of music teachers are not yet formulated. Some certification processes are already existing, of course (CA – aptitude certification,

DE – state diploma, DUMI – university degree for teaching music in primary education...); they are based on a set of examinations carried out by a board. However, the decisions made by almighty boards of examiners may be sometimes subjected to legal action in case of technicalities (which most often consist of a technicality hampering equal treatment formally). Nevertheless, the profession of music teacher is not subjected to national specifications, although some institutions may have specification sheets where the duties of the employee are described by their employer (being most of the times, in our case, the city town-halls or the local civil-service, represented by the CNFPT – national centre for the management of territorial civil service). In case of recognition of professional experience, it would be necessary to publish before examination the skills that will be expected from the candidates, for candidates to acquire these skills and get prepared for the certification exam, and for examining boards to have a clear task, organised by a specification document allowing the board to assess all expected skills¹. The difficult work for the music profession is to agree on a set of expected skills, which is a collective exercise we are not accustomed to, but cannot delay any longer, for we need to give points of reference to the many candidates, either young or middle-aged, already in business or still in training. Without any reference, candidates will sense that recognition is ruled by arbitrary logic, which might well be right, and have a vague impression that entering the music profession is only a matter of luck or even influence.

2. Furthermore, it is impossible to describe the skills the way they are intended to be assessed. Therefore, exam descriptions must be linked closely to what we wish to assess (or 'measure') in candidates.

Thus, a skill that can be assessed only on a long-term basis (e.g. being able to develop an institutional project with the teaching staff) might well show impossible to assess, through lack of assessment procedures taking into account the development of aptitudes and their implications over time: in a series of 'standard' exams, the board will only be able to base their evaluation on a very indistinct perception of the candidate's personality.

3. As we said it before, the above-mentioned reflections came through the question of recognition of qualifications: but it appeared to us quickly that these principles can and must apply to courses leading to a diploma as well as to certifications depending on exam. The specifications we mentioned

¹ It is a well-known fact that the question of assessment references – that we prefer to the more ambiguous term *criteria*, and public references, i.e. published, keeps preying on the minds of juries drawing up aptitude lists.

should, in the end, apply to the description of the various tasks and skills of music teachers, whatever led the candidates to choose this profession or take this examination. A standardised description of tasks and skills expected from a music teacher has become necessary: it does not mean necessarily that all candidates should follow the same path². It is however necessary to organise the profession in order to make the descriptions of expected competencies more understandable to all partners – candidates, employers, directors, boards of examiners, trainers in training centres and continuing education. This would be a chance of putting an end to the long-lasting antagonism between DE and CA awarded on examination and DE and CA awarded at the end of a training. Thus, the question of recognition of qualifications looks to us like a chance to clarify three different issues:

- the description of the tasks, duties and skills that make up the profession of music teacher,
- the two different paths (course training to a diploma / certification on examination)
- the third way of achieving recognition of professional qualifications (for the – very many – teachers teaching without diploma)

4. In such a perspective, we were led to discuss the question of referencing skills, which is the most frequent way of objectivizing both the outcomes of a training and its methods of assessment³. The problem in the description of such systems of reference lies above all in the fact that they mix – often in a forthcoming way – a constellation of ‘expected’ skills (considered new, or in phase with the changes in the profession or in society...) with a set of traditional skills considered ‘basic’. In practice, such systems of reference are often impossible to use because they give an ideal description of a too ‘perfect’ teacher. The drawback with these systems is that they do not mention the conditions in which skills are assessed. Therefore we chose to describe skills dynamically (and not strictly) : on the one hand by deducing them from the duties and tasks of the

² For example, there is no question, for all music teachers, of following only a training entitling to a diploma. But all candidates should be assessed according to the same professional issues, their tasks and duties being the same, thus as well as their skills.

³ The reader may want to refer to a publication by the University Paris VIII, Department of continuing education, which devoted an issue of the magazine *"Pratiques de formation à la question de la reconnaissance des acquis"* (Getting trained on the question of recognition of qualifications): "Autour des nouvelles lois sur la reconnaissance des acquis" (New regulations on recognition of qualifications) 2001, Paris, 2, Rue de la Liberté, 93526 – Saint Denis, Fax : +33 1 49 40 65 57, e-mail : revuepaniv-paris8.fr

specialised teacher, on the other hand by providing them with a framework of assessment procedures.

The following proposition intends to describe altogether:

- *the teacher's **tasks** in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector (5 duties, corresponding to 5 essential values)*
- *the teacher's **duties** in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector (10 tasks)*
- *the ensuing **skills** to be assessed (6 skills)*

It will be remarked that the six suggested skills intend to link up in practice the duties and tasks: they make up the set of specifications to meet in order to be deemed able to teach. Thus they endeavour to connect the construction of teaching staff in institutions to the more common – although hardly formalised – description of the music teacher's skills.

The attentive reader will undoubtedly remark what could be taken as repetitions among duties, tasks and skills: the differentiation between these three categories is yet to be brought forward. However, it will be impossible to organise qualification outcomes in a fixed manner while their dynamic links make them tricky. The description of skills is at the heart of the present document; it seemed to us that they could not be separate from the tasks and duties, and that the job description, certification procedures and training methods had to be viewed together.

5. As mentioned earlier, a nomenclature of skills, even drew up this way, is pointless if the examination remain the same, or is incapable of showing whether the candidates have the expected skills. The last part of the document roughly outlines how our reflection stands at present on the question of recognition procedures (concerning courses leading to a diploma, CA and DE on examinations, or recognition of qualification). We chose to assess the six skills through the achievement of *three projects* by the candidates. An assessment based on projects presented by candidates in a official and formalised manner (matching the specifications characterised by the skills) enables:

- to take into account, in the assessment of skills, the duration which is necessary to develop a professional skill,
- to take into account the various *contexts* (musical, institutional, human, practical) which the profession is fitted into⁴,

⁴ We do not intend to ‘fix’ a candidate on his/her specific workplace, or to base assessment on his/her local work conditions, but to assess the candidate in a real professional

- to reform the design of examinations in order to assess the candidate in his/her development and not at a specific moment,
- to assess the various skills combined in everyday work and their management on long-term teaching (developing all skills separately does not imply, for example, the ability to involve in an institution or to develop curricula...),
- the possibility for mixed board of examiners (trainers / music professionals) to carry out significant assessments, that can be discussed with candidates, and that are formulated in writing, in favourable and relevant conditions.

