

Women and Equalities Committee

Misogyny in music

Second Report of Session 2023–24

HC 129



Women and Equalities Committee

Misogyny in music

Second Report of Session 2023–24

HC 129

Report, together with formal minutes
relating to the report

Ordered by the House of Commons
to be printed 24 January 2024

Published on 30 January 2024 by
authority of the House of Commons

Women and Equalities Committee

The Women and Equalities Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration and policy of the Government Equalities Office (GEO).

Current membership

[Caroline Nokes MP](#) (*Conservative, Romsey and Southampton North*) (Chair)

[Dr Lisa Cameron MP](#) (*Conservative, East Kilbride, Strathaven and Lesmahagow*)

[Elliot Colburn MP](#) (*Conservative, Carshalton and Wallington*)

[Dame Caroline Dinenage MP](#) (*Conservative, Gosport*)

[Dame Jackie Doyle-Price MP](#) (*Conservative, Thurrock*)

[Carolyn Harris MP](#) (*Labour, Swansea East*)

[Kim Johnson MP](#) (*Labour, Liverpool, Riverside*)

[Lia Nici MP](#) (*Conservative, Great Grimsby*)

[Kate Osborne MP](#) (*Labour, Jarrow*)

[Kirsten Oswald MP](#) (*Scottish National Party, East Renfrewshire*)

[Bell Ribeiro-Addy MP](#) (*Labour, Streatham*)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

© Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2024. This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament Licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/site-information/copyright-parliament.

Committee reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/womenandequalities and in print by Order of the House.

Committee staff

The current staff of the Committee are Hasan Al-Habib (Committee Specialist), Lizzie Arnold (Senior Media and Communications Officer), James Clarke (Committee Specialist), Chloë Cockett (Senior Committee Specialist), Mark Earl (Safeguarding and Witness Support Officer), Matthew Eaton (Committee Specialist), Michelle Garratty (Committee Operations Manager), Roberta Guerrina (Parliamentary Academic Fellow), Phil Jones (Clerk), Jack Smith (Committee Operations Officer), Charlotte Swift (Second Clerk) and Hennie Ward (Media and Communications Officer).

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Women and Equalities Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 4452; the Committee's email address is womeqcom@parliament.uk.

You can follow the Committee on X (formerly Twitter) using [@Commonswomequ](https://twitter.com/Commonswomequ).

Contents

Summary	3
1 Introduction	5
2 Representation and discrimination	7
Education and training	8
Misogyny in the workforce	10
Impact on mental health	12
Gatekeepers	13
Appearance	14
Intersectionality	15
Support	17
Diversity in leadership and other key roles	18
3 Legislative and other related changes	22
Maternity and paternity support and childcare	22
Employment law and the Equality 2010 Act	24
Time limit	26
4 Sexual harassment and abuse	28
Educational settings	30
Recording studios	33
Live music and events	35
Third party harassment	36
Improving safety in venues	39
Reporting	42
Reporting pathways	43
Support	44
5 Creative Industries Independent Standards	

Authority	46
Sanctions, support and deterrence	47
Licensing managers	51
6 Non-disclosure agreements	53
Duress	53
Impact on career	55
Legislation	55
7 Conclusion	57
Conclusion	58
Conclusions and recommendations	59
Formal minutes	66
Witnesses	67
Published written evidence	69

Summary

Women working in the music industry face limitations in opportunity, a lack of support, gender discrimination and sexual harassment and assault as well as the persistent issue of unequal pay in a sector dominated by self-employment and gendered power imbalances. Despite increases in representation, these issues are endemic and are intensified for women faced with intersectional barriers, particularly racial discrimination.

There are legislative steps the Government can take to help tackle some of these concerns. The Equality Act should be amended to ensure freelance workers are provided with the same protections from discrimination as employees, section 14 of the Act should be brought into force to improve protections for people facing intersectional inequality. The Government should legislate to impose a duty on employers to protect workers from sexual harassment by third parties, a proposal the Government initially supported and then rejected last year.

We received distressing evidence on the impact of non-disclosure agreements on victims of discrimination, harassment and abuse. Victims with little agency in the process are threatened into silence by organisations seeking to protect their reputation and the perpetrators of abuse who work for them. Victims described to us of being told they would suffer reprisals if they failed to sign what was put in front of them, often without independent counsel. The Government should urgently bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit the use of non-disclosure and other forms of confidentiality agreements in cases involving sexual abuse, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, bullying or harassment, and discrimination relating to a protected characteristic. The Government should consider a retrospective moratorium on NDAs for those who have signed them relating to the issues outlined above.

Additional requirements should be placed on areas in the industry in which harassment and abuse are known to take place. Studios and music venues and the security staff that attend them should be subject to licensing requirements focused on tackling sexual harassment. Managers of artists should also be licensed. The Office for Students has proposed a new condition of registration and potential sanction for educational settings aimed at improving protections for students. We urge the OfS to implement its proposals swiftly and to enforce them robustly.

Non-reporting of incidents of sexual harassment and abuse is high. Victims who report behaviour struggle to be believed. Even when they are believed, more often than not, it is their career not the perpetrators' that ends. In many cases, those who do report harassment or sexual assault regret doing so due to the way it is handled. This must change, and the establishment of a new authority, the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA) will help to shine a light on unacceptable behaviour in the music industry and in doing so, may reduce the risk of further harm. Crucially, it will be a single, recognisable body that anyone in the industry can turn to for support and advice. It is not a panacea for all of the problems in the industry, other reforms remain crucial, and time will tell whether it has the powers required to drive the changes needed.

In this Report we have focused on improving protections and reporting mechanisms, and on necessary structural and legislative reforms. The main problem at the heart of the music industry is none of these; it is the behaviour of men—and it is almost always men. More often than not, women are left with the expectation they will be able to enact change while being hindered by men who do not wish to amend their ways.

Too often, problems of discrimination, harassment and misogyny are seen as women's issues—that it is their role to experience, avoid, overcome, withstand, analyse, discuss and understand misogyny so men don't have to. While necessary, preventative measures risk normalising behaviours and place the responsibility on women as potential victims rather than men as potential perpetrators.

Educating boys and men on misogyny and consent, how to respect and better support women and to recognise the additional challenges they face will be more transformative than any of the measures set out in this report. The Government must develop and introduce a new strategy in schools, aimed specifically at boys on issues of misogyny, sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

Women in the music industry have had their lives ruined and their careers destroyed by men who have never faced the consequences for their actions. People in the industry who attend award shows and parties currently do so sitting alongside sexual abusers who remain protected by the system and by colleagues. The music industry has always prided itself on being a vehicle for social change; when it comes to discrimination, and the harassment and sexual abuse of women, it has a lot of work to do.

1 Introduction

- 1.** Women are underrepresented in key roles in the music industry. Positions of authority, from senior leadership through to roles in Artists and Repertoire and production have historically been more likely to be occupied by men. This is reflected in the unequal representation of female artists in the rosters of artists at major record labels, in airtime, streaming and as headliners at music festivals.¹
- 2.** In many levels of the industry female representation is improving, in part due to the support of a myriad of targeted programmes, but in certain areas progress is slow and shackled by discrimination, misogyny and sexual abuse in an industry that is still routinely described as a “boys’ club”.² Women seeking careers in music continue to face unjustifiable limitations in opportunity, a lack of support, gender discrimination and sexual harassment as well as the “persistent issue of equal pay” in a sector dominated by self-employment.³ These issues are intensified for artists faced with intersectional barriers.⁴
- 3.** Abuse and discrimination are not unique to the industry but they are amplified in music by the high number of freelance workers in the sector—which gives rise to significant power imbalances in working relationships and precarious employment practices—and the informal nature of many workplaces which, together with late-night working, often in places where alcohol and drugs are available, can result in women working in environments that are unsafe.⁵ None of these concerns will come as a surprise to anyone with knowledge of the sector; the question we asked repeatedly in this inquiry and one which the industry must continue to ask itself is why these concerns persist and how they can be better tackled. One approach being developed is the creation of a standards body, known as the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA). We consider the potential role and responsibilities of that organisation in this Report.

1 Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#)); [Counting the Music Industry: The Gender Gap](#), Vick Bain, 2019

2 See for example, Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#)); Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#)); Q348 [Annie Macmanus]; Q368 [Rebecca Ferguson]

3 Sally Anne Gross and Dr George Musgrave ([MiM0003](#))

4 Intersectional refers to overlapping or concurrent forms of discrimination, for example, being subject to discrimination due to both race and gender.

5 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

4. We held oral evidence sessions with academics, industry bodies, festival representatives, record label executives, artists and government and met privately with women from a diverse range of professional backgrounds from across the industry.⁶ We are grateful to everyone who contributed to our inquiry, especially the women who came forward to recount their testimonies, and to our specialist advisers Dr Rachel Horton, Associate Professor, School of Law, University of Reading and Dr Hannah Bows, Associate Professor in Criminal Law, Durham University.⁷ Throughout this inquiry our attention has been drawn to the experiences of individual female artists, including the instances of abuse they have been subjected to on social media and elsewhere. Out of respect to those artists we will not repeat it here.

5. **RECOMMENDATION**

We expect the music industry to act on our recommendations and call on industry bodies to respond to the recommendations relevant to their work.

6 The Committee met privately with women from across the industry including musicians, from a variety of genres, producers, songwriters, managers, programmers, label staff, researchers and women who work in the live music sector.

7 For details of their declarations of interests please see the Committee's Formal Minutes.

2 Representation and discrimination

6. 2023 saw a landmark year for female artists in the UK; seven of the top 10 tracks and 13 of the top 20 were by women. Nearly half (48.5%) of the tracks that reached the Top 10 of the weekly Official Singles Chart were by female artists, either solo or as part of a collaboration. This represented their highest annual share of Top 10 hits this century.⁸ However, behind these achievements, which are to be celebrated, lies a wider picture of deep-rooted underrepresentation of women in key roles in the music industry.
7. Women represent less than a third of top-selling artists in music and only 14% of songwriters.⁹ In 2022, just 187 women and non-binary people were credited as either producer or engineer on the top 50 streamed tracks in 14 genres, compared to 3,781 men.¹⁰ Of all songwriters and composers who received a royalty in 2020 from their music being streamed, downloaded, broadcast, or performed, only one in six (16.7%) were women.¹¹
8. Most recently, in summer 2023, only one in 10 headliners at music festivals in the UK were women.¹² Responding to criticism of the lack of female headliners at the Glastonbury festival, Emily Eavis, co-organiser of the festival, who has long advocated for balanced line-ups, voiced her frustration at the lack of female artists being signed and supported:

We're trying our best so the pipeline needs to be developed. This starts way back with the record companies, radio. I can shout as loud as I like but we need to get everyone on board.¹³

8 British Phonographic Industry, [Women enjoy a record-breaking year in music in 2023](#), 3 January 2023

9 University of Southern California Annenberg Inclusion Initiative report, [Inclusion in the Recording Studio? Gender & Race/Ethnicity of Artists, Songwriters & Producers across 1,100 Popular Songs from 2012 to 2022](#), January 2023

