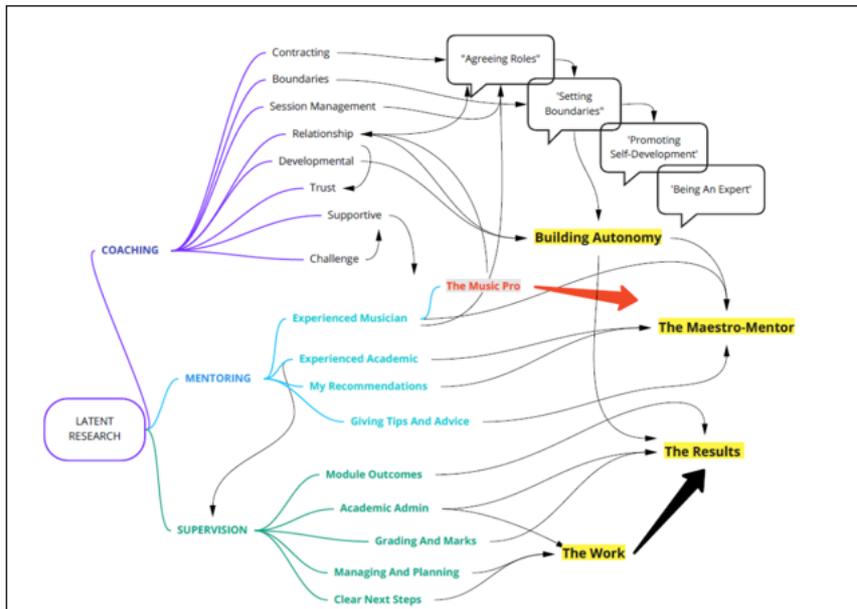


determined structural codes from latent research deriving explicitly from the aspects of coaching, mentoring and supervision I had previously explored. Several important themes emerged from this such as, 'Building Autonomy', the 'Maestro-Mentor' and the importance of 'The Work and The Results'. However, several important process codes also emerged from the interviews themselves and were also identified by me, such as 'Agreeing Roles' and 'Being an Expert'.

Figure 2: Coding Map A. Using pre-determined coaching, mentoring and supervision codes to identify emerging themes



Coding Map 'B' was developed, based on the structural codes concerned with broader context and organisational issues and specifically; the HE sector, the music industry and the BIMM London culture and several key themes emerged from this, such as the importance of Career Fit but several also emerged to overlap with those from the first map, most prominently the Music Maestro and The Music Professional themes.

Emerging from both maps was the agreement across all three interview groups that the supervision often referred and related to music professionalism and career fit, and in turn the concept of the tutor often adopting strong elements of both mentoring and coaching, helping the student to build their autonomy and self-motivation to complete their final music project to a high standard.

Figure 3: Coding Map B. Using latent research topics from music industry, Higher Education and BIMM London culture to identify emerging themes



Findings

Findings from Organisational Data

The organisational documentation data, both public and private, firstly provided insight into the broader culture of the organisation and how this impacted the supervision relationships. The BIMM London prospectus promotes a strong ethos of creativity, self-awareness and being ‘resilient and adaptable’ (BIMM Prospectus, p36) – something especially important bearing in mind the noted pressures and competitive realities in professional music careers. BIMM London also places great emphasis upon the professional pedigree of its senior music lecturers within the cultural DNA of the organisation, as shown in public and internal materials, there is a clear drive towards encouraging young musicians to be autonomous, self-directed, and resilient as they grow their professional music careers.

Academic planning and deeper organisational documentation also reflected an institutional focus on promoting music careers, with modules and programmes built in conjunction with and influenced by the commercial music industry. The close affinity to the music industry and music careers is also reflected within internal organisational discussion documents, plans and briefings. For example, within curriculum re-design, it is noted that courses and studies are focused on post graduate employment and there is recognition that course and educational delivery has been built in consultation with 55 professional musicians, 36 companies and 5 trade bodies (BIMM London 2020). The BIMM London prospectus (BIMM, 2020) gives insight into this:

As Europe’s largest and most prestigious music institute, we understand what it takes to build a meaningful career in the music industry. After all, we’ve been training the next generation of music professionals across a variety of music related subjects for over 35 years (BIMM Prospectus, p.4)

and

Industry engagement is at the centre of everything that we do. It is how we are transforming music education and it's what sets us apart from everyone else (BIMM Prospectus, p.37).

The clear industry focused direction and career tone of the environment is further reinforced with the tutors, who as well as holding formal academic music qualifications are also successful professional writers and performers, working as session musicians in studio recordings, as music directors or within major commercial productions and tours and this fact is again stressed strongly in marketing and promotional material (BIMM London, 2020).