According to this principle, that will be further detailed, a final panel of examiners would gather the results of the three specialised boards. Each specialised board would have to assess one type of project, involving the six expected skills in the three range of activities. The inspectorate's role would then be changed:

- it would keep on sending inspectors to participate in the assessment of certain projects by certain candidates – for example as the professional within the board,
- it would assess, by all possible means, all assessment procedures either courses leading to a diploma, in certifications on examinations, or recognition of qualification processes.

Status of the document

The present document is a work proposal, as specified earlier. It is certainly incomplete and largely perfectible in many respects. The avenues of research roughly suggested here appeared to us after twelve years of experience in issues as tricky as those of training and assessment. They are submitted for discussion.

Our profession needs to have this debate: we all need to clarify things, both in structuring the various ways of entering the music profession and in regulating it.

It may be difficult to adopt a common system of references in order to describe this profession many of us have made up throughout their individual or local opportunities and options: training centres will not decide all by themselves, but they have the responsibility to make proposals.

This is what the present document is aiming at.

situation, and, through this real-life experience, to be able to anticipate or foretell his/her skills.

Summary of the document

Page 4

1. Describing the teacher's **tasks** in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector

Page 4

2. Describing the teacher's **duties** in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector

Page 5

3. Describing the teacher's **skills** in the specialised music sector

Page 9

4. Remarks on the notions of examination, certification, and more generally of **assessment of the qualification of music teachers**

Page 11

5. Reworking diplomas: the graduate's '**résumé**' – the artistic subject and general skills

Page 12

6. Suggestions for assessment **procedures based on projects**

1. The teacher's tasks in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector

The description of the tasks is deduced from the essential values of the specialised music teaching sector, as described in the Charter on specialised artistic teaching.

a. The teacher has an educational task to ensure by giving access to a musical practice.

It is through the instrumental or vocal practice that students can have access to the largest possible musical culture. It is also through this practice that they learn how to live in society and become fully responsible for their actions.

b. The teacher acts in a cultural area of society.

The music teacher has to commit him/herself to be a resource in the community where he/she moves. He/she have to know the its history regarding cultural policies, its various publics and sociological groups living together. He/she must be able to start partnerships with the various cultural players in the community, both institutions and associations (associations, Ministry of Education, other cultural institutions, informal groups ...).

c. The teacher has a professional culture of music teaching.

He/she should be able to develop a network with his/her colleagues in order to share experiences, carry out a reflection on the profession, and set up new projects. He/she must keep on training and informing him/herself. He/she must participate in research activities.

d. The teacher has to arouse and monitor amateur practice.

The aim of music education is to enable everybody to practice music throughout their life. Music education must be directly connected to amateur music practice.

e. The teacher has to pass on a living heritage, as well as 'invent' new practices.

The point of passing on traditions is fundamental. It should be viewed with the large diversity of heritages that exist today in our society. Tradition is only alive if its holders are able to invent new contexts in which heritage has a meaning for participants and finds a place in the living conditions of contemporary society. The music teacher must be able to arouse new experiences and encounters with today's various musical practices.

2. The teacher's duties in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector

a. Be a resource within the community.

The teacher has to be contemplated as a 'resource' in the service of the community in which he/she works. It implies to have specialised musical skills (indisputable instrumental or vocal skills representing a specific aesthetic). It also implies to have a large set of diversified musical skills, allowing the teacher not to confine him/herself to his/her own subject or aesthetic.

b. Design and organise training and practice structures based on varied curricula set up collectively.

This implies that the teacher participates actively, within the institution (music school), in building the student's 'everyday life' and link this everyday life to the medium and long-term outcomes fixed by the institution.

c. Design and organise curricula in multiple ways Be able to assess and advise students.

The teacher has to support students to help them choose their own learning path; he/she has to find diversified means suited to each student, participate in implementing sufficiently diversified paths within the institution, cooperate with his/her colleagues in sharing out students, share responsibilities, and work out learning agreements with students. This entails that the teacher is able to assess his/her own students in diverse ways, notably through spoken assessment (dialogue with students). He/she must also be able to assess the results of his/her teaching – individual or shared with his/her colleagues – and communicate it.

d. Participate in the institution's plan.

The teacher has to be able to participate actively in all formal events giving structure to the music school: department meeting, staff meeting, education committee, parents and students meeting... He/she has to be an interlocutor for the management, parents, students and municipal authorities in working out the institution's project; he/she has a role of mediation and counselling.

e. Convert plans into means. Work in cooperation with the management.

The teacher has to keep abreast of the financing means and sources of music schools and culture in the community. He/she must be able to negotiate with administrations and public services (in and outside the music school) with full knowledge of the facts and

according to hierarchic situations. He/she must be able to adapt his/her projects to the economic reality of the community and of the profession, but also, should the need arise, stand up for his/her original projects or those of the institution in the face of the financing and co-organising partners. The teacher must be able to budget his/her projects.

f. Help new musical practices to emerge while diversifying his/her own musical skills.

The teacher must be able to invent new mechanisms enabling beginners to take possession of heritages in a lively way. He/she must be able to invent situations allowing student to discover further musical processes and/or aesthetics, without making them compulsory in the course of the student's musical education. In this respect, he/she should be able to set up well thought-out learning agreements accepted by all parties. He/she must be able to suggest or arouse new musical practices by keeping well abreast of music activities today and by cooperating, at least for this reason, with musicians outside the music school.

g. Suggest means of getting people interested in practising music.