10 Fix the mix report, [Lost In The Mix: An Analysis of Credited Technical Professionals in the Music Industry Highlighting Women and Non-Binary Producers and Engineers Across DSP Playlists, Genres, Awards, Record Certifications & Distributors](#), We Are Moving the Needle, Howard University, Middle Tennessee State University, and Jaxsta, April 2023

11 PRS for Music, [Tipping the scales: PRS for Music reveal membership gender data](#), March 2021

12 BBC News, [Music festivals: Only 13% of UK headliners in 2022 are female](#), May 2022

13 RollingStone, [Glastonbury Co-Organizer Promises Female Headliners in 2024 After All-Male Top Billing This Year](#), March 2023

9. Melvin Benn, Managing Director of Festival Republic, which has launched its own scheme to support female artists, also commented on the need for structural change to address gender imbalance. He similarly drew attention to the role of radio: “we endeavour to put on stage what people are listening to [...] radio has a greater ability to direct audience tastes than we have, we can only reflect”.¹⁴ In the 12 months to August 2022, female artists accounted for 10% of the top 20 tracks by British artists played on the nation’s top radio stations. For BBC Radio 1, one of the UK’s largest stations, female artists were represented in just 15% of the station’s top 20 most played tracks.¹⁵
10. Music is a multi-billion pound industry. In 2022, it contributed £6.7 billion to the UK economy and generated £4 billion in exports. It employs over 200,000 people in a wide variety of roles, genres and settings.¹⁶ Routes into the music industry are varied. For musicians it ranges from formal channels of further and higher education to self-promotion and discovery via word of mouth, social media and high-profile competitions. Whatever the route pursued, we heard that for women, the environment is unwelcoming, access to career opportunities continues to be problematic and those entering the music industry routinely experience misogyny and discrimination.¹⁷ We discuss below the forms that discrimination and misogyny can take, some of which have their foundations in education.¹⁸

Education and training

11. Gender diversity has improved in music in higher education over recent years and there is now almost equal participation. However, this masks significant imbalances in certain disciplines and is far from being reflected in the industry, suggesting barriers remain for female graduates seeking to start their careers.¹⁹
12. We were told how certain instruments, roles, courses and genres are given a strong association with gender which can result in an unwelcoming environment for women and girls, either through casual misogyny or more directly through bullying, sexualisation and sexual harassment (which we

14 Festival Nation ([MiM0051](#))

15 Why Not Her? [Gender and racial disparity data report on UK radio 2021–22](#)

16 UK Music, [This is Music 2023](#), November 2023

17 Sally Anne Gross and Dr George Musgrave ([MiM0003](#)); Q58 [Vanessa Threadgold]

18 Q123 [Deborah Annetts]; Arts Council England, [Creating a More Inclusive Classical Music: A study of the English orchestral workforce and the current routes to joining it, Literature Review, 2021](#)

19 In 2021–22, 44.9% of music students in higher education in the UK were female, see HESA, [What do HE students study?: Personal characteristics](#), January 2023; Vick Bain, [Counting the music industry: The gender gap](#), October 2019

discuss separately later in this Report).²⁰ Deborah Annetts, chief executive of the Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM), explained:

I think the music colleges have still not necessarily got their heads around equality in relation to how they deal with issues around discrimination and harassment, and the actual curriculums that they are delivering [...] Looking back over the research we did in 2019, “Dignity in study”, which was across all types of music college, but also included drama and dance, we saw that the inappropriate behaviours started within those creative colleges, were learned and then went into the profession; and there is no protection.²¹

13. Participation rates show that music technology courses still show a stark gender imbalance, reflecting the lack of female representation in the production workforce, despite the technology’s increasing importance to modern musicians.²² In jazz—a genre where conservatoire staff and student bodies are similarly male-dominated—we were told how jam sessions were a distinctly competitive and unwelcoming environment for women and that female role models for musicians-in-training are lacking.²³
14. Women who play instruments considered ‘masculine’ are often held to a higher standard than their male counterparts with mistakes seen as confirmation of a belief that women are less capable—in many cases women are discouraged from playing certain instruments at all, reducing what women can achieve.²⁴ A participant in our private roundtable discussions explained “there is this idea that if you’re a girl you can’t play the drums, or if you’re a girl you can’t play the trumpet really loudly because it will make you look ugly”.²⁵ The Musicians’ Union described to us female students being “cat-called in rehearsals”, “made to feel uncomfortable by male lecturers” and being told “they couldn’t play their instrument properly if they didn’t sit with their legs open in orchestra rehearsals”.²⁶
15. Expectations in education of what instruments and roles women can perform impacts the pipeline of female role models that is essential to encouraging young talent and serve to further entrench gender imbalance.²⁷ These biases are not harmless or isolated; people who hold these, or similarly biased, views are often in positions of power and make

20 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); Arts Council England, [Creating a More Inclusive Classical Music: A study of the English orchestral workforce and the current routes to joining it](#), 2021

21 Q123 [Deborah Annetts]

22 Vick Bain, [Counting the music industry: The gender gap](#), October 2019

23 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#))

24 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); Anonymous ([MiM0005](#))

25 Private roundtable discussion

26 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

27 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

decisions on whose career is supported and who is and is not employed.²⁸ It is positive that these prejudices are now being challenged. During the course of this inquiry, we have been made aware of a range of initiatives and interventions aimed at supporting women and girls into education and training in areas that have traditionally been male-dominated. However, while promising, these are often small in scale and limited in funding; wider action across the industry is required to challenge stereotypes and increase female participation in music.²⁹

16. RECOMMENDATION

Music colleges, conservatoires and other educational settings need to do more to address the gendering of instruments, roles and genres and improve the visibility of and support for female role models. The Government and industry bodies should offer increased, funded and targeted opportunities for women and girls to study subjects and to engage in training in areas of the music industry that remain male-dominated and where women are made to feel unwelcome.

Misogyny in the workforce

- 17.** The issues of misogyny in music education are replicated in women’s experiences in the workplace and the challenges they face in seeking to make and sustain a career in music. Female respondents to a 2022 survey by the Musicians’ Union reported “a range of bullying behaviours such as being humiliated in public, being isolated, and ridiculed in front of colleagues—all of which the respondents noted was related to their gender.”³⁰ A contributor to our inquiry reported her experience of working in a mixed choir:

Jokes were frequently made about the intelligence and ability of soprano and alto sections. If mistakes were made by members of these sections, it would be pointed out with mockery or a sense of inevitability. By contrast, mistakes made by tenor or bass sections were given a respectful, supportive approach, with advice on e.g. how to stay in tune during a difficult/clashing note. There was a sense that the men were professionals, and the women were amateurs.³¹

- 18.** Respondents to the Musicians’ Union survey noted “a lack of confidence from employers in [female musicians’] abilities” and that “very often women

28 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

29 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#)); Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#)); F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#))

30 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

31 Anonymous ([MiM0005](#))

were asked if they were fans, rather than musicians or it was assumed they must be singers not instrumentalists”.³² A recurring theme was men assuming women could not have any technical knowledge and dismissing female musicians’ technical abilities.³³

- 19.** While such concerns were raised in our inquiry about roles across the sector, our attention was drawn to the recording studio environment which one contributor described as, “one of those spaces where women are not spoken to when they enter the room [...] they are just ignored because maybe they are perceived as a girlfriend.”³⁴ We also heard how female managers are regularly underestimated or mistaken by promoters, stage crew and senior industry figures for assistants and girlfriends.³⁵ One manager told us:

There is a dated perception in the industry of what an artist manager looks like. When people don’t see a man in charge they are often shocked to see it’s me. I feel as though I have to work twice as hard as my male counterparts to get the recognition I deserve. Even then it feels everything I do is never good enough in the eyes of some of the powerful white men in the industry.³⁶

- 20.** Nadia Khan, Chief Executive of Women in CTRL, described to us her experience:

Over the period of my career, I have experienced bullying and harassment. I have been undermined constantly on varying different levels. I have felt invisible when I have walked into rooms, been perceived or deemed to be just an assistant or a groupie. I have been kicked off festival stages while my artist is on stage performing because security does not believe that I could be the manager. I have been laughed away by bouncers at the front of shows who have not believed that I am the manager.³⁷

We were told by the Music Managers Forum, the world’s largest professional community of music managers, about the unequal standards women face where assertive male managers can be considered “great champions” for their artists, while female managers report being labelled a “b*tch or difficult” if they are equally assertive, and ignored or pushed aside if “polite and kind”.³⁸ Annie Macmanus, DJ and broadcaster, gave this example:

32 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

33 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

34 Q58 [Vanessa Threadgold]

35 Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#)); Q58 [Vanessa Threadgold]

36 Anonymous ([MiM0004](#))

37 Q66 [Nadia Khan]

38 Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#))

A young girl was trying to put on events and went to the venue where she was promoting the event. She went there early and realised they did not have a table to put the decks on. She spoke to the venue owner to say she needed a table for the decks. He called her some horrific words, basically verbally abused her badly. When the two 50-year-old men she had booked to come and the DJ came in and asked for a table, of course, they got one immediately. That is emblematic of what happens consistently to women, young women trying to make a career in dance music and at live events.³⁹

- 21.** This behaviour is not restricted to artists or those working directly with them. 84% of respondents to a research report conducted by Women in CTRL and #radiosilence looking at the experiences of women working in radio described it being harder for women to progress their careers. Reasons given included “management being overwhelmingly male and white”, “casual sexism”, “it feeling like a boys’ club”, and “men being promoted over women”. 61% experienced sexist comments about their appearance, comments which would often be passed off as ‘jokes’.⁴⁰

Impact on mental health

- 22.** The constant belittling of women in the music industry takes its toll on those who experience it. Dr Sarah Raine, Fellow at the School of Music, University College Dublin, described to us the experiences of jazz musicians she interviewed:

Several women spoke about the emotional toil of being a musician in the contemporary scene, intensified by what they saw as a comparative undervaluing of women musicians by promoters, agents, and media and the scene’s reliance upon a ‘boys’ club’ network of male individuals to gain access and opportunities.⁴¹

An anonymous contributor to our inquiry described how, as a junior manager in a company, she was told not to be “so confrontational and emotional” when raising that a male intern was being paid the same as her. She concluded:

Practically every job I have had in the music industry I and my female colleagues have been subject to misogyny which has both affected our moods, proactivity and progression. As the years have gone by I have seen many of these women leave the industry which ultimately makes it harder for those of us remaining.⁴²

39 Q385 [Annie Macmanus]

40 Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#))

41 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#))

42 Anonymous ([MiM0007](#))

Another contributor added, “As women, we have the stereotype placed on us for being fussy, loud, and bossy. If we call something out or complain, we just completely fulfil that stereotype, there’s literally no winning”.⁴³

