

The Music Therapy Charity
MA Bursaries for trainees on Music Therapy Training courses in the UK
Trainee Report

*** Highlights of the benefits of the bursary, to you so far. Please include some examples of your activities on the training course, such as placement experiences (bearing in mind confidentiality, and without identifying people or places), learning from lecturers and supervisors, and your achievements.**

I was fortunate to be awarded a bursary from the MTC which supported me to complete my training as a music therapist. I qualified with a merit in an MA in Music Therapy from the University of West of England in November 2017. An important stipulation to being able to register as a music therapist with the Health and Care Professions Council once you qualify is that you must have completed 40 hours of personal therapy throughout the training. I identified a music therapist to work with to complete this personal therapy in the first year. Initially, I was able to self-fund the first 25 hours of this therapy, working part time as a social worker alongside my training. Unfortunately I struggled to continue to be able to self-fund this towards the end of the training. Without completing the 40 hours I would not have been able to qualify as a music therapist. Fortunately, the MTC awarded me a bursary which enabled me to continue my personal therapy sessions with the same practitioner that I had originally accessed in my first year. I chose to access guided imagery therapy, a different form of music therapy that I had experienced in my first year. This specific type of music therapy had a significant impact on my development as a music therapist and in turn my work with children's and adults with learning disabilities in my final placement, a community learning disabilities team. I used techniques from guided imagery therapy with one particular client who was going through a difficult bereavement after the death of his brother. Guided Imagery Therapy is particularly helpful for clients experiencing loss, so it was a really useful method for me to experience and put into practice. The client really enjoyed this particular technique telling me he always came away from a sessions feeling more relaxed.

The bursary also allowed me to delay returning to work full time whilst I completed my dissertation; an evaluation of a pilot project of a music therapy group for adults with profound and moderate learning disabilities. This research project was presented at the British Association of Music Therapy Learning Disability Network Meeting and the research has played an important role in discussions about this music therapy group being delivered on a more permanent basis.

How the bursary from the MTC has helped you develop towards becoming a professional music therapist. Plans for your future career

Due to financial constraints, I have had to return to work full time as a social worker with children in care but I have been using all the transferable knowledge and skills I acquired on the MA in music therapy such as counselling, groupwork and therapeutic skills on a daily basis to ensure the children I

work with achieve the best possible outcomes. Immediately after I qualified, I secured a year secondment to work in a CAMHS team and have been considering changing jobs to work as a primary mental health specialist within a local CAMHS team. I would not have been suitable for this role without the background in therapy the course provided me.

In the future I hope to gain part time work as a music therapist whilst continuing to work as wither a social worker or primary mental health specialist.

I am so grateful to the Music Therapy Charity for awarding me a bursary without which I would not have been able to complete my training.