The teacher should be able to participate actively in heightening public interest in music, in order to open the practice of music to a wide range of people. He/she ensures that the institution is open to social and generational diversity by setting up varied educational, artistic and dissemination processes.

The teacher should be able to make creative approaches understandable to everyone; he/she has to implement methods appealing both to wonder and reason. He/she should know how to place art between desire and action.

h. Participate in training, dissemination and creation activities at community level.

A part of the profession of music teacher must be dedicated to activities related to the cultural life of the place: training, dissemination and creation activities, musical experiments with the students and colleagues, and local or foreign musicians. He/she should be able to lead transverse initiatives on the artistic level, for example with the dance or drama sector or other fields of knowledge, for instance schools or other educational structures.

i. Assess a musical environment; increase resources; make presentations in and outside music schools.

The teacher has to be prepared to help individuals or groups, in and outside the music school, by assessing their musical practice, giving them ideas to work on,

and looking for documentary or human resources likely to make progress. He/she should be able to organise varied events to keep amateur practice alive, and if necessary invent new events on the basis of the local situation.

j. Formalise and structure experiences with colleagues.

The teacher should be able to think about his/her own practice, communicate formally, orally as well as in writing, his/her own teaching experience, and take an active part in working groups on the various aspects of the profession.

3. The skills of the music teacher in the specialised sector

The description of skills of specialised teachers can be deduced from the tasks he/she is supposed to ensure within the public service and the various duties he has in the institution. These skills can be assessed, for example in the framework of the recognition of qualifications, at the end of a course leading to a diploma, or at the beginning of it (in this case, it is a chance to assess all competencies and to individualise some of the training).

In the framework of courses leading to qualification, the development of these skills lies at the core of the training. Programmes of continuing education may well be organised around these main lines.

Notes, 1. Assessment of such skills implies to implement fitted mechanisms. It entails a certain duration and multiple sessions, in order to observe the candidate in real professional contexts, since it is impossible to reduce professional competencies only to technical skills or the ability by the candidate to pass tests out of context. Furthermore, it would be necessary to strengthen the connection, in vocational training, between training itself and assessment procedures. The educational aspects of the agreement enables to reduce this gap that is often noticed; it is however important to work out the agreement with respect to a general framework, fixing for the whole profession the qualifications that are expected from teachers in this specific sector. The systems of reference with which we would like to objectivize the skills and expectations have proved, in other circumstances, that they were more than a simple enumeration of knowledge and skills. The following list of competencies intends to set out the qualifications of music teachers; these qualifications should lie finally at the core of their profession.

2. The implementation of such a system of reference will make it necessary to modify the texts regulating the profession today, but in small proportions.

Section 1: the first three skills are related to one-to-one teaching. They are connected directly to the activity the teacher is appointed for.

I. Be an expert practitioner in one or more instrumental or aesthetic subjects; keep researching and bringing new innovations in one's original practice or in other musical practices.

The music teacher should have reached a high level of expertise in his/her subject(s). Moreover, he/she should be able, throughout his/her career, to take up 'challenges' regarding his/her initial qualifications, in order to expand his/her 'catalogue' of musical gestures and musical ideas. This is all the more important that music is getting more and more complex, constantly taking over new forms, processes or rediscoveries. The music teacher has to be a musician in his/her own right in the institution, and represent a resource for everyone.

In this sense, we would like to underline the connection between educational and musical skills, since the teacher cannot rely on technical or musical qualifications recognised outside his/her duties in the institution. This skill aims at training teachers able to carry out artistic 'experiments' with his/her students, the students of other classes, and colleagues in and outside his/her institution.

II. Be able to design and operate teaching and training systems, introductory courses and monitoring mechanisms; be able to work out well-balanced curricula

The two terms of this second group of skills, 'work out well-balanced curricula' and 'design and operate mechanisms' must be put in relation with one another.

Curricula, i.e. the organisation of all musical studies, can no longer be viewed only at national level, according to directives that are flexible though scarcely implemented systematically. It is necessary to carry out, at local level in every institution, diversified curricula structured in a national framework preferring coherence to standardisation.

Teachers have to be able to carry out a top-quality reflection on general curricula development.

It should be possible to offer personalised training paths to beginner or advanced students in a musical practice, as well as to groups asking for help or support, in order to support or develop their amateur practices. These paths, complementing current cycles by giving more sense to CFEM (musical studies certificates) need to be formalised in an agreement in the institutions offering them. Therefore their design and implementation require the active participation of teachers, and ability by teachers to develop on this basis a close cooperation between the management and teaching staff.

By 'mechanisms', we mean various situations invented by the teacher to place the students in a practical condition allowing them to use what they learn in their curricula. The notion of giving a 'course', in the framework of traditional one-to-one teaching, is thus broadened: the 'educational' skill entails the ability to vary educational situations depending on the intentions agreed between the teacher, the students and the institution. The teacher should then be able either to:

- follow the progress of a student trying to qualify with respect to the curriculum he/she enrolled,
- suggest mere 'work proposals' to the student or a group during a course, a rehearsal, a session, a series of sessions over a period of time,
- imagine and give a task to a group of students, under specific conditions, to be carried out in a definite period of time, and intending to bring specific musical assets,
- develop a more global project, in partnership with other teachers within the institution and/or local associations in the artistic sector, and/or general education institutions.

The traditional individual course, highly valuable and obviously successful, is only one of the possible methods. It seems necessary today to extend the teacher's know-how for them to use a variety of relevant systems in a variety of curricula – i.e. multiple but structured paths.