Gatekeepers

23. One of the most significant barriers to women starting and developing a career in the music industry is that gatekeeper roles such as programmers, promoters and Artists and Repertoire (A&R)—the area of the business responsible for identifying new talent—are male-dominated.⁴⁴ The consequences of this range from women not being given work or promoted due to their gender, having to change something about themselves in order to be accepted or treated as a commodity rather than an artist with intrinsic value.⁴⁵
24. Nadia Khan described being told by A&Rs booking or playlisting on radio, “Women artists don’t test well on radio so, therefore, we are not going to programme them.”⁴⁶ Statistics published in the Why Not Her? report, *Gender and Racial Disparity Data Report on UK Radio* show the stark extent to which gender imbalance is embedded across radio.⁴⁷ We heard that female artists get skipped more on streaming platforms, and that the algorithm then negatively affects them and they move down playlists or are removed completely.⁴⁸
25. Women have to work harder than their male peers for recognition. The F-List for Music, a not-for-profit community interest company representing more than 5,000 female and gender nonconforming musicians in the UK, told us, “It is a noted phenomenon that women have to attain a higher standard and quality of creativity than their male counterparts.”⁴⁹ In the music press, female artists often find their contribution to their own music questioned in a way that does not happen to male artists and the role of any male collaborators overstated.⁵⁰ Women are also invariably more likely

43 Webb ([MiM0015](#))

44 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#)); Q61 [Nadia Khan]

45 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); Katie Waissel ([MiM0057](#))

46 Q58 [Nadia Khan]

47 Why Not Her?, [Gender and Racial Disparity Data Report on UK Radio 2022–23](#)

48 Q58 [Nadia Khan]

49 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#)) - In 2019 researchers analysed the music of over a quarter of a million songs produced and released between 1955 and 2000 and concluded that female songwriters were more creative and novel in their output but were less likely to be recognised as creative despite their low representation as songwriters and performing musicians

50 Pitchfork, [The Invisible Woman: A Conversation With Björk](#), January 2015; Slate.com, [It’s Not Just Björk: Women Are Tired of Not Getting Credit for Their Own Music](#), 21 January 2015

to be accepted as singers in contrast to most other types of musicianship, further restricting their music careers and ambitions.⁵¹

Appearance

- 26.** Gatekeepers impose additional requirements on women with respect to appearance and sexualisation that men experience to a far lesser degree. We heard how women are routinely judged on what they look like before their ability, and lose out on work due to being deemed by people in gatekeeper roles as “not attractive enough” or not having “the right body type”, and that it is not uncommon for employers to request all female bands or sections just to promote a “sexy image”.⁵² Women described being measured regularly by their management company and humiliated if they couldn’t meet punishing targets on their weight and told they couldn’t be serious about a career in music.⁵³ Such concerns are not limited to musicians, 70% of respondents to Women in CTRL’s survey about working in radio reported their appearance affecting job opportunities.⁵⁴
- 27.** The sexualisation and objectification of women in the music industry does not stop in the workplace. Constant comments on social media and elsewhere about female musicians’ appearance—on their attractiveness rather than their talent—contribute to a culture where a female artist’s worth is judged first on their looks and perceived sexual availability.⁵⁵
- 28.** The situation is magnified for BME artists. Charisse Beaumont, chief executive of Black Lives in Music, a charity working to dismantle racism in the industry, reported that “70% of black female artists have felt the need to change something about themselves in the industry and that 43% of black women working had changed something about themselves to be more accepted in the industry”.⁵⁶ She reported how one respondent to their survey had told them, “I wanted to change my name and lighten my skin to be more appealing, to be accepted and fit in and have more opportunities.”⁵⁷
- 29.** Black female artists have spoken out about being pigeon-holed into a music genre or overtly sexual role that is not true to them and the ‘male gaze’ affecting their access to opportunity and career progression.⁵⁸ One contributor to a Musicians’ Union survey commented:

51 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#))

52 Q58 [Nadia Khan]; Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

53 Sally Anne Gross and Dr George Musgrave ([MiM0003](#)); Q357 [Rebecca Ferguson]

54 Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#))

55 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

56 Q7 [Charisse Beaumont]

57 Black Lives in Music ([MiM0029](#))

58 Black Lives in Music ([MiM0029](#))

I have had multiple occasions of being told by men that I have only been booked because of my ethnicity and because I am female. Over time, this created doubts surrounding my abilities as an artist.⁵⁹

Intersectionality

- 30.** In its 2017 Dignity in Work survey and campaign, the Incorporated Society of Musicians found that nearly half of the 600 respondents said they had experienced some form of discrimination, with reference to all nine protected characteristics, including women who had lost work because they had children.⁶⁰ Women frequently did not report incidents of discrimination due to a fear of losing work. Dr Cassandra Jones, Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Northumbria said that research on the industry’s culture found that nearly 60% of respondents said white British people are favoured over other ethnicities; 84% thought it is sexist and 80% thought it favours non-disabled over disabled people:

What we found was that women with disabilities were subjected to bullying and harassment so much more often than men without disabilities. We also found that women who identified as sexual minorities experienced bullying and harassment much more than heterosexual men and BME women were sexually harassed more often than white men were.⁶¹

- 31.** The Musicians’ Union and other organisations have called on the Government to “review the limit of two characteristics within Section 14 of the Equality Act 2010, so the law acknowledges that overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination impacts on people who experience sexual harassment.”⁶² Section 14 of the Equality Act which provides for protection from discrimination because of a combination of two characteristics has never been brought into force. We recommended the Government introduce section 14 in our 2022 report on support for women experiencing the menopause.⁶³ The Government rejected that recommendation. It argued that bringing section 14 into force would impose additional burdens on business despite the evidence we had received that such burdens would be minimal. We were told that businesses are already

59 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

60 Incorporated Society of Musicians, [Dignity in Work: A survey of discrimination in the music sector](#), April 2018

61 Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki, [Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry “Completely entangled in its fabric”](#), University of Winchester, May 2022; Q28 [Dr Cassandra Jones]

62 Ivors Academy of Music Creators ([MiM0022](#)); UK Music ([MiM0037](#)); Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#)); Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

63 Women and Equalities Committee, [Menopause and the workplace](#), First Report of Session 2022–23, HC 91

aware of their responsibilities under the Equality Act and enacting section 14 would not require much, if any, further training or education.⁶⁴ When we challenged the Government on its response to our report, the Minister for Women explained that section 14 would be a burden because:

there is such a potential variety of combinations of characteristics that employers would need to accommodate or ensure that they are not treating those less favourably than people who do not have the particular combination of characteristics.⁶⁵

- 32.** The Musicians’ Union’s 2022 snapshot survey found that more than 65% of respondents who had experienced misogyny and/or sexism said it was linked to another characteristic. It explained:

These behaviours are often experienced combined with and driven by ageism, racism, LGBT+ phobia, ableism, and assumptions about women’s ability to perform if they are pregnant or have caring responsibilities.⁶⁶

Black Lives in Music said its data revealed that black women are the most disadvantaged in the music industry, experiencing oversexualisation and objectification.⁶⁷ Black women creators experience poor mental health at a disproportionate rate to black men and are more likely to feel pressure to alter themselves to assimilate. Black women are overlooked for promotions, and have their qualifications questioned. Regarding pay, Black Lives in Music’s data shows that black women in the industry are on average paid the least and are paid 25% less than white women and 52% less than white men. Nearly half of the black women the group has corresponded with say their mental wellbeing has “significantly worsened” in the music industry and a fifth have sought counselling due to racial abuse, while others are yet to do so.⁶⁸

- 33.** Charisse Beaumont, chief executive of Black Lives in Music, told us that her report “says 65% of all black disabled music creators experienced discrimination due to their race; 35% of black disabled creators have experienced gender discrimination; and just 7% were subject to discrimination because of their disabilities.⁶⁹ She concluded, “Unless we

64 Ibid, para 91

65 [Letter from the Minister for Women to the Committee](#), dated 8 February 2023

66 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

67 Black Lives in Music ([MiM0029](#))

68 Black Lives in Music ([MiM0029](#))

69 Q27 [Charisse Beaumont]; [Attitude is Everything and Black Lives in Music, Unseen Unheard: Race and disability - Black disabled experience in the UK’s music industry](#), June 2023

break or tackle racial discrimination, we cannot really tackle everything else”.⁷⁰

34. CONCLUSION

Women have significant additional barriers to pass to get a foothold in the music industry and must navigate acts of passive aggression, ridicule, and misogyny to have a sustainable career. Female artists are routinely undervalued and undermined, endure a focus on their physical appearance in a way that men are not subjected to, and have to work far harder to get the recognition their ability merits. Despite increases in representation, discrimination and misogyny remain endemic. These concerns are intensified for women faced with intersectional barriers, particularly racial discrimination.

35. RECOMMENDATION

Section 14 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides protection from discrimination on the basis of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics presents a limited understanding of how overlapping characteristics are used to discriminate against individuals and prevent the most vulnerable from bringing harassment claims based on their actual experience. The Government should bring section 14 of the Equality Act into force and consider whether an amendment to that section is required to better protect those facing intersectional inequality. Businesses are already aware of their responsibilities to equality of treatment under the Equality Act; bringing section 14 into force would impose minimal additional burdens.

Support

- 36.** There are a myriad of organisations that help support women to have careers in the music industry, from those who gave evidence to us, including the F-List, Black Lives in Music, Cactus City, and Women in CTRL, to more local schemes such as Girls Rock London, Yorkshire Sound Women Network and Manchester-based Brighter Sound to name just a few.⁷¹ Initiatives such as UK Music’s Five P’s action plan;⁷² the global Keychange pledge;⁷³ a

70 Q27 [Charisse Beaumont]

71 Professor Bethany Klein et al ([MiM0001](#))

72 UK Music, [The Five Ps: The music industry’s action plan](#)

73 [Keychange](#) is an international initiative led by the PRS Foundation - the philanthropic arm of the Publishing Rights Society for Music, Reeperbahn Festival and Musikzentrum Öst. It invests funding in emerging female talent and encourages music festivals to pledge a 50:50 gender balance in their programming.

joint code of practice by the Musicians' Union and the ISM⁷⁴ and the best practice framework for the industry being developed by the BPI (British Phonographic Industry) and others are just some that seek to promote a change of culture in the industry. But as Lady of the House, a platform championing women in electronic music, told us:

The fact we have so many initiatives, communities, programs etc is amazing but on the other hand shows the desperate need to straighten the music industry out so it can protect and give women an equal opportunity in regards to equity.⁷⁵

- 37.** Many of these organisations are sparsely funded, or completely volunteer led.⁷⁶ Additionally, while we heard a lot of support for initiatives such as the Keychange pledge—which asks organisations to commit to 50% female representation, we were told that they can sometimes mask progress as well as help to drive it.⁷⁷ Dr Sarah Raine's work on jazz festivals showed that while those festivals felt they met the Keychange pledge of a woman on stage 50 per cent of the time this did not prevent a large gender imbalance, with women making up “at best a third of total musicians scheduled” with “women instrumentalists particularly underrepresented”. Dr Raine concluded “The ‘one woman on stage’ interpretation of 50/50 hides continued gender inequality and the gendering of certain roles within jazz.”⁷⁸