BIMM London is often purposely not positioned as a traditional university or music conservatoire, which tend to focus upon musical theory and virtuosity and often specialising in; orchestra, chamber music, jazz, classical, folk music, or musicological theories and research. Rather, within internal documents such as Curriculum Redesigns (BIMM London, 2020) and BIMM Brand Guidelines (BIMM London, 2020) the emphasis is on promoting student autonomy and aiming for students to be career ready as they are more likely seeking future as performers or session musicians in contemporary industry.

Findings from Interviews

The analysis and coding of interviews with tutors showed that their practical industry context combined with their academic insights, was an important part of the supervision relationship and work, suggesting a particularly strong aspect of mentoring existing within the relationship. This was noted with the prevalence of comments related to steering, offering tips, helping to plan and recommending the way for work to be done. For example, according to tutor Ernie:

I think a lot of people need that guidance and I think there's a lot to be gained from a supervisor who, who nudges you in the right direction and shows you how to exploit your own thoughts and how to how to pursue your own interests and your own line of thinking (00:00:53.960).

A further clear aspect of mentoring that emerged in tutor interviews, was that they are often selected to work with students because of their own music career pedigrees and interests, which the students admire or may wish to emulate, and there is a clear recognition, too that at times they will need to take the supervision role as a technical musical authority, to help steer the students from a position as an expert. For example, this is evidenced when tutor Earl says: "I'm a performer of many years. And, you know, I've got this range of skills that allow me to kind of adopt a kind of informed or authoritative or expert possibly role" – (00:33:03.230).

Whilst the tutor interviews reflected a strong mentoring approach, elements of coaching were noted too, such as recognition of relationship importance, and the mix of both supportive and challenge coaching. The need for autonomy and encouraging student self-direction was also a clear take-away from the tutor interviews, and they shared a view that they recognised an appropriate use of challenge interventions and directing the work, where they thought it was needed.

The emphasis on autonomy and challenge, was also reflected in the key interviews with academic administrators, who agreed that the supervisors should be steering and guiding, suggesting they too see the relationship as containing strong mentoring elements. They also stressed the importance of promoting autonomy within supervision and agreed that the music professional component of the relationship and a future focus was an important element as it fits the overall direction of, and reason for, studying at BIMM London. However, there was too a recognition that there was an important academic component within the relationship. The combination of the tutors' academic experience, industry knowledge and sheer technical musical expertise was key to the success of these supervision relationships.

Analysis of the student interviews mirrored many of the comments made by the tutors and administrators, with students also seeing the supervision relationship as being about encouraging autonomy and helping to drive them towards a professional music career. For example, the students valued receiving clear musical advice, project direction, and at times an appropriate challenge from true music professionals, who they respected, and this too suggests a strong element of mentoring, with students acknowledging that their supervisors have trod the professional path they are wishing to take. For example, student Stan says: 'You know, he's respected in the industry. That's where I want to be' (00:21:47.670).

The students also recognised too, the importance of some challenge in the supervision meetings and the need for the sessions to avoid being a cosy club and encourage creative work. For example, student Diana notes:

I could see there was a lot of times when he was saying stuff to help me think up my own ideas. You are supposed to figure it all out yourself, so, he's got to facilitate your thinking (00:20:25.680).

It is also valuable to note the important aspects of coaching and mentoring that clearly did not emerge from interviews. The literature review noted the importance of contracting within coaching and mentoring and a key finding from interviews was a that whilst there were agendas for the sessions, and the tutors and students see them as important to delivery of the academic and broader developmental outcomes too, there was a clear absence of formal contracting in each meeting and no shared model or coaching or mentoring process used across supervision. This is not a major problem affecting quality of delivery, but it is recognised by tutors and administrators as being absent and something that could evolve.

Also, within the literature review, the issue of anxiety and stress, was identified as potentially important in both the current HE and music industry contexts and yet it is important to note that in this study, these issues never actually emerged as major factor in interviews. Rather it was the role of challenge and autonomy and the importance of a professional focus, that was much more prevalent revelation from the interview analysis.

Discovering the Modern Maestro

The most notable theme to emerge through this study was the potential discovery of the 'modern maestro', as a common connecting theme in the coding and analysis and one which was unexpected but potentially valuable. The term maestro is a concept, with a deep and sometimes controversial history in music education, that can be seen to share some of the attributes of coach, mentor, teacher and expert, a personal guide and director. Maestro was a strong tradition in classical music conservatories, often associated with extreme musical practice, technical mastery and a harsh discipline that is not appropriate in a modern context.