Moreover, education expertise should also include the ability to imagine educational situations enabling students – and users – to introduce so-called 'theoretic' aspects through practices themselves: guiding students in their research work partly replaces theoretic courses, often separate from musical or instrumental practice until now. This educational competency still remains insufficient in music teaching: its inclusion in the list of expected skills implies to systematise experience exchanges between teachers within institutions as well as in vocational training and continuing education. It is seems to be one of the conditions for a stronger and legitimate professional identity.

Finally, as we described it in the duties, the teacher should be able to carry out relevant assessment depending on the situation. These assessments intend to help students to chose their paths: the teacher should therefore master all processes leading, depending on the context, to formalised assessment (e.g. by joining a board of examiners), assessment shared with students, and to the means of a non-normative dialogue with parents and partners involved in the institution's project.

III. Be able to work as a team, lead meetings, and take an active part in the institution's plan. Be able to cooperate with the various partners of the institution.

The ability to work as a team is often considered normal, although it is dismissed in certain teaching situations such as an instrument class. It may be profitable today to look upon teamwork as a principle: such a skill can no longer be an option, while all institutions endeavour to work out an explicit project and specify priorities, taking into account their local conditions and their national objective as a public institution. The teacher should be able to become fully integrated in teamwork. If he/she is to be able to share ideas with his/her colleagues, he/she will also have to work with them on issues in accordance with methods beyond the personal point of view. Teamwork becomes more than practical 'linking' moments – to share out timetables, rooms or budgets: it relates to issues that imply and structure the institution's life. On this account, the teacher is a key player in the institution: he/she should be able to organise his/her intentions, communicate with his/her colleagues on any issue, keeping abreast of the mentioned issues; he/she should be able to help his/her colleagues share their teaching experiences; he/she should have the ability to suggest solutions, invent new processes if necessary (see skill II) and state their benefits and drawbacks.

Furthermore, the teacher needs to be able to share out students.

During ensemble activities, or during the implementation of individual projects extending beyond the usual framework of the class, the teacher should have the ability to structure group activities, even if all participants do not study his/her specific subject.

He/she also should include in his/her teaching the possibility for students to involve in other activities within the institution, and regulate them with his/her colleagues, the management, or, if need be, partners outside the institution.

The teacher should also be able to utter the outcome of his/her own teaching activities and projects carried out in common with the teaching staff.

Section 2: the three following skills are more transverse skills, implemented before and following one-to-one teaching, though not accounted for by this type of teaching.

These skills are often less formalised, although they are central to professional teaching within institutions. Drawing them up will enable the reader to objectivize the role of the teacher both in the institution and the profession.

These skills relate to the professional dimension of the teaching profession, which can be exported by teachers to any institution, and the 'capitalisation' of the experiments carried out locally by the teachers and their colleagues.

As such, they melt the teacher into his/her professional dimension, the latter being able to think, formalise and communicate with his/her colleagues, regardless of the specific places he/she works or has worked.

IV. Be a thoughtful practitioner and an educationalist: be able to place his/her subject – aesthetic and/or instrumental – in time and cultural fields; be able to decide his/her musical learning outcomes in individual situations; be able to design, operate and assess didactic processes adapted to formalised musical learning outcomes; be able to confront her/his own educational processes with the research in this field; be able to enrich the broad educational issues in music education with partial alternatives based on his/her own experience.

The use of the word 'didactic' is ambiguous today: sometimes it refers to the set of processes required to ensure teaching standardised by outcomes, themselves specified by internal principles for organising knowledge and know-how – sometimes it refers to the 'didactic concern' all teachers should show by working on the description of processes of their subject. According to the second definition, didactics (processes) cannot be separate from the 'educational' side (educational and relational aspects of teaching). Here we chose this second perspective, modestly describing didactics as an 'attempt to rule out all aleatoric aspects of training': the didactic skill consists, for the music teacher, in using processes through which the music student discovers, understands and learns musical approaches, and builds multiple references, theoretic as well as practical.

Thus contemplated, the didactic skill is, first of all, an ethical concern (do not base teaching on the 'nature' of students or their inherited cultural knowledge); second, it is an 'epistemological' concern (be able to search musical mechanisms in order to derive significant sequences, on the musical and educational point of view); finally, it is a 'technical' concern (be able to express learning outcomes bowdlerised from the usual sophisms and, in the framework of courses, invent, monitor, and assess mechanisms specific to the chosen outcomes). This entails to build minimal references in connection with contemporary research on trainings, education, and on the various conceptions of artistic education.

This didactic skill is directly linked to the teaching profession: first because it takes place everyday in the definition of the work proposed to students and users, second because it is part of the professional approach bringing together teachers teaching the same subject or not, with differing 'methods'.

The debate on 'methods' often mirrors the different subject methods, instead of comparing them. Methods are often presented as simple "mediations" organised in a logical progression, without explaining clearly how choices are made. The question of methods only makes sense if the projects they represent are compared (what type of musicians do we want to train? Through which processes? On the basis of what repertoires?).

The didactic concern, considered in this way, is not just a mere disposition of the teacher to take interest in these problems: it relates to the ability, to appeal to procedures allowing to meet formalised educational intentions, thus more likely to be assessed, and to this end to carry out the musical and educational research needed for the definition of the suggested learning situations.

Finally, this skill gives the possibility to open gradually a professional, collective reflection on musical education (see VI).

V. Be able to be a resource musician in his/her institution; be able to ensure a role of mediator-artist within the community; be able to involve actively in an artistic educational project allowing a great majority of people to discover the artistic approach, to develop a project related to the various musical forms, and for some of them to take on advanced study of music.

Teachers have knowledge and know-how on which the institution should be able to lean in order to develop specific projects (address unusual publics, raise public interest, monitor amateur practice, development of new curricula, cooperation with associations or the Ministry of Education...).