Diversity in leadership and other key roles

- 38.** The concern that the music industry is a ‘boys’ club’ was raised repeatedly with us. There is evident frustration at the continuing effect of the historic domination of key roles by white men. The lack of women in positions of authority sets the culture and influences decisions for the rest of the profession and can have a direct impact on women's career opportunities and progression.⁷⁹ In organisations where men are overrepresented the Musicians' Union told us it has:

led to workplaces that don't support women in aspects of their lives such as starting a family, having caring responsibilities or policies that support older women such as menopause policies. [...] When women do raise these issues their commitment to work is questioned and quite often it can have a detrimental impact on their careers.⁸⁰

74 [ISM-MU Code of Practice](#)

75 Lady of the House ([MiM0035](#))

76 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

77 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#))

78 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#))

79 Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#))

80 Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#))

In contrast, we heard how the atmosphere at one label had become more collaborative and less egotistical and competitive following a female chief executive taking post.⁸¹

39. There are encouraging signs that diversity is improving. UK Music’s 2022 Diversity Report found that the proportion of women in higher level roles within the industry is increasing, with numbers rising at senior level from 40.4% in 2020 to 45.1% in 2022, and at mid-level from 51.2% in 2020 to 53.3% in 2022.⁸² Women in CTRL’s 2022 study of board members in the industry’s trade bodies found 42% were female (an increase from 34% in 2021); since that study two of the bodies have appointed black female chairs.⁸³ There are still drop-offs in representation as women ‘age-out’ of the industry but the rate is reducing.⁸⁴

40. Across the record labels there are significantly more women in frontline roles than ever before, as the British Phonographic Industry explained:

EMI, Virgin, RCA, Decca, Epic and Atlantic—to name just a few—are some of the most well-known labels in the music industry and are now run in the UK by women. In other areas of the business, women hold the roles of Managing Directors, Chief Operating Officers, Executive and Senior Vice Presidents.⁸⁵

The major labels set out the proportion of women in their senior leadership teams: Universal 50%; Sony 55%; and Warner 48%.⁸⁶ With respect to A&R a department that has traditionally employed more men than women, the labels told us that they now had dedicated programmes to consider barriers to entry and increase the representation of women.⁸⁷ Vick Bain’s 2019 study of the music industry found that just over 14% of those currently signed to 106 music publishers and just under 20% of those signed to 219 record labels were female.⁸⁸ The BPI told us:

We are already seeing the changes in relation to the signing of women artists as a result of more women working in these crucial roles and targeted entry-level programmes, some specifically for women.⁸⁹

81 Q364 [Annie Macmanus]

82 UK Music, [Diversity Report 2022](#), 2022

83 Women in CTRL, [Seat at the table report - 1 year on](#), July 2021

84 In 2020 the proportion of female respondents to UK Music’s survey of the industry was 49.7% aged 35 to 44 and 35% aged 35 to 64. Figures for 2022 were 53% and 40.6% respectively. UK Music, [Diversity Report 2022](#), 2022

85 British Phonographic Industry (further submission) ([MiM0042](#))

86 Q239; Sony Music UK ([MiM0052](#)); Universal Music UK ([MiM0048](#))

87 Q244 [Natasha Mann]

88 [Counting the Music Industry: The Gender Gap](#), Vick Bain, 2019

89 British Phonographic Industry ([MiM0038](#))

Although gender imbalances persisted in their rosters, we were assured by label executives that the situation was improving and there is “real momentum behind female talent”.⁹⁰

- 41.** The picture across the music industry is however more mixed. Research by Arts Council England found that while women make up a substantial portion of the workforce in classical music, they remain less well represented in senior roles like orchestral principals, as solo artists, in artistic leadership roles and elsewhere.⁹¹ In the technical side of the business, while trends are positive—female membership of the Music Producers Guild is at the highest recorded level, up from 5% in 2016 to 15%—the number of female producers and engineers credited on the most played tracks remains very low.⁹² The ISM report that despite increases in female representation, 66% of respondents to their 2022 survey reported that they had been subject to discrimination, up from 47% in 2017.⁹³

42. RECOMMENDATION

Although female representation in the music industry is improving, particularly at senior levels, progress is not uniform and gender imbalance remains entrenched in certain areas. The music industry and government should increase investment in diverse talent and make more funding available to the schemes that support it. Pathways to careers for women working in the sector must improve, particularly in key gatekeeping roles such as A&R and other male-dominated areas including sound engineering and production.

43. RECOMMENDATION

To allow progress to be monitored, record labels should commit to regular publication of statistics on the diversity of their creative rosters. All organisations with more than 100 employees should be required to publish data on the diversity of their workforce and gender and ethnicity pay gaps.

44. RECOMMENDATION

Organisations in the music industry should provide mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training. These steps are required because misogynistic and discriminatory behaviours remain entrenched despite increased representation.

90 Q208 [Isabel Garvey]

91 Arts Council England, [Creating a more inclusive classical music: A study of the English orchestral workforce and the current routes to joining it](#), 2021

92 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

93 Q123 [Deborah Annetts]

- 45.** The music industry needs to become more welcoming and supportive of women. Reported increases in discrimination have shown that increased female representation alone will not be enough. Legislative change, better reporting pathways and redress for victims of poor behaviour are also required. We discuss those challenges next.

3 Legislative and other related changes

- 46.** Over 70% of the music workforce is freelance (for musicians the figure rises to over 80%),⁹⁴ working hours can be unsociable, contracts are often precarious, support is inconsistent and the provision of work is often based on unequal relationships. These factors contribute to demoralisation and ultimately the attrition of women from music. Women are leaving the music industry in their 30s and not returning owing to challenges around access, career progression and parenting.⁹⁵ Since 2018, the number of women aged 45 to 64 in the sector has fallen from 38.7% to 35% despite women outnumbering men in the lower age groups.⁹⁶
- 47.** In the sections below we explore concerns around employment, some of which are shared between freelancers and employed staff and some which are particular to each of those groups.

Maternity and paternity support and childcare

- 48.** Parents and carers are underrepresented in the music industry: 29% of people in the music industry have caring responsibilities, compared with 44% of the UK population.⁹⁷ It can be difficult for parents to maintain a career in a sector which involves late hours, freelance work and insecure working environments.⁹⁸ Concerns raised with us focused on the effect of pregnancy on job retention, the adequacy of maternity support and childcare availability. We heard how expectant mothers in the freelance sector have lost their job directly or lost their role more covertly due to pregnancy and that rules around maternity and paternity leave provided insufficient support and protection.⁹⁹ A survey of over 400 music production

94 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#)); Q72 [Vick Bain]

95 Sally Anne Gross and Dr George Musgrave ([MiM0003](#))

96 UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

97 Q133 [Jamie Njoku-Goodwin]

98 See for example, Incorporated Society of Music ([MiM0009](#)); Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#)); UK Music ([MiM0037](#)); Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#)); Q133 [Jamie Njoku-Goodwin]; Qq193-7 [John Shortell]; Q64 [Vick Bain]

99 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#)); Incorporated Society of Musicians, [Dignity at work 2: Discrimination in the music sector](#), September 2022

professionals found that 8% of respondents had been discriminated against because of pregnancy or maternity.¹⁰⁰

- 49.** There is a marked difference in the way that parents are treated who are employed, particularly in larger organisations with HR functions, compared to those who are freelance. Senior executives from the major record labels set out their companies’ progressive policies on maternity and childcare and the positive effect they are having on retention rates.¹⁰¹ Such policies contrast starkly with the support available in the freelance sector. What support exists is available only to mothers—through Maternity Allowance—and there is no paternity or shared parental leave that would enable fathers to take paid time off. We heard how this can place the entire burden of childcare in the first year on the mother and removes her from the workplace which can then have a detrimental effect on future earnings.¹⁰² The Music Producers Guild explained:

[...] music production is very competitive. It relies heavily on personal relationships, and the impact of the break from the workplace lasts beyond the nine months of statutory maternity allowance. Research by Parental Pay Equality showed that only 20% of self-employed mothers return to their pre-baby earnings by the time their child is two.¹⁰³

- 50.** On returning to work, long hours and the lack of a set pattern can raise logistical and financial difficulties with childcare for parents who lack a supportive employer or who are freelance, and tend to impact the mother’s career significantly more than the father’s.¹⁰⁴ We heard reports of women in production and artist management roles moving to other positions within or outside the industry where it is easier to combine parenthood with a successful career.¹⁰⁵ A Parents and Carers in Performing Arts survey of over 400 parents and carers working in classical music found that 90% of respondents had turned down work due to caring responsibilities—just 4% of respondents referenced a supportive employer—while 40% said they were thinking of leaving their careers in music.¹⁰⁶ Charisse Beaumont explained:

This is reflected across the music industry, not just in classical in this case. There is not much support from the Government. There is not much support from the industries and the employers when it comes to parents and caring responsibilities. That is something that definitely

100 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

101 Sony Music UK ([MiM0052](#)); Q230 [Jessica Carsen]; Universal Music UK ([MiM0048](#))

102 UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

103 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

104 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

105 Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#))

106 Q22 [Charisse Beaumont]; Parents and Carers in Performing Arts, [A bittersweet symphony: the experience of working lives and caring duties in classical music](#), October 2022

needs to be looked at, not because it is haemorrhaging talent, not because it affects the gender imbalance at the top, but because it is just a basic understanding of what your workers need to survive and thrive in the music industry.¹⁰⁷

51. RECOMMENDATION

Having children should not be a barrier to a career in the music industry, yet the evidence we have seen suggests otherwise. While large employers are taking welcome steps to support parents with childcare responsibilities, the industry as a whole needs to reflect on how it can better support parents to combine parenthood with a successful career in music. Increased awareness of the time pressures on parents, improved childcare support and better flexible working arrangements are required across the music sector to relieve gender disparities and aid the progression of women to senior positions.

52. RECOMMENDATION

Reform of parental leave for freelancers is overdue. The current system places the burden of childcare onto the mother and offers no financial support for self-employed fathers or same-sex partners wanting to share childcare responsibilities. The Government should bring forward legislation to allow self-employed mothers and fathers to share parental leave and pay and for the leave to be taken non-consecutively as is the case with PAYE employees.

