

**Becoming an Entrepreneur: understanding  
student motivations and experiences on 'with  
Enterprise' programmes**

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**(with thanks to collaborators Sue Whittle (FBS)  
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# 'With Enterprise' programmes

An innovative group of programmes combining subject-specific modules with a set of modules provided by the LUBS Enterprise Centre

**Biotechnology with Enterprise (2013)**

**Music with Enterprise (2013)**

**Biology with Enterprise (2015)**

**Social Policy with Enterprise (2015)**

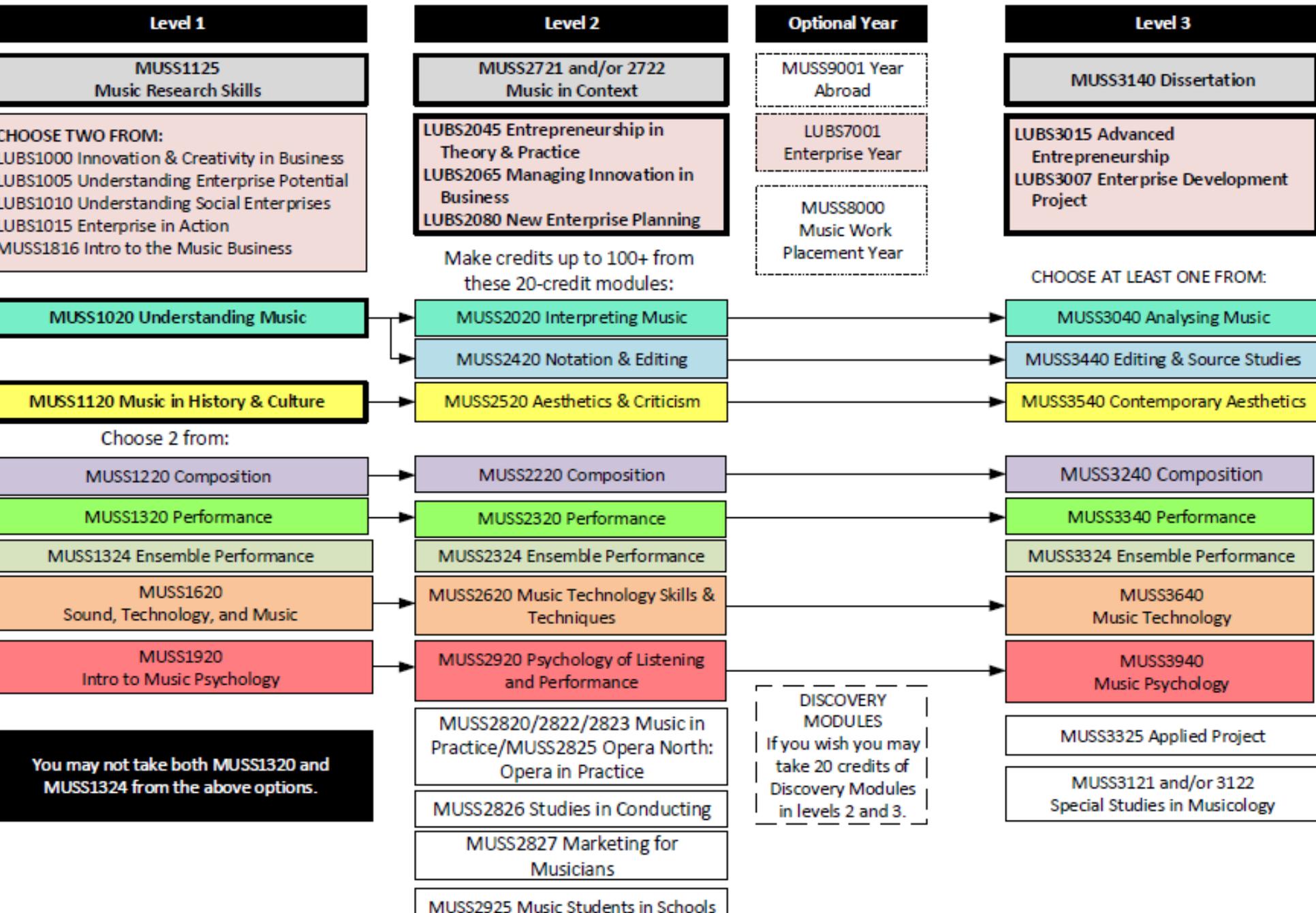
**Theatre Studies & Drama with Enterprise (to start 2018)**

