

*INSERT ACRONYM HERE* – MY  
EXPERIENCE IN HIGHER TECHNICAL  
SKILLS

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# BACKGROUND

2012 – Joined UoS as Media Production Technician

2016 – Switched to 0.5 academic in the Performing Arts Dept.

2018 – Full time academic and PL for Technical Theatre degree

2022 – Seconded 0.5 to Academic Lead for Higher Technical Skills

2023 – Gained Senior Lecturer, PL for 2x DipHE Programmes

2024 – Gained Senior Fellowship

2025 – Ended secondment, became Subject Group Head for Music

## ACADEMIC LEAD FOR HTS

In this role, I was achieved:

- Institutional recognition of Level 4 & 5 Qualifications
- Advocated for above at regular top level boards
- Input into teaching environment for £14m building
- Lead four schools in developing seven Level 4 & 5 quals
  - Three of these successful HTQ applications

# TOP TIPS

What I would tell myself in 2022

## I. ADVOCATE FOR THIS TYPE OF PROGRAMME

- It is new, it is hard, it disrupts
- I had to convince those above and those below.
  - Ensure senior management are agreed in the direction of travel
- Prepare for put downs and give yourself knowledge for debate
- These programmes are not quick cash grabs.

## 2. FIND THE RIGHT PEOPLE

- Some will try and tank the project
- Some will be told by seniors they need to do the project
- Some will not immediately be seen but they are worth seeking out

## 3. PLAN

- HTQs are complex to design & set up
- Not quite apprenticeships, not quite normal study
- Scrutinised by your own QA, Skills England, Employers (and Pearson if HND)
- Do the leg work on HTQ application – retrofitting an existing course into HTQ is very challenging and often best to start fresh.

## 4. WORK WITH QUALITY ASSURANCE

- Check the regs for opportunities and stumbling blocks
- Qualification awarding algorithm
- External Examiners
- Academic Developers

## 5. WORK WITH MARKETING

- Without strong marketing, programmes unlikely to succeed
- They must be on side and understand the point of the programmes
- As always - find the allies.

## 6. KNOW YOUR STUDENTS

The students we have on our programmes are different than usual

- First in family?
- Prior experience of education
- Transition to level 4, transition to level 5
- Data, data, data.
- Understand *why* they have come to study
- Support, support, support.

## 7. LEVEL 6 TOP-UPS

- Big debate and I do not yet know where I stand
- I firmly believe that someone should be able to achieve the pinnacle of their education, no matter what time of life
- This is what these types of programmes can allow
- If done properly, they allow access to HE to those who might not normally achieve it
- But students need to understand that a qualification is attained, not obtained, and a L4/5 qual does not necessarily mean automatic top-up.

## SUMMARY

- Find the People
- Plan
- Advocate

QUESTIONS?