Employment law and the Equality 2010 Act

- 53.** Freelance workers lack many of the protections and access to support and advice available to those with more formal working arrangements. It can be difficult for them to report incidents of discrimination and harassment, or to gain mediation or other resolutions, particularly for issues which are not clearly unlawful or contractual.¹⁰⁸ Many individuals work alone, are unsure who to complain to and do not have access to HR managers and traditional reporting systems.¹⁰⁹ This is particularly problematic for younger people in the industry who are more likely to be on the wrong side of power imbalances.
- 54.** The less formalised employment space can also make it harder to enforce the statutory right to non-discrimination for pregnant women.¹¹⁰ While it is

107 Q22 [Charisse Beaumont]

108 Association of Independent Music ([MiM0036](#)); UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

109 Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#))

110 UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

hoped that the creation of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority [see later in the Report] will see a step change in the level of support available to freelancers, particularly in cases of discrimination and harassment, we were told that changes to the Equality Act 2010 were also necessary.¹¹¹

- 55.** An individual is protected against discrimination under the Equality Act if they can show they are under an employment contract or a ‘contract personally to do work’. Working arrangements entered into by freelancers in the music industry can put them outside of those protections. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport confirmed to us that, “many freelance musicians are exempt from legal protections from sexual harassment at work because of their employment status”.¹¹² The Incorporated Society of Musicians (ISM) explained:

the flexible nature by which work is both offered and accepted means that it is often difficult to identify an underlying ‘contract personally to do work’ [...] to qualify for protection as an employee. Those who do work offered by another would rarely be able to identify a contract of employment between the person who offered them the work and the supplier of that work.¹¹³

- 56.** The ISM cited the common practice of ‘depping’ in which a musician might deputise for another, stating that, “in these circumstances [...] it is difficult to see how a court or tribunal could interpret this arrangement as a ‘Contract personally to do work’, and much less a contract of employment or apprenticeship”.¹¹⁴ The ISM observed that in these scenarios, there is often no employer and no HR department to which to make a complaint about discrimination.¹¹⁵

- 57.** The Government recognised these concerns in its 2021 response to its consultation on sexual harassment in the workplace, stating that:

working agreements entered into by freelancers can unwittingly put them outside of certain employment protections. We would expect broader issues around which groups are covered by the Act to be an aspect of any wider future review of it.¹¹⁶

111 For example Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#)); Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#)); Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); Ivors Academy of Music Creators ([MiM0022](#)); F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#)); UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

112 Department for Culture, Media and Sport ([MiM0039](#))

113 Incorporated Society for Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

114 Incorporated Society for Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

115 Incorporated Society for Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

116 Government Equalities Office, [Consultation on sexual harassment in the workplace: government response](#), July 2021

- 58.** While recognising the challenges faced by freelancers in the music industry, the Minister for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries confirmed to us that the “Government do not have any current plans to amend the Act.”¹¹⁷

Time limit

- 59.** Where victims of workplace discrimination or harassment are eligible to bring forward Equality Act-based claims to the Employment Tribunal, they only have three months to do so. We were told that this window was too short. UK Music explained that “many survivors don’t take an immediate decision to report as sometimes it takes longer to reach a decision or realise that a claim exists”.¹¹⁸ Deborah Annetts, chief executive of the ISM agreed, “I know as an employment solicitor that so often, people come to you when they are virtually out of time; it makes it incredibly difficult”.¹¹⁹
- 60.** In its 2019 consultation, the Government said it would look closely at extending the time limit for bringing Equality Act-based discrimination cases to the Employment Tribunal from three months to six months.¹²⁰ In February 2023 the Minister for Equalities told the ISM:

Government continues to look closely at extending the time limit [...] Officials [...] are now taking this work forward and are looking to assess the impact of such a change on all aspects of the Employment Tribunal System [...] Any decision [...] will need to take account of the effect on the wider justice system, which remains under considerable strain following the covid-19 pandemic.¹²¹

When asked why change had not yet been forthcoming, the Minister for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries told us, “I do not think at the moment we are of a mind that that is desirable”, adding, “I would always be worried about the prospect that people who commit offences go unpunished and unrecognised. I do not think necessarily that the existing measures allow that to happen”¹²²—a view clearly at odds with the concerns raised during our inquiry.

117 Q305 [Sir John Whittingdale]

118 UK Music ([MiM0037](#))

119 Q138 [Deborah Annetts]

120 Government Equalities Office, [Consultation on sexual harassment in the workplace: Government response](#), July 2021

121 Equality Hub, Minister for Equalities response to ISM, 23 March 2022

122 Q309 and Q313 [Sir John Whittingdale]

61. CONCLUSION

Freelance workers in the music industry are more likely to be discriminated against yet in many cases do not have the same level of protections under equalities legislation as those subject to more formal working relations. The Government recognises this, as it does the benefits of extending the time limit to bring Equality Act-based cases to the Employment Tribunal. However, in both cases it has failed to make the necessary changes, meaning vulnerable people continue to be unable to access the support they need while perpetrators of discrimination and harassment are allowed to go unpunished. We do not accept that the volume of work in the courts system is a reason for further delay.

62. RECOMMENDATION

The Government should bring forward legislative proposals to extend the protections relating to discrimination and harassment in the Equality Act 2010 to include all freelancers. Limitation periods for Equality Act-based discrimination and sexual harassment claims should be extended to six months. In the meantime, the Government should set out clearly—in its response to this report—which freelance workers are currently entitled to protections under the Equality Act and which are excluded from that protection.

4 Sexual harassment and abuse

- 63.** Sexual harassment and abuse is common in the music industry. Women are being sexually harassed by colleagues, employers and audience members; behaviours range from sexually explicit jokes, online trolling and abuse to unwanted touching, stalking, sexual assault and rape.¹²³ 48% of 800 respondents to a 2019 survey by the Musicians' Union said they had experienced sexual harassment at work, 58% had witnessed it.¹²⁴ Almost one in three respondents felt that the sexual harassment they experienced was linked to a protected characteristic.¹²⁵ The 2022 study *Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry 'Completely entangled in its fabric'*, by Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki, found that a significant proportion of workers in the industry had:
- ▶ Experienced physical violence (35%)
 - ▶ Been pressured to do something sexual when they didn't want to (19%)
 - ▶ Been offered a career benefit for sexual cooperation (17%)
 - ▶ Experienced negative career impact for refusing sexual cooperation (16%)
 - ▶ Been made to do something sexual when they were intoxicated with drinks and/or drugs (16%)
 - ▶ Been sent unwanted sexual photos/videos by a colleague (15%)
 - ▶ Been forced, or threatened with force, to do something sexual they did not want to (9%).¹²⁶

72% of those who responded to an ISM survey that they had been subject to sexual harassment, said they were self-employed at the time of the

123 BBC News, [Rape and abuse: The music industry's dark side exposed](#), December 2017; DJ Magazine, [Sexual Harassment in Dance Music: Five Women Tell Their Story](#), 2018; Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#)); Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#))

124 Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#))

125 Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#))

126 Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki, [Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry "Completely entangled in its fabric"](#), University of Winchester, May 2022

incident.¹²⁷ Jones and Manoussaki concluded that the extent of sexual harassment in the industry is such that women consider “it a part of work culture and a normalised aspect of business that they must learn how to negotiate.”¹²⁸

64. The informal environment in which work in the music industry often takes place, the structures of a sector that is largely freelance and accompanying individual vulnerability, and the prevalence of significant power imbalances make sexual harassment more likely and more difficult to challenge. It occurs across the industry and affects women in almost any role, though those in freelance work are among the most vulnerable.
65. Women have had their careers inhibited or have simply left the industry because of sexual harassment, impacting their mental and physical health. The Musicians’ Union told us:

A common theme of the reports we receive through Safe Space¹²⁹ is men abusing their power to instigate and maintain coercive sexual relationships with women. Promises of work, career progression or the threat of retaliation against women professionally if they refuse to participate are used by men to sexually harass women without consequence. These behaviours prevent women working in certain organisations where there are known sexual harassers.¹³⁰

We heard from women who had record labels withdraw work from them after they rejected advances from their artists.¹³¹ One contributor explained how she was harassed by someone responsible for funding who threatened to withdraw a grant if she raised a complaint over his behaviour towards her. Annie Macmanus told us about the experience of a female photographer on tour:

about three weeks into the tour, the artist started to become quite emotionally abusive and tell her that her photos were not good enough, and he threatened to sack her in front of people. That happened consistently, so she started to lose her confidence and to be mentally affected. In the end, he confessed to her one drunken night that he fancied her—and she didn’t fancy him back, and she got fired straight after the tour and has never worked for the label again. Her thing—the point she spoke to me about—is that she couldn’t have

127 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

128 Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki, [Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry “Completely entangled in its fabric”](#), University of Winchester, May 2022

129 Safe Space is a reporting tool run by the Musicians’ Union that helps musicians to share and report sexual harassment, discrimination or abuse in the music industry.

130 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#)); see also for example BBC News, [Sex exploitation ‘as bad in music industry as in Hollywood’](#), October 2017

131 Anonymous submissions

won. If she had gone with him, she would have been fired for being unprofessional, and she didn't want to go with him anyway.¹³²

- 66.** The evidence we received suggests sexual harassment and abuse is more prevalent in particular environments, in particular educational settings, recording studios and live music venues. We discuss each of them below.

Educational settings

- 67.** We have reported previously on the safety of female students in educational settings, in 2015, in 2018 and most recently in our July 2023 report which also addressed the abuse and harassment of female teaching staff.¹³³ A 2018 ISM report on music professionals working in the UK found that 60% of the 600 respondents to their survey had experienced sexual harassment, the majority of whom were women, were self-employed and did not report it—conservatoires and music colleges were cited as common locations.¹³⁴ A follow up report on higher education institutions with a focus on drama, dance and music found 27% of respondents had been sexually assaulted.¹³⁵ These reports have common threads, that sexual abuse and harassment is commonplace in educational settings, it is normalised, victims are reluctant to come forward and those who do find support to be inadequate.
- 68.** Since the ISM's survey, there have been multiple reports of sexual harassment in music settings. In 2019, students of the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) reported their frustration “at the blank wall they encountered when reporting sexual impropriety by their teachers”.¹³⁶ Allegations included claims that teachers asked students for sexual favours or made lewd comments at them.¹³⁷
- 69.** A review into behaviour at the RAM found a fear of ‘speaking out’ that “appears to stem from the belief that powerful individuals have the potential to adversely influence opportunities for those in the music profession”.¹³⁸ The Review called on the institution to commit to a “strategy

132 Q381 [Annie Macmanus]

133 Women and Equalities Committee, [Sexual harassment and sexual violence in schools](#), Third Report of Session 2016–17, HC91; Women and Equalities Committee, [Sexual harassment of women and girls in public places](#), Sixth Report of Session 2017–19, HC701, Women and Equalities Committee, [Attitudes towards women and girls in educational settings](#), Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, HC331

134 Incorporated Society of Musicians, [Dignity at work: a survey of discrimination in the music sector](#), April 2018

135 Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians' Union and Equity, [Dignity in study: a survey of higher education institutions](#), 2018

136 Slipped Disc, [Further abuse claims at the Royal Academy of Music](#), 28 November 2019

137 Guardian, [Students at London's Royal Academy of Music 'feared reporting sexual misconduct'](#), 29 November 2020, The Standard

138 The Royal Academy accepted the recommendations of the review.

for training and development designed to prevent future safeguarding incidents”. It stated that the strategy should extend to part-time and visiting staff and that no one should be invited into a teaching relationship without first being subject to background and reference checks.¹³⁹

- 70.** In 2022, the Independent inquiry into child sexual abuse, which has been examining historical allegations of abuse, noted that music schools “present particular challenges in terms of safeguarding”, as instrumental tuition involves a high proportion of one-to-one teaching and a degree of physical contact will often be necessary. It observed that “tuition may be provided by renowned and distinguished instrumentalists, who teach on a freelance basis without qualifications or training for teaching children”.¹⁴⁰ The inquiry concluded:

the power and influence of often revered and influential music teachers made some pupils even more vulnerable to being sexually abused by them. The reputations of both the musicians and the schools were often seen as more important than their victims and potential victims when allegations were made or concerns were raised. [...] ¹⁴¹