**English with Enterprise (to start 2019)**

**Not** joint honours programmes – Enterprise teaching forms around 1/3 of credits

**BOLD = COMPULSORY MODULE**

# BA Music with Enterprise (from 2018)



# Study Design

## **Online survey**

Distributed to both 'with' and 'without' Enterprise students in relevant Schools in semester 1 of Year 1

Repeated in semester 2 of final year to obtain comparisons at the end of programmes

## **Focus groups**

Undertaken annually with 'with Enterprise' students in each year

## The cohort 2014-16

	n	% female	% male
Biological Sciences	82	72	28
Music	43	84	16
All 'with Enterprise'	29	59	41
All 'without Enterprise'	98	82	18

Note the difference in gender balance between 'with' and 'without' Enterprise cohorts

# Choosing 'with Enterprise' programmes

- Most common reasons for choosing 'with Enterprise' programmes

**I think it will give me a wider choice of career options (93%)**

**I want to develop a wider range of skills during my degree (86%)**

**I think it will make me more employable (79%)**

- Most common reasons for choosing single subject option

**I'm not interested in business or enterprise (44%)**

**No previous academic background in business or economics (35%)**

**I have no intention of starting a business (35%)**

## Differences in background

- No differences in training in enterprise and entrepreneurship
- No difference in employment history

### **‘With Enterprise’ students more likely to:**

- have close family members who are self-employed
- Have participated in extracurricular activities related to enterprise/entrepreneurship

Very few students from either group reported experience of setting up or running a business

# Differences in attitudes and aspirations

Item	Average score (+ Enterprise)	Average score (- Enterprise)	P value
I know many people that would be useful if I wanted to start a company	4.31	3.06	0.003
Many people in my network are interested in entrepreneurship	3.69	2.56	0.001
Many people in my network have the right contacts if I wanted to start a company	3.14	2.27	0.006
I would be able to borrow a large sum from people in my network	4.10	2.85	0.001
I would get good support from my network if I wanted to start a company	4.55	3.42	0.007
I could form a good start-up team with people in my network	3.90	2.90	0.008

**‘With Enterprise’ students feel more prepared/able to start a business**

## Differences in attitudes and aspirations

Item	Average score (+Enterprise)	Average score (-Enterprise)	P value
strongly consider setting up my own business	4.28	2.86	0.001
am willing to work hard to set up my own business	4.66	3.59	0.012
have been preparing to set up my own business	2.90	1.64	0.000
am going to try hard to set up my own business	3.97	2.23	0.000
would rather be employed than running my own company	3.90	4.77	0.017

‘With Enterprise’ students are more likely to aspire to setting up their own business

# Differences in attitudes and aspirations

Item	(+ Enterprise)		(- Enterprise)	
	n	%	n	%
the next year	1	3.4	0	0.0
three years	0	0	1	1.0
five years	6	20.7	2	2.0
ten years	10	34.5	18	18.4
> Ten years	7	24.1	17	17.3
Never	5	17.2	60	61.2

In both groups this is a long-term aspiration

# Experiences of the programme

Employability	Teaching & assessment	Identity and belonging
<p><b>‘Value added’</b>  <i>“...it gives you a bit of an edge...it gives you another way to think about the industry”</i></p>	<p>Desire for points of crossover content/modules  <i>“Maybe if there’s...a little bit more integrated, maybe if we did some kind of business biology, or business science modules...”</i></p>	<p>What are external perceptions of the course?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Within UoL and beyond  <i>“It feels like some people [within the school] don’t even know that our course exists”</i></li> </ul>
<p>Developing networks, creating opportunities</p>	<p>Tailoring modules to strengths and interests  <i>“We got quite a lot of flexibility in our assessment in terms of making our own...social enterprise and deciding on our business plan”</i></p>	<p>Difficulties in integrating in both schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Frustration with communication and support</li> </ul>
<p>Year in industry  <i>“I think...it does help you decide whether that’s actually what you want to be doing because you’re only committing for a year...” (BTWE Y2)</i></p>	<p>Desire for more Enterprise content</p>	<p>Negative comparison with LUBS peers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breadth and specificity of knowledge</li> </ul>
	<p>Perceived value of reflective assessments</p>	

# Conclusions and Implications

- **Students choose ‘with Enterprise’ programmes with employability outcomes in mind – this shapes perceived experiences throughout the programme**
  - Application of subject content beyond the classroom
  - Modules/teaching content which combines the two subject areas
- **Building confidence**
  - Move from structured networking and application of skills to a more independent approach
- **Challenges of ‘belonging’ to two schools**
  - Perceptions of skills/knowledge
  - Differences/overlaps in teaching methods and approaches
  - Communication
  - Timetabling
  - Range of available module options is restricted