

Report for Music Therapy Charity – Year One

Firstly, thank you so much for awarding the bursary this year.

Prior to starting the Masters in Music Therapy, my income was primarily derived from music performance and teaching, which isn't always as regular as one might like. Receiving this award has alleviated a large degree of financial stress caused by the reduced time I have for working and has allowed me to focus much more on my studies.

The learning experience on the course so far has been incredible. Studying the principles and techniques of music therapy while adapting existing musicianship skills has been illuminating and challenging, my perception and understanding of music has shifted, in a good way. Starting the course as a fairly competent improviser and having what I considered to be quite a good ear, learning how to listen and focus at such a heightened degree when working with service users in music therapy sessions was enlightening; hearing every nuance and gesture as a potential musical fragment to develop.

Putting all of this into practise with service users on placements and seeing positive interactions that weren't forthcoming outside of the medium of music is not only personally uplifting and (in my limited experience so far) a validation of the effectiveness of music therapy in reaching and supporting people, but has solidified the notion that this is a career I am going to pursue once qualified.

There is another year of study and placements to go and, although there is a cloud of uncertainty regarding social distancing and how that will impact the work, I'm looking forward to continuing and completing the course. I am confident that, with the support of our fantastic team of tutors, my cohort and I will flourish.