- 71.** For progress to be made the high level of non-reporting in education needs to be tackled. The ISM found “a lack of confidence in their higher education institution’s capability to ‘take concerns seriously’” as the main reason for high levels of non-reporting. They noted that many students who did go on to report their concerns felt unsafe after doing so and felt unsupported. The ISM called on educational settings to have a designated member of staff such as a pastoral officer for students to report their concerns to.¹⁴²
- 72.** It is clear from our previous work and that of the ISM and others that problems in educational settings have not been sufficiently addressed. There are signs that this may be about to change. Earlier this year, in a case brought by two students who had been sexually assaulted, a judge ruled against the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, finding that the college was negligent in its response and, significantly, had a duty of care relating to processes around the allegations.¹⁴³ It remains to be seen

139 LeighDay, [Review into claims of sexual harassment and misconduct at Royal Academy of Music](#), 1 December 2020

140 Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, [The residential schools investigation Phase 1: Music schools, Residential special schools; Phase 2: Safeguarding: day and boarding schools: Investigation Report](#), March 2022, HC1131

141 Ibid.

142 Incorporated Society of Musicians, Musicians’ Union and Equity, [Dignity in study: a survey of higher education institutions](#), 2018

143 [Feder and McCamish v the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama](#), County Court sitting at central London, 2023; Wonkhe, [A judge has ruled that universities do owe a duty of care to students](#), October 2023

what the wider implications of that case will be for the higher education sector, but, independent of that judgment, the Office for Students (OfS) is proposing a new condition of registration aimed at protecting students from harassment and sexual misconduct.¹⁴⁴

- 73.** The OfS proposes requiring all universities and colleges registered with it to publish, in an easily available single document, the steps they would take to protect students from harassment and sexual misconduct, arrangements for handling incidents, details of how it will support anyone involved in incidents and details of training for students and staff.¹⁴⁵ A breach of the condition and failure to abide by the steps set out in the document could result in the imposition of a monetary penalty, suspension of elements of a provider’s registration, for example its access to student support funding or OfS public grant funding, or deregistration. The OfS told us that it expects “to publish an analysis of consultation responses, as well as their decisions about our future approach, early in 2024”.¹⁴⁶ It has also indicated that it wishes any new conditions to be implemented quickly once decided.¹⁴⁷

74. RECOMMENDATION

We support the Office for Students’ (OfS) proposed new condition of registration aimed at protecting students from harassment and sexual misconduct. Its effectiveness will depend, in part, on students and staff feeling both able to recognise and report misconduct and that any complaints will be taken seriously. OfS guidance should stipulate that internal reporting pathways must be clearly signposted and independent of the structures and relationships in which harassment and abuse may occur, for example internally via a dedicated pastoral officer or externally to Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority.

144 Office for Students, [Student guide to tackling harassment, hate and sexual misconduct](#), February 2023

145 Ibid.

146 Women and Equalities Committee, [Attitudes towards women and girls in educational settings: Government, Ofsted and Office for Students responses to the Committee’s Fifth Report of Session 2022–23](#), HC258

147 The OfS proposes that subject to the responses to its consultation, any new condition of registration would come into force on a date not less than three months from the date the it publishes its final decisions.

75. RECOMMENDATION

The OfS should also require educational settings to ensure that all staff, permanent, temporary and those visiting, are aware of policies around abuse and harassment, including the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. People invited to teach students should undergo background and reference checks and be in no doubt of expectations with regard to conduct. Eminent musicians should not be exempt from these safeguarding duties.

76. RECOMMENDATION

Too often in the past, institutions have put protecting their reputations ahead of a duty of care for their students. The OfS's proposals for potential loss of funding and/or accreditation should help challenge that mindset. We urge the OfS to implement the new condition as swiftly as possible and to enforce it robustly.

Recording studios

- 77.** The recording studio environment hosts a disparate range of people from the artist client and session musicians to managers, technicians and record label executives as well as permanent studio staff. They tend to be small businesses, often in a rural location, and working hours can be long, blurring the lines between work and socialising.¹⁴⁸ Such settings can lack structures within which harassment and abuse can easily be reported and commercial self-interest can deter studios from taking action, for example against an artist, when reports are made. Where women have reported concerns for their safety, the Music Producers Guild told us they were often ignored or dismissed, “[action] was often insufficient, or no action was taken, and the victim of the harassment was expected to leave their workplace or modify their behaviour rather than the perpetrator.”¹⁴⁹ Concerns are not just related to the behaviour of musicians. One artist described to us how a famous producer propositioned her, telling her to submit to sexual harassment or “get out of his studio”.¹⁵⁰ Katie Waissel described to us how, at the age of 16, she was grabbed by a much older man and placed on his lap in the recording studio while they were reviewing the track she was recording.¹⁵¹
- 78.** Almost all (94%) of the female respondents to a Music Producers Guild survey reported that they had either witnessed or had sexist comments

148 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

149 Ibid.

150 Private roundtable discussion

151 Katie Waissel ([MiM0057](#))

directed at them or deliberately said in front of them, 21% of women reported being sexually assaulted at work, and 13% reported witnessing sexual assault at work.¹⁵² These sentiments were echoed by participants in our private roundtables. A contributor to the MPG survey described the impact of abuse on her mental health:

I found myself completely exhausted from trying to avoid [redacted], and trying to stay courteous when he would strike up conversation in the presence of clients. I also have recently needed to stop taking out of hours sessions pretty much entirely, as the studio I usually work for do not employ any studio-specific out of hours security [...] a huge factor in this choice was the frequency of sexual harassment from clients on out of hours sessions, and not feeling that the risk of sexual assault is appropriately managed or taken seriously. My income has taken a big hit as a result of this decision.¹⁵³

- 79.** Vanessa Threadgold, Founder and Managing Director of Cactus City, a recording studio set up to be a safe space for women, described to us how she established the studio in response to experiences of female music industry professionals in recording studios and the need to create a safer environment. She told us, “As part of our work, we speak to hundreds of women, and the general consensus is that the music industry will always put a potentially lucrative but abusive person they view as an asset ahead of the needs of victims.”¹⁵⁴ Cactus City has developed a charter of good practice for other studios aimed at improving protections for women in the studio. Pledges include having procedures for reporting inappropriate behaviour and for studios to be more prepared for late night sessions. We heard how some studios were reluctant to agree to such terms. Vanessa Threadgold explained:

It can be quite difficult, one of the reasons being that sometimes studios tell us that as there are so many freelancers that work in the space, they do not want to be responsible for the actions they are perpetrating within the studios. They sometimes say, “We can’t sign up to this because, actually, we feel like we’ll lose business from people who are here in our studios to create a party environment or a more casual working environment, and we want to take advantage of that.” It is difficult in that sense.¹⁵⁵

152 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

153 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

154 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

155 Q59 [Vanessa Threadgold]

80. RECOMMENDATION

A recording studio should be a safe space for all those who work there. Frequently this is not the case, and commercial self-interest is prioritised over personal safety. We recommend that all commercial recording studios should be licensed. That licensing process should include a sexual harassment risk assessment to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect the safety of those who work there, particularly during out of hours sessions, and clear reporting pathways when incidents do occur. Studios where there are repeated instances of harassment and abuse should lose their licence. Contracts should allow for termination in the event of inappropriate behaviour.

- 81.** To further support this aim the Government should bring forward a mandatory duty to require workplaces to prevent sexual harassment, including from third parties and for all freelancers—we discuss this below.

Live music and events

- 82.** Musicians and staff commonly mix with audience members and other workers in late-night venues, and informal settings such as festivals and tour buses, often with the presence of alcohol and drugs. We heard that sexual harassment is “rife in these environments”,¹⁵⁶ that “Musicians are at risk from audience members, paying or non-paying guests, and their principals”¹⁵⁷ and that the “anonymity in these spaces and lack of intervention by venue security leads to a toleration of such behaviours and increased risk to female musicians”.¹⁵⁸ The Musicians’ Union has reported that 47% of their membership have been sexually harassed by an audience member.¹⁵⁹ Annie Macmanus described the lack of protection for female DJs:

There is no protection for them in the booth—anyone can walk in. Most of all, they work till 4, 5, 6 in the morning, and the promoters or whatever are not prepared to pay for their travel. There is no understanding of the fact that it is not safe for a woman to travel home at that time of night. They constantly have to fight for their own rights when it comes to being safe and a lot of the time they don’t get those.¹⁶⁰

- 83.** The F-List, told us that women on stage may be seen as “easy targets” and receive “higher levels of verbal abuse, heckling, disruption, unwanted

156 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

157 Ibid.

158 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#))

159 Q176 [John Shortell]

160 Q371 [Annie Macmanus]

touching, and physical assault than their male counterparts, all heightened by alcohol intoxication”.¹⁶¹ The F-List also highlighted the prevalence of online abuse after performances and a lack of understanding of how this affects female performers: “We submit female and gender nonconforming musicians need protection from third party harassment and this needs [to be] reinstated into the Equality Act 2010”.¹⁶²

Third party harassment

- 84.** Before 2013, subsections 40(2) to (4) of the Equality Act 2010 provided for circumstances where an employer could be liable for third party harassment if someone was harassed on at least three occasions, the employer knew about it and failed to take reasonable steps to prevent it.¹⁶³ Third party harassment relates to harassment from someone a worker interacts with as part of their job but who is not employed by the same employer. In 2013 the Government repealed those provisions as part of its drive to remove the regulatory burden on businesses.¹⁶⁴
- 85.** In their 2018 report on sexual harassment in the workplace, our predecessor Committee recommended that the Government should ensure “interns, volunteers and those harassed by third parties have access to the same legal protections and remedies as their workplace colleagues.”¹⁶⁵ The Committee found little evidence of whether or not the section 40 provisions, while in force, had any effect on the amount of third-party harassment taking place:

Only a small number of cases were taken forward under section 40(2)-(4), and these were mostly settled or withdrawn, with only one known case reaching tribunal hearing. Despite this, there was widespread, if not universal, support in our inquiry for introduction of measures similar in effect to those that were repealed.¹⁶⁶

During the consultation on the repeal of the provisions, the Law Society, along with other organisations, noted the deterrent effect of the legislation, “which has supported and encouraged best practice amongst employers

161 F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#))

162 Ibid.

163 House of Commons Library, [Worker Protection \(Amendment of Equality Act 2010\) Bill 2022–2023: Progress of the Bill](#), 27 January 2023, p7

164 The provisions were repealed by the Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013. Following a review and consultation, these provisions were removed as they were “considered to impose an unnecessary burden on business.” TUC, [Tackling third-party abuse and harassment](#), 22 March 2019.