The teacher cannot save his competencies only for teaching his/her subject. He/she is also an artist, guardian of artistic education in the community. Although the notion of artistic education remains vague – in practice it refers more often to a profession than an educational project aiming at giving various publics access to an artistic experience – music teachers need to have the ability to get in touch with the various publics of the community he works in, and to imagine specific actions resulting, in the end, in more paths leading, if not to the music school, at least to chances of discovering or reinforcing the specificity of the artistic approach.

It is in this sense that the teacher should have the ability to consider him/herself also as a potential resource for such actions, in the framework of his/her musical skills firstly, in the framework of the expertise in suggesting and monitoring musical practices secondly.

Such a skill can emerge in many ways: the teacher takes advantage of a given opportunity to develop it.

Finally, this skill also relates to the teacher's ability to ensure the duty of mediator between the performing professionals and the diverse local publics.

VI. Be able to formalise a musical and educational research; be able to participate in setting up a professional culture

The emergence of a professional culture is necessary, since institutions have to undertake the description of their action and methods these days, because of the unprecedented development of the media, the new musical practices and new ways of listening, new publics, and unstable economic conditions.

It is, for teachers, less a matter of finding a range of answers to the problems caused by these issues, than a matter of setting up frames for debate and exchanges, and of having access to professional publications suggesting multiple references, both practical and theoretical. There is no such publication today, and research in the field of music education has almost disappeared.

Professional culture is everybody's business; every teacher should collaborate to its development. It is a situation of emergency, for teacher often feel somewhat isolated when faced to urgent, many questions, occurring in the profession. Urged by various authorities – whether local or national – to restructure their action within institutions, many teachers are overcome by doubt and weariness, the recommendations they receive being often conflicting. It is therefore important for everyone to have the more opportunities to become key players in their profession, by taking part in professional meetings and publications, and considering difference and contradiction as normal aspects of the profession.

This implies that teachers develop the ability to formalise – orally and in writing – the issues of their profession, the questions occurring to them, the research – even partial – they are carrying out or have carried out, the conclusions they draw from their personal or collective experiences.

Besides, it can be observed that in courses leading to a diploma, writing a dissertation has a favourable effect, as can be confirmed by the very graduates who have had to make one.

Nevertheless, the development of this skill should not be left to the sole writing of a dissertation: reports of professional research, notes (bibliographical or technical notes, or programme presentations, in a reporting perspective) should be presented, and teachers should be regularly encouraged to bring their contribution. In the same way, they should be more able to express themselves in professional meetings, in or outside their institution, formalising their participation to debates in order to enrich them.

4. Remarks on the notions of examination, certification, and more generally of assessment of the qualification of music teachers

The rhythm of the French musical world is marked by examinations. The life of inspectors, institutions directors, music schools and many teachers is ruled by tests, examinations and competitions. It can give the feeling that musical teaching is achieved only during the meetings of examiners around objects taking shape as they go along: the performances of students and candidates. The ears of those who carry out assessment may become quite refined after a time, but also completely distorted.

The so-called republican form of exams and competitions is, in fact, largely disconnected to any real employment or practice situation. It takes place at a given, performative moment, in an appropriately 'neutral' hall and in front of a group of experts supposed to complement each other through the bodies they represent (institutions, field, schools...). This wish to assess elements as such, isolated, out of context, would presuppose a preliminary agreement on universal musical values applied to musical objects well-identified by their artistic content, as such once again. Everyone would agree on the principle and could quite objectively foresee the result of the assessment.

In fact, this universal standard value exists less than ever today: not only this universality changes quickly when confronted to the diverse musical practices owed to a globalised culture, but within the music that lies at the core of institutions of musical ('classical music'), heterogeneous approaches blossom as well, notably (though not only) concerning early and contemporary music. The notions of instrumental schools (whether national or other) tend to be replaced by international performance and specialisation differentiating individuals in the extreme: we can no longer hang on with certainty to a technical well-identified product.

Recent research in the field of human sciences tends to deconstruct quite vigorously the illusion of objects as such, and to turn towards mediation processes and contexts that generate them. Thus the artistic work loses its romantic aura of object able in itself to go through time without a change, isolated from the everyday contingencies that ruled over its elaboration and from today's contingencies ruling its re-creation. A whole area of theoretic research applied to music tends nowadays to show that theoretic discourse on music (thus the interpretation of works of the past) is only a fiction, a subjective 'tale', built up throughout history. We can legitimately admit that it is possible to have a sense

of artistic truth when listening to a work or its performance; nevertheless we must not forget how the context (of creation, listening, performance...) marks such a feeling above all.

It is certainly for these reasons that we mention the student's 'autonomy' today, the student as a 'player' of his/her training and practice. The teacher is no longer the one who merely passes on the univocal truth of a tradition, but should be now the one who provides the student with the means to make his/her choices and build his/her own conception the musical practice. If this is to happen, assessment can no longer be separated from the processes enabling the music student (student and musician) to manage his/her own practice.

Any sound combination becomes 'music' provided we decide it is. Because of this radical relativism of values, the processes that change the student into a player must be carefully marked out by values specifying even more precisely the context in which the assessment of the student is taking place. The context will no longer be specified in an only path, or an only line of progress, but will be specified for each learning session, each type of music, and each stage of the musician's evolution.

The outline is not new: to lighten heavy and too frequent assessments (examining boards, multiplication of barriers), and to take into account day-to-day study in the qualifying assessment. The reflection the recognition of professional qualifications, as well as problems of student assessment in trainings leading to DE or CA, lead us to design more original assessment procedures.

Another characteristic of assessment of musicians needs to be seriously questioned today: organise examinations by subject. For example, we assume that it is easy to assess the music culture of an individual by organising a music analysis or listen and comment examination. In the best situation, we will have the expression of a well-done school exercise, but not necessarily that of a real cultural knowledge. Music culture will only be an issue in education if it meets precise actions connected to issues. For example, if a student is asked to present three different interpretations of a musical work, he/she will have to study the elements involved (approaches of style, rubato within acceptable limits, construction of phrases, form...). If the student is asked to compose a musical work, he/she should be able to use precise musical notions expressed in specific models. Thus subjects are expressed in precise actions and only have a substance if they can be replaced in a general music practice.