Within contemporary dictionaries a maestro is defined as; 'a master, usually in an art, an eminent composer, or conductor or teacher' (Oxford English Dictionary (OED), 2020) with the protégé defined as 'one who is protected or trained, or whose career is furthered by a person of experience, prominence or influence' (OED, 2020) and so the connection within this study's context can be made. For many people the 2014 film 'Whiplash' (Chazelle, 2014), which tells the story of extreme levels of perfectionism, intense rehearsal and often cruel old-fashioned methods in a present-day New York jazz orchestra, shows the kind of harsh maestro that modern music educators such as BIMM London would not in any way endorse or support. As a note though, it is interesting to consider that this film itself, was reportedly shot over nineteen, intense fourteen-hour days of music performance and filming (Ford, 2014) - so ironically the film itself, with its narrative critiquing the harsh regime, shows the extreme levels of work and pressure all creatives, not just musicians, often work under.

However, there is a deeper history of the maestro terminology that is worthy of exploration. As explained by Persson (2000, p.25) the maestro 'gains prominence by virtue of outstanding musical skills and is functioning as a teacher' and, as perceived by the music academic Morten Carlsen (2019), the maestro-student relationship may possess attributes to coaching and mentoring. He notes: 'The maestro will initiate the student into the secrets of the art and guide him or her towards success in the professional world' (2019, p 97). Carlsen recognises that traditional maestros was respected as they were professional and expert musicians that students desired to emulate, but that this traditional maestro approach to music teaching, associated with harsh and long hours of technical practice by the protégé, is today seen as too extreme and suggests that mentoring may be a more modern and more acceptable description:

The mentor model places responsibility on both sides. It implies that the student must be competent as regards their own learning and development... Less motivated or self-conscious students may find this challenging' (Carlsen, 2019, p.100).

As identified in the interview analysis, the supervision relationship builds upon and is supported by the shared music interests of students and tutors, with the latter adding their own valuable technical skills, combined with their more practical advice and steering on academic project completion. It is worth noting that in many coaching and mentoring situations, the similarity and background of both participants is also often a critical element, as noted in research by Blackman (2016) and Chinn, Richmond, and Bennett (2015) and this too appears to be reflected in these supervision relationships. This modern-maestro form of mentoring was shown by the tutors often taking at times a very active and authoritative form or intervention (Clutterbuck, 1985; Heron, 1975; Stein, 2009) – mixing support and challenge but always aiming to encourage students to adopt the personal drive and practical autonomy, that they know, as experienced professionals themselves, is required to become a successful musician. At its centre, supervision is a trusting relationship built around a shared passion of the tutor and student for music, but as defined within my adaptation of the Gravells and Wallace Support Model (Figure 1) the supervision relationship appears to shift and adapt.

When adopting the aspects of supervision, the tutors were still seen to take the position of 'study guide', checking on academic progress and explaining and informing about key administrative elements.

However, the tutors also adopted supportive and challenging interventions and steers where needed. The final year music project may be viewed as the first professional steps young musicians are taking, working closely with a very experienced musician, someone who they admire and want to learn from, not just for academic success, but as exemplars for the kind of people they wish to become.

Conclusion

This study began with the recognition that any professional creative career is often uncertain and requires extreme levels of drive, ambition and resilience and that student life in 2020 is also noted as associated with high levels of anxiety and stress.

The supervision of music students in this context therefore poses a particularly sensitive and challenging context but with the increasing demands for HE to prepare young graduates for careers, there is a reality that it should be helping to prepare them for those professional demands, not neglect them. This study shows an agreement by the institution, tutors, and students that final year musicians need to be highly self-motivated, autonomous and creative. BIMM London clearly positions itself as being highly vocational HE institution and its close association with the music industry means its programmes are positioned as providing a direct route to professional careers

and this appears to be reflected in the supervision relationships and in the expectations and roles of tutors and students.

The supervision relationships studied here contain strong elements of mentoring and coaching practice but the most original finding in this study, is the identification of an emerging modern-maestro mentoring relationship style, suggesting that tutors with a very strong pedigree of respected academic and professional experience, may often usefully adopt a directive and challenging style of intervention during the supervision. This appears to build a positive relationship and impact, when students too, are motivated to become music professionals, following the path of their tutors. This discovery of a possible modern-maestro style in this creative education environment, is a theme potentially deserving further investigation, that could be explored and tested within other music institutions, across other creative undergraduate settings and, perhaps more broadly for coaching and mentoring theory and practice within the creative sector.

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About the authors

Following a 20-year career in media, entertainment and marketing management, **Andrew Armour** is now a consultant, coach and higher education educator, specialising in the creative sector. He is an accredited practitioner of Business Model You and a Fellow of The Royal Society Arts, Manufactures and Commerce.