165 Women and Equalities Committee, [Sexual harassment in the workplace](#), Fifth Report of Session 2017–19, HC725

166 Women and Equalities Committee, [Sexual harassment in the workplace](#), Fifth Report of Session 2017–19, HC725

and potentially reduced incidents of third party harassment at work would be lost.”¹⁶⁷ Our predecessor Committee recommended that legislation should be introduced to impose new employer liabilities for third-party harassment and general duties to prevent harassment, enforceable by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.¹⁶⁸

- 86.** The Government had an opportunity to protect workers from third-party harassment in the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act, which received Royal Assent in October 2023.¹⁶⁹ The original version of this Bill would have amended section 40 of the Equality Act 2010 by making employers liable for harassment cases involving an employee and a third-party, providing the employer had failed to “take all reasonable steps to prevent the third party from doing so”, and without the ‘three-strikes’ rule.¹⁷⁰ This would have been welcomed by many in the industry. The ISM said that without the option of third-party harassment claims, employers, services providers and fixers are able to:

distance themselves from a societal ill that takes place under their watch and, arguably, in circumstances where they should be held responsible. If someone seeks to bring a harassment claim against their employer, they currently have to “rely on nebulous provisions involving vicarious liability in order to found a claim.”¹⁷¹

- 87.** The Government told the ISM that it was committed to introducing:
- ▶ a new legal duty requiring employers to take all reasonable steps to prevent their employees from experiencing sexual harassment in the workplace; and
 - ▶ explicit protections against all workplace harassment of employees by third parties, for example customers or clients.

The Government continued:

The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Bill (the Bill) will deliver on these two legislative commitments. [...] The Bill therefore addresses ISM’s recommendation for the Government to reinstate third-party harassment protections. As a result, it will provide increased protections for everyone in ‘employment’ (as defined

167 The Law Society, [Equality Act 2010 - employer liability for harassment of employees by third parties Response to the Government Equalities Office consultation](#), August 2012

168 Women and Equalities Committee, [Sexual harassment in the workplace](#), Fifth Report of Session 2017–19, HC725

169 [Worker Protection \(Amendment of Equality Act 2010\) Act 2023](#)

170 House of Commons Library, [Worker Protection \(Amendment of Equality Act 2010\) Bill 2022–2023: Progress of the Bill](#), 27 January 2023

171 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

in the Equality Act 2010 (the Act)) against harassment from, for example, audiences as well as customers and clients.¹⁷²

88. However, instead of legislating to better protect workers vulnerable to sexual harassment at work, as many in the music industry are calling for, the Government removed the third-party ambition from the resulting act, meaning employers have no liability for harassment of their staff by third parties. The Government cited potential costs to business as a reason for its removal from the legislation.¹⁷³ As seen during this inquiry, women working in the music industry are highly vulnerable to sexual harassment and have little protection or support in addressing it.

89. CONCLUSION

The Government's weakening of the Worker Protection Act 2023 has let down women already vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment in insecure work settings. While we welcome the duty on employers to take 'reasonable steps' to protect their employees from sexual harassment, without third-party harassment liabilities, it will be harder for employees to bring a case against employers who have failed to protect them from sexual harassment from audience members and from staff they have not employed. While few cases were brought under the previous provisions, in removing them the Government underestimated their deterrent effect and encouragement of best practice. There is overwhelming support for their reinstatement.

90. RECOMMENDATION

The Equality Act 2010 should be broadened to impose a duty on employers to be proactive, rather than simply reactive, in protecting workers from third party sexual harassment and for a statutory code of practice to support them in doing this. A statutory duty would create a clear and enforceable legal requirement on all workplaces to safeguard workers, and help bring about cultural change in the workplace. Employment tribunals should impose greater penalties in cases where perpetrators of harassment and bullying behaviour are found to have acted vindictively against complainants.

172 Letter from the Minister for Equalities to the Incorporated Society of Musicians, 23 March 2023

173 HL Deb, 14 Jul 2023, [col 2030](#) [Lords Chamber]

91. RECOMMENDATION

Guidance for employers and employees, including freelancers, on the new duty to protect from sexual harassment, should set out how employers should prevent and manage sexual harassment coming from third parties in the absence of legal protection, including how all parties can report it, regardless of employment status.

Improving safety in venues

- 92.** Musicians have shared with us their experiences of being sexually assaulted or sexually harassed by fans and people working in venues. Dr Rosemary Hill, Senior Lecturer at the University of Huddersfield, described how her research found a lack of understanding around sexual violence, and that where musicians have tried to talk to venue staff they have “not known what to do.”¹⁷⁴ She explained:

Because the music industry is made up of all of these little pockets of businesses and freelancers, there is no central organisation that says, “You will need to have this training.” But that is what they need. They need that kind of training.¹⁷⁵

Licensing

- 93.** Some countries are requiring venues to tackle sexual violence via funding or licensing requirements. In France, the National Centre of Music (CNM) has produced a *Protocol for the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence* for the French Music Industry.¹⁷⁶ The protocol contains a series of measures including that employers and their staff must undergo training around sexual harassment and sexual violence and that organisations must implement procedures to allow victims and bystanders to be heard and protected. Funding from the National Centre of Music is conditional on compliance with the protocol. It is working with grassroots training organisations to help organisations access the necessary training. The Irish Government has tied tackling sexual violence to the liquor licensing laws—venues will not get their liquor licence if they are not shown to be proactive in dealing with sexual violence.¹⁷⁷
- 94.** Marta Pallarès Olivares, Head of International Press and PR at Primavera Sound Festival, described to us the *Protocol against sexual assault and*

174 Q21 [Dr Rosemary Hill]

175 Q21 [Dr Rosemary Hill]

176 Centre nationale de la musique, [The CNM launches its roadmap in favour of gender equality](#), January 2021; Q21 [Dr Rosemary Hill]

177 Gov.ie, [Minister McEntee to reform Ireland’s antiquated licensing laws](#), October 2022; Q21 [Dr Rosemary Hill]

harassment in private night-time leisure venues that has been introduced by Barcelona City Council.¹⁷⁸ The Protocol sets out preventative actions venues should take, and minimum training venue staff should have on detecting sexual abuse and assault and how to assist victims of it.¹⁷⁹

- 95.** Numerous organisations and initiatives have been set up in the UK in the last few years aimed at improving women’s safety, from educating people about how to keep safe to providing training to music venues to help them better understand, respond to, and prevent sexual violence in their spaces.¹⁸⁰ Melinda Kelly, Member of Management Team, Safe Gigs for Women, suggested that looking at licensing to improve the safety of women at venues “would certainly be a very good place to start, provided the expense of it would not then stop grassroots music venues being able to put on a show”.¹⁸¹ The Minister for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries told us:

The licensing requirements include the personal licence, where there is a set of requirements that individuals need to meet. That is certainly something that I would be interested in looking at if this Committee made a recommendation to strengthen that. It is not really in our gift particularly. It may be a Home Office matter more than ours, but I can certainly see a case for it. I will be interested to see whether that is one of the recommendations this Committee puts forward.¹⁸²

96. RECOMMENDATION

Public funding and licensing of music venues should be made conditional on those premises taking steps to tackle gender bias, sexual harassment and abuse. This should include the training of venue staff by accredited organisations that work in the sector. The Government should review international examples, such as the measures introduced in France, Ireland and Barcelona, and introduce similar policies in the UK. The Government should consider making funding available to smaller venues to enable them to meet this condition.

178 Q183 [Marta Pallarès Olivares]

179 Barcelona City Council, [Protocol “We won’t keep quiet” campaign against sexual assault and harassment in private night-time leisure venues](#), May 2018

180 These include Safe Gigs for Women, Good Night Out, Safety in Music, the Association of Electronic Music Diversity and Inclusion initiative, the Mayor’s Women’s Night Safety Charter, UN Women Safe Spaces in Music, Safer Spaces, Girls Against, the Association of Independent Festivals’ Safer Spaces at Festivals Campaign and the Women at Night Taskforce.

181 Q82 [Melinda Kelly]

182 Q298 [Sir John Whittingdale OBE MP]

Security

97. In addition to venue staff, concerns were also raised with us on the quality of support available in venues from contracted security staff in cases involving discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse, of artists and crew as well as audience members.¹⁸³ We heard calls for security staff to receive training on dealing with these issues not least because poor responses can lead to re-traumatisation of the victim.¹⁸⁴ We also heard calls for that training to include education on diversity and inclusion as security staff are invariably responsible for the safety of different genders, races, backgrounds and needed to be “aware of the experience that they are all going to have”.¹⁸⁵

98. RECOMMENDATION

Security Industry Authority accreditation for security staff to work at live music venues should include training on dealing with discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. That training should be survivor-led and provided by accredited organisations dedicated to improving safety for women.

Facilities

99. Many live music venues lack facilities and structural support for women working in the industry.¹⁸⁶ Respondents to the Musicians’ Union survey reported being treated as “one of the lads”, “expected to share rooms with colleagues, male and female whilst on tour” and in some cases were asked to share beds.¹⁸⁷ Often venues lack multiple changing facilities and women are expected to change in front of their male colleagues, in the toilets or in their car which is “uncomfortable and unprofessional”¹⁸⁸ and “raises safety concerns.”¹⁸⁹

183 Private roundtable discussion; Q78 [Melinda Kelly]; Q188 [Lauren Down]

184 Private roundtable discussion; Professor Bethany Klein et al ([MiM0001](#)); Qq190-1 [Lauren Down]

185 Private roundtable discussion

186 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

187 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

188 Dr Sarah Raine ([MiM0010](#))

189 Musicians’ Union ([MiM0020](#))

100. RECOMMENDATION

Expecting women to change in front their male peers or in their car, or to share rooms or beds with male colleagues while on tour, is unacceptable and raises safety concerns. The music industry needs to improve its facilitation of mixed groups. As a minimum, venues that host live music should provide adequate, separate dressing room facilities for women and gender nonconforming musicians.

Reporting

101. Non-reporting of incidents of sexual harassment and abuse is high. In their 2022 study, Jones and Manoussaki found that 80% of women did not report the incident against them.¹⁹⁰ Victims of harassment and abuse may choose not to report because they do not wish for their careers to be defined by something traumatic that happened to them.¹⁹¹ Three-quarters of the people in the ISM's 2022 *Dignity at work 2* study who had experienced harassment or discrimination said they had decided not to report due to fears they might not get work again.¹⁹² Nadia Khan, chief executive, Women in CTRL, told us:

In my own incident where I was sexually harassed after an event, I woke up and somebody was on top of me trying to take my clothes off. This is somebody who works in the industry. This is somebody who I then had to be around multiple times. When I tried to bring it up, in terms of confronting that person with the group, all I got was an apology and a denial to say, "No, I just came in to say goodbye." I did not want to burn the bridge because this person has a spot on radio, or I am going to see them again at events. You have to weigh it up in a decision and say, "Well, what's the right business choice for me to make?" "How am I going to ensure that I pay my bills?"¹⁹³

102. The majority of perpetrators of harassment and abuse act with impunity. Victims who do call out behaviour struggle to be believed. Even when they are believed, more often than not, it is their career that ends.¹⁹⁴ In many cases, those who do report harassment or sexual assault regret doing so

190 Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry project ([MiM0026](#))

191 Q347 [Annie Macmanus]

192 Incorporated Society of Musicians, [Dignity at work 2: Discrimination in the music sector](#), September 2022

193 Q66 [Nadia Khan]

194 Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry project ([MiM0026](#)); Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#)); Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#)); Q31 [Dr Jones]; Q66 [Nadia Khan]; Q68 [Vanessa Threadgold]

due to the way it is handled.¹⁹⁵ One contributor explained what happened when she asked what a venue planned to do following her harassment:

There was no response and I have since ceased to receive offers of work from them. That is what happens when you report harassment as a freelancer, more often than not you just don't get hired again and the culture never changes. You have nowhere to go, no-one to report to and in the end, no work.¹⁹⁶

Another professional described her experience after reporting her harassment to a senior colleague at a talent agency:

I endured six months of further harassment by WME's HR department and then the inevitable 'Constructive Dismissal' process found them guilty of unlawful behaviour. The result being, they had to pay me off, yet I, the victim, lost my career. As a woman in her mid-30s.¹⁹⁷

Witnesses to unacceptable behaviour are not immune from being blacklisted or made redundant. A contributor explained how they were forced out of a company after reporting a senior label executive for groping a young woman in a meeting. They told us the perpetrator's sexist behaviour was widely known but ignored in the complaints process.¹⁹⁸

- 103.** Nadia Khan told us that her organisation had spoken to over 100 women who work in radio and “nobody would give us statements with their name attached because everyone is scared to speak out”.¹⁹⁹ This reflects our experience in arranging sessions for this inquiry. We approached dozens of artists and were told repeatedly that talking about their experiences would be detrimental to their career.