Instead of dividing up subject data in specific examinations (instrument, teaching, music culture, educational culture...) where exaggerated attention is drawn on basic elements thus destabilising the general

view any assessment should provide, it would be profitable to try and describe a number de contexts and precise actions, expressing on a general level the interaction of the various subject fields of music and its teaching. This does not prevent each context from being studied through diversified information: course, instrumental performance, short dissertation, interview, documentation...

5. Reworking diplomas

The preceding reflections lead us to address the question of reworking diplomas.

The recognition of skills in music education remains first and foremost organised around the assessment of the candidate's musical skills. These skills remain obviously the essential requirement in order to teach. However, the extreme specialisation of our teaching sometimes leads to develop descriptions of musical skills in a perspective of assessment strictly subject-centred. It would be now necessary to find out how to describe transverse competencies: they could enable the teacher, whenever it is needed, to ensure more 'general' duties, for example to carry out a work with colleagues and students from other disciplines, or to advise and guide students allowing them to take the best of the institution's resources.

Besides, musicians having no know-how or interest in aesthetic or technical fields other than their main subject are few: the recognition of such additional skills should urge us to take more general account of teaching skills, thus making them more attentive to the various aspects of the educational running of the institution.

We suggest here a few elements to rethink diplomas.

Main musical practice: the candidate's musical and artistic subject

Some subjects are defined by a musical instrument (flute, violin, piano...), others by a musical genre (jazz, early music, today's amplified music...).

We can make an extremely accurate description of technical skills (for example instrumental); these technical skills are supposed to apply to various types of repertoires in fact roughly specified; the fact that these technical skills prevail over repertoires limits greatly the teacher's role, by insisting only on the transmission, individualised in the instrument class, of his/her own technical ability.

It remains difficult to describe the exact outlines of an aesthetic. For example, if a recorder player has a very strong interest in early music, there is however an important repertoire of 20th century music for this instrument. It is also often difficult to tell clearly the 'musical personality' of a jazz musician or a musician playing amplified music, because they are still often self-taught and follow eclectic curricula in these subjects; it is difficult to make out subjects splitting clearly and suddenly some trends of today's music and some trends of traditional music: we have been noticing for two

decades a very elaborate research on fusion, and even the wish to approach modernity and tradition from the angle of an 'imaginary folklore'.

We would like to bring forward another way, that we would like to call, failing a better term, the teacher's 'subject', his/her 'home origin' so to speak, including his/her curriculum and experiences since the start. The DE (state diploma) would be that of a *music teacher*; a *personalised résumé* would be attached to it for each graduate, including the following items:

- **Subject:** musical subject of the graduate
- **Area of specialisation:** main instrument and (if applicable) additional instruments, and main aesthetics or repertoires of the graduate
- **General skills:** fields in which the graduate may involve furthermore, subjects or musical procedures he/she may monitor
- **Research fields:** area(s) of reflection on music teaching carried out by the graduate, his/her publications if any or his/her current research work
- **Creative work**

The notion of 'subject' thus involves a range of knowledge and skills that are not fixed once and for all, but shall be developed all along the teacher's career. The music teacher is at the service of the community formed by the music school and its background. He/she is to be considered a 'resource' for his/her colleagues, students and the public in general, a person to whom specific problems can be set out for resolution. He/she will not give courses in his/her sole subject.

6. Suggestions for assessment procedures based on projects

The notion of project is able to provide assessment procedures with an interesting framework, by linking them to main lines of training, because it comes within the scope of a very precise professional context, which implies to produce work within limited time and combine know-how in several subjects.

Here are the elements included in the notion of project:

- Time

A project allows avoiding basing the assessment only on a limited performance at a given moment in front of an almighty board of examiners making an assessment out of context. Besides, a project takes place in a limited period of time that is set at the beginning, and can vary according to situations. It allows carrying out a series of varied assessments before, during and after the activities.

- Agreement

The content of the project has to be moved freely by the candidate to be assessed, meeting very accurate requirements specified by the assessing institution. The agreement consists of a document written by the candidate and discussed with the institution. The content of the agreement describes the project, the course of its development, its planning over time and its assessment criteria.

- Place, partners and participants

The candidate has to discuss with the institutions, find a financial support, possibly work with partners and decide run the project with participants of his/her choice.

- Project publication

The end of the project is an opportunity to make a public formal presentation of the project outcomes, in the form of a concert, recording, conference or publication (etc.).

- Result and documentation.

The candidate presents the project results and includes all documentation used during the project.

The assessment of the project may be considered relatively heavy from the financial and organisational point of view, for it requires to :

- a) Discuss the agreement with the students or candidates,
- b) Follow up the projects (educational support and visits, stage reports),
- c) Assess the public presentation, and find out its results with the student or candidate.

The question of costs will however have to be contemplated by comparing the present perspectives with the cost of already existing assessment procedures.

It is not certain that the effect of economies of scale could finally speak in favour of this approach. It is clear that linking more training and certification, as we suggest it here, causes in-depth changes in the meaning of assessment operations: there is a huge gap, both in operational terms (who will assess, when, how, at what cost) and in terms of meaning. Because linking assessment and training processes increase the training impetus, assessment being more astute. It would even be the opportunity to rework certifications on examinations, if these could be organised similarly, asking candidates to present three projects as early as at the eligibility stage (after or jointly with auditions); candidates would then have the chance to stand on real professional contexts, in which they often already work. Splitting up the admission stage in three projects would enable candidates to plan their projects depending on their professional activity schedules and the skills they already have. It would be a new way of conceiving certain subject matters between the two sets of examinations in existing trainings.

For the final stage of results, it is possible to set up a board of two examiners, including: one person representing the institution ensuring the training or recognition of qualification, and a person from outside, the institution, having specialised abilities in assessing the project contents. In fact, what should be compared is the cost of this method with the one-off convening of a board of five persons.

The major benefit of this project method is to place exactly in the context what is being assessed, in terms discussed and agreed. Place things in the context entails interaction between various elements that become meaningful when taken globally, but can be assessed separately thanks to the various papers of the project: written agreement, documents, work sessions, public presentation, publication, interview with the examining board and written final outcomes, etc.

Are the three projects described below sufficient to assess all the skills that are necessary to be a music teacher? It remains open to discussion. But it will be remarked that aspects of educational and musical culture are mentioned in the three projects in various forms (which can be further described) and that the specific interest lies in the fact that the forms of culture are interwoven or interactive: they cannot be separate from each other in the three projects. Besides, the three projects include practices while at the same time asking candidates to theorise correspondingly. The three situations also imply an interview with assessors.

Last information: we described here the project of the candidate, and the way he/she should be able to present his/her specific actions in connection with professional life. We did not mention the students of the candidate: but they are part of the projects too. We can therefore imagine that the project of the candidate consists in implement the student's projects!

Descriptions of the three projects leading to certification in the framework of the DE – state diploma in music teaching

In the framework of state diploma assessment, whatever certification procedures are chosen (courses leading to a diploma, certification on exam, recognition of professional experience), the student shall carry out three projects:

- a) Project no.1: focused on artistic practice
- b) Project no.2: focused of teaching, training and monitoring practices
- c) Project no.3: focused on an educational reflection and on integration in a team

In order to be awarded the state diploma, it is necessary to carry out each of the three projects in a fixed period of time and following the agreement set up between the candidate and the institution awarding the diploma. Each project is assessed one the one hand by visiting experts and trainers during its achievement, and on the other hand at the time of its final presentation. The diploma is awarded if all projects are assessed positively.

In the case of courses leading to a diploma, the training centre ensures the inclusion of projects in an agreement and their supervision. The examining board convened for the final presentation of the project consists of a representative of the training centre, one teacher and one director. The research carried out in the framework of continuous assessment and in connection to the specific project is included and examined by the board.

In the case of a state diploma on examination, the three projects are achieved after eligibility papers, over a fixed period. The follow-up and assessment procedures of projects are still to be decided. In the case of recognition of professional qualification, the candidate already appointed in the relevant position settles an agreement with a training centre in relation to the achievement requirements of his/her projects. Activities of continuous training may be organised in order to help candidates to achieve their projects.

1. Musical realisation project – Artistic practice

This project has to include three types of musical practice:

- a) The main musical practice of the student (or candidate).
- b) A connected musical practice, repertoire or style less approached by the student.
- c) A transverse work based on a musical genre less related to the professional practices of the candidate.

Project 1 (a): main musical practice of the candidate

This first aspect of the project comes within the framework of the main practice of the student (main subject). Here the student works in his/her dearest interest, in the aesthetic framework he/she is most attracted to, using the strong points of his/her own musical practice.

The outcomes of project (a) are to offer students an intense artistic moment in what they consider the most significant aspect of their musical training, but also to encourage them to take as far as possible with a coherent aesthetic approach.

This is why project (a) is not a mere repetition of what the student already successfully achieved in the past. It is rather an occasion to re-think his/her own musical practice, and to enrich it by studying further, or even to challenge oneself artistically.

Project 1 (b): connected musical practice

In the framework of the musical genre of the student, project (b) leads him/her to study a style less familiar to him/her. It can be a specific repertoire hardly studied before or a musical style little known to the student, always staying in the area of his/her own main subject. For example, an instrumentalist specialised in the classic repertoire would study early music or late 20th century music if he/she has little knowledge of these repertoires. A student in amplified music would take interest rap music if he/she is specialised in rock. A student in traditional music would study traditions of a neighbouring region to the tradition he/she knows, or would go forth discovering other stylistic forms in his/her own specialisation.

Project 1 (c): work on a more distant musical genre

Project (c) deals either with grouping together musicians belonging to the same area of specialisation and musicians specialised in another genre in order to give rise to a 'mixed' musical moment, or to get the student to

work with specialists of a distant genre in order to catch a glimpse of this new musical context.

The three project parts (abc) should lead to relevant public presentations. This can be achieved through a concert performance, but the project can also result in a formalised recording, or a concert-lecture, or even a composition, etc.

The student draws up an agreement with the teacher of the training centre. This written agreement gives the outlines of the artistic undertaking, a schedule with intermediate stages, and assessment criteria suggested by the student and formalised in the agreement by trainers at the end of the first year. The student has a certain amount of teaching hours as a resource (on two years) in order to help him/her carry out his/her projects. The allocation of hours is discussed with trainers.

2. Musical education project – Teaching, training and monitoring practices

Educational project no.2 comes in three parts:

- 1 Teaching and training of non beginners
- 2 Monitoring of amateur practice
- 3 Introductory courses, leadership artistic activities, and work with beginners

The candidate should meet the three above-mentioned requirements by achieving four different projects, developing respectively the following skills:

- a. find a place in a curriculum, think about it, suggest alternatives, draw up agreements with students on a significant period of time
- b. achieve learning mechanisms fostering the student's activity
- c. arouse and support amateur practices
- d. be able to develop teachings in a cross-subject spirit

Each project no.2 (abc) has to result in a final presentation including either a musical production by the students or participants, or the introduction of a research carried out during the project. Assessment procedures of the students must be included in the project and be the subject of a written report by the candidate.

The project is formalised at the beginning by a written agreement, describing the various parts of the project, the local context in which the projects will take place, the students or participants joining in, the learning outcomes at stake, the contemplated situations or mechanisms, assessment procedures, the place and date of the

various courses or work sessions, and place, date and kind of final presentation(s).

3. Professional project: educational culture, research and integration in a team

A professional record is made up by the student, resuming the articles written during his/her training, giving, among other issues, a description and assessment of the experiments he/she will have achieved, research elements developed and formalised during the training, a thirty-page dissertation on a subject related to music teaching, and an account of the leadership of a teachers meeting in a music school on a subject put forward by the student and approved by the relevant local team.

The board examining project no.3 reads the dissertation and the professional record, attends the debate(s) with the teachers; it interviews the student at the end of the process.

All three projects are assessed by examiners.

The student's record is thus prepared. Continuous assessment is no longer used in certification: achieving successfully the three projects is necessary and sufficient in order to be awarded the DE – state diploma.

A committee chaired by the director of the training centre goes through the examiner's reports; it has annual sessions; it includes at least two persons from outside the centre and one inspector from the DMDTS (Direction of music, dance, theatre, and performance education, and training, ruled by the Ministry of Education). It validates certification.

Detailed contents

Page 4 **1. The teacher's tasks in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector**

- a. *The teacher has an educational task to ensure by giving access to a musical practice*
- b. *The teacher acts in a cultural area of activity*
- c. *The teacher has a professional culture of music teaching*
- d. *The teacher has to arouse and monitor amateur practice*
- e. *The teacher has to pass on a living heritage, as well as 'invent' new practices*

2. The teacher's duties in the framework of specialised music teaching in the public sector

- a. *Be a resource within the community*
- b. *Design and organise training and practice structures based on varied curricula set up collectively*
- c. *Design and organise curricula in multiple ways. Be able to assess and advise students*
- d. *Participate in the institution's plan*
- e. *Convert plans into means. Work in cooperation with the management*

Page 5 **3. The skills of the music teacher in the specialised sector**

- f. *Help new musical practices to emerge while diversifying his/her own musical skills*
- g. *Suggest means of getting people interested in practising music*
- h. *Participate in training, dissemination and creation activities at community level*
- i. *Assess a musical environment; increase resources; make presentations in and outside music schools*
- j. *Formalise and structure experiences with colleagues*

Section 1: the first three skills are related to one-to-one teaching. They are connected directly to the activity the teacher is appointed for.

I. Be an expert practitioner in one or more instrumental or aesthetic subjects; keep researching and bringing new innovations in one's original practice or in other musical practices

II. Be able to design and operate teaching and training systems, introductory courses and monitoring mechanisms; be able to work out well-balanced curricula

III. Be able to work as a team, lead meetings, and take an active part in the institution's plan. Be able to cooperate with the various partners of the institution.

Page 6

Page 7

Section 2: the three following skills are more transverse skills, implemented before and following one-to-one teaching, though not accounted for by this type of teaching.

These skills are often less formalised, although they are central to professional teaching within institutions. Drawing them up will enable the reader to objectivize the role of the teacher both in the institution and the profession.

These skills relate to the professional dimension of the teaching profession, which can be exported by teachers to any institution, and the 'capitalisation' of the experiments carried out locally by the teachers and their colleagues.

As such, they melt the teacher into his/her professional dimension, the latter being able to think, formalise and communicate with his/her colleagues, regardless of the specific places he/she works or has worked.

IV. Be a thoughtful practitioner and an educationalist: be able to place his/her subject – aesthetic and/or instrumental – in time and cultural fields; be able to decide his/her musical learning outcomes in individual situations; be able to design, operate and assess didactic processes adapted to formalised musical learning outcomes; be able to confront her/her own educational processes with the research in this field; be able to enrich the broad educational issues in music education with partial alternatives based on his/her own experience.

Page 8 V. Be able to be a resource musician in his/her institution; be able to ensure a role of mediator-artist within the community; be able to involve actively in an artistic educational project allowing a great majority of people to discover the artistic approach, to develop a project related to the various musical forms, and for some of them to take on advanced study of music.

VI. Be able to formalise a musical and educational research; be able to participate in setting up a professional culture.

Page 9 **4. Remarks on the notions of examination, certification, and more generally of assessment of the qualification of music teachers**

Page 11 **5. Reworking diplomas**

The *Diplôme d'Etat* (state diploma) would be a **music teacher diploma**, on which the instrument or subject would no longer be mentioned, and on which each graduate could attach a **personalised résumé** including the following items:

- Subject: musical subject of the graduate
- Area of specialisation : main instrument and (if applicable) additional instruments, and main aesthetics or repertoires of the graduate
- General skills: fields in which the graduate may involve furthermore, subjects or musical procedures he/she may monitor
- Research fields: area(s) of reflection on music teaching carried out by the graduate, his/her publications if any or his/her current research work
- Creative work

The notion of 'subject' thus involves a range of knowledge and skills that are not fixed once and for all, but shall be developed all along the teacher's carrier. The music teacher is at the service of the community formed by the music school and its background. He/she is to be considered a 'resource' for his/her colleagues, students and the public in general, a person to whom specific problems can be set out for resolution. He/she will not give courses in his/her sole subject.

6. Suggestions for assessment procedures based on projects

Page 12

Descriptions of the three projects leading to certification in the framework of the *Diplôme d'Etat de professeur de musique* (state diploma in music teaching)

Page 13

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- a) The main musical practice of the student (or candidate). **Project no.1 (a)**
- b) A connected musical practice, repertoire or style less approached by the student. **Project no.1 (b)**
- c) A transverse work based on a musical genre more distant from the candidate's professional practices. **Project no.1 (c)**

Page 14

2. Musical education project – Teaching, training and monitoring practices

The educational project no.2 comes in three parts:

- a) Teaching and training of non beginners
- b) Monitoring of amateur practice
- c) Introductory courses, leadership artistic activities, and work with beginners

Each project no.2 (abc) has to result in a final presentation including either a musical production by the students or participants, or the introduction of a research carried out during the project. Assessment procedures of the students must be included in the project and be the subject of a written report by the candidate.

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Cefedem Rhône-Alpes
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