Reporting pathways

- 104.** Victims frequently lack clear procedures to report incidents.²⁰⁰ Dr Cassandra Jones, Lecturer in Criminology at the University of Northumbria, explained this “reflects the music industry where it can be difficult to know who is in charge”.²⁰¹ While there are some large organisations in the music industry, the majority of companies are small and lack professional HR structures, as one contributor to Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki's research set out:

195 Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry project ([MiM0026](#))

196 Delphi Mangan ([MiM0008](#))

197 Samantha Thompson ([MiM0018](#))

198 Evidence submitted in confidence

199 Q66 [Nadia Khan]

200 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

201 Q32 [Dr Cassandra Jones]

The label where I was bullied at by the general manager was my first proper full time job in music after graduating from university, and they didn't even have a HR team, so I felt like I had no option but to just endure it, which had an awful effect on my mental health at the time and hugely knocked my confidence. Something I am still trying to fix to this day.²⁰²

- 105.** Just 13.2% of respondents to Cactus City Studio's survey were aware of more established and developed organisations such as the Musicians' Union—who have a reporting tool—and/or Help Musicians who have a bullying and harassment helpline.²⁰³ Where internal reporting pathways are known the evidence suggests that victims still feel let down by the process.²⁰⁴ Laura Snapes, the Guardian's deputy music editor, observed, "short of becoming a whistleblower—and opening oneself up to potential legal threats—I see no genuine recourse for any woman who experiences sexism and misogyny in the music industry as it stands."²⁰⁵

Support

- 106.** A lack of support is also cited as a key concern for victims. Cactus City Studio's survey revealed that "60.5% of respondents did not know of any support available or said there was barely any support available".²⁰⁶ One contributor to our inquiry explained:

Support is non-existent within the industry despite the recent new era of open mental health conversations. Addicts can seek 12-step meetings and find sponsors in an attempt to recover and feel supported. Victims of abuse have no such safe community other than costly therapy. Victims in turn feel isolated, through fear of speaking out, through the consequences of potentially being unemployable.²⁰⁷

- 107.** Laura Snapes told us:

Major record labels might have HR departments or—in the wake of #MeToo—have established specific task forces to deal with these issues, but it strikes me that they are little short of a back-covering sham. And while there are many mutual support groups where women

202 Dr Cassandra Jones and Dr Kallia Manoussaki, [Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry "Completely entangled in its fabric"](#), University of Winchester, May 2022

203 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

204 Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry project ([MiM0026](#))

205 Laura Snapes ([MiM0013](#))

206 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

207 Evidence submitted in confidence

can share their experiences, they cannot challenge the existing power structures.²⁰⁸

Cactus City Studio observed “there is support, but the support that exists is minimal or not specific enough to the needs of those who have suffered harm.”²⁰⁹ Despite important initiatives such as Help Musicians and Safe Space, there was widespread support for a separate body to which anyone in the industry could turn in order to report concerns and incidents and which could provide support and investigate allegations.²¹⁰

108. CONCLUSION

Sexual harassment and abuse in the music industry remains widespread. Aggressors act with impunity while victims who report actions against them very often face further harm by doing so. It is disappointing but not surprising, that non-reporting is high. Organisations should not assume a low incidence of reported cases means they do not have perpetrators of harassment and sexual abuse within their employment. They should instead reflect on why anonymous surveys in the industry return high figures of misconduct, yet their internal surveys do not.

109. CONCLUSION

Awareness of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and discrimination needs to be improved and reporting pathways made clear. A reporting structure needs to be available to everyone working in the industry, not just those who have access to HR departments, which we heard were at best ineffective and at worst damaged the victim further. The industry is moving in this direction with the establishment of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority; the question is whether it will have the necessary levers to be effective.

208 Laura Snapes ([MiM0013](#))

209 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

210 See for example Q281 [Isabel Garvey]; Q37 [Charisse Beaumont]; Q177 [John Shortell]; British Phonographic Industry ([MiM0042](#)); Rebecca Ferguson ([MiM0046](#)); UK Music ([MiM0037](#)); Laura Snapes ([MiM0013](#))

5 Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority

- 110.** The music industry is subject to many of the same concerns recently brought to light in the film industry yet the MeToo movement that brought Harvey Weinstein to justice has had limited impact in music. Perpetrators of unacceptable behaviour continue to face limited consequences for their behaviour. It is hoped this will change with the establishment of a new authority.
- 111.** The Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA) is a non-statutory standards authority, expected to be operational by the end of 2024, “to improve standards of behaviour across the creative industries and to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying and harassment, including bullying and harassment of a discriminatory nature”.²¹¹ It will operate a two-company model similar to the Advertising Authority, funded by contributions from the creative sectors (music, TV, film, theatre), with funds collected by a finance board to guarantee CIISA’s independence. The finance board, a parent company, will oversee CIISA’s funding and sit separately to the CIISA Board to ensure it can “investigate without fear or favour”.²¹² The CIISA Board will not know who is providing funding.
- 112.** Creative industry professionals will be able to use CIISA to make complaints, or seek advice relating to bad behaviour, if the behaviour has taken place in relation to work in the creative industries and if they were conducting paid work. Jen Smith, CIISA’s interim CEO, described its creation as a “much-needed circuit breaker and trusted source of knowledge and expertise for employers, member bodies and crucially freelancers.”²¹³ She told us:

At our heart, we want to be a reporting line for behaviours of concern in the creative industries, because what is missing is a single point of accountability, to which people can report experiences that they have had or witnessed. That may lead CIISA to do investigations into those behaviours of concern.²¹⁴

211 CIISA [website](#)

212 CIISA [website](#)

213 CIISA, Summary document provided to the Committee

214 Q99 [Jen Smith]

113. CIISA has set out the following ambitions:

- ▶ Futureproof an inclusive talent pipeline, improving the lived experience for our talented workforce and tackling discriminatory behaviours with our strategic partners to positively impact representation, retention and attraction.
- ▶ Professionalise behaviours, upskilling our collective capability to de-escalate situations, promoting constructive conversations, through services that provide expert advice, mediation and early dispute resolution.
- ▶ Act as a deterrent by preventing serial perpetrators of harmful behaviours going unreported.
- ▶ Provide due process, accountability, independent intervention, resolution and recommendations.
- ▶ Influence better working practices across the creative industries, shining a light on unlawful victimisation when behaviours of concern are raised.²¹⁵

114. It will offer 11 services, including the ability for individuals to report discriminatory behaviour that has happened to them or to a colleague; access to advice; support with the criminal justice system; early dispute resolution and mediation; best practice, data and insights into the industry (also available to the general public); an in-house investigations service; and access to an independent adjudication panel investigation service. Freelancers will be able to access all services other than the in-house investigation service.²¹⁶ CIISA also plans to work with partners to establish a legal definition of bullying, prevent the misuse of NDAs, advocate for freelancers, and promote inclusivity. CIISA will cover a disparate range of sectors. It aims to take a phased approach to building up its services.

Sanctions, support and deterrence

115. As set out in the previous chapter, women in the industry are not reporting what is happening to them due to fear of losing work and other reprisals or because they do not know how to. In some instances, women are turning to spaces that are potentially exploitative to tell their stories, with conversations being led by people with no training or experience in handling the issues.²¹⁷ The establishment of a separate, professional body to whom

215 CIISA, Summary document provided to the Committee

216 CIISA, Summary document provided to the Committee

217 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))

incidents can be reported, if need be, anonymously, may go some way to addressing these concerns and increase reporting.

- 116.** CIISA will hope that its establishment leads to improved behaviour, and that its creation is preventative via training and dissemination of best practice. However, victims of discrimination, harassment and abuse may expect their reports to result in consequences for the perpetrators of that behaviour and, where appropriate, the organisations employing them. We questioned Jen Smith on the sanctions available to CIISA. She explained:

We will make recommendations. An independent adjudication panel will be appointed to make those recommendations. [...] CIISA will offer fairness, due process and evidence-based decision making. It will get to the truth and to the facts. By virtue of our existence, we will have a deterrent value, and people will get to trust the integrity of CIISA through the consistency of our recommendations.²¹⁸

- 117.** CIISA will reserve the right to name an individual or individuals within their recommendations at the conclusion of an Adjudication Panel investigation on the basis that: “allegations have been made publicly, but CIISA found no evidence to substantiate these allegations (in which case the person investigated may want a public statement made) or that a breach of CIISA’s expected behaviours was so significant that it is in the public interest to identify the creative industry professional so that recommendations about them can be implemented”.²¹⁹

- 118.** In general, contributors to our inquiry provided qualified support for the creation of the authority. Concern was raised about whether by using CIISA initially, anyone making a complaint about their treatment may have less time to bring a case to a tribunal.²²⁰ The ISM noted the need for “a robust appeals system” to protect both the victims and the alleged perpetrator. While some questioned whether its powers were sufficient to create meaningful change. Rebecca Ferguson, who has campaigned for the creation of CIISA noted: “There needs to be something introduced into CIISA so that there is accountability. That is what worries me the most—there does not seem to be any accountability.”²²¹ Deborah Annetts, Chief Executive of the Incorporated Society of Musicians, set out her concerns:

because CIISA does not have statutory enforcement powers, it lacks teeth, so perpetrators will continue to get away with it. The most it can do is name and shame, and that is not enough, in my view. I think that it will also confuse people, who might think to themselves, “I’ve

218 Q101 [Jen Smith]

219 CIISA position statement on anonymity

220 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))

221 Q383 [Rebecca Ferguson]

been to CIISA; I will get justice,” but they could find that, having gone to CIISA, they are out of time, because they have only three months to bring a claim in the tribunal. For all those reasons, together with some governance issues, I do not believe that it will give us the framework we need in order to see change in our landscape.²²²

The Minister for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries told us he saw “distinct advantages” in a self-regulatory system rather than an “inflexible” statutory one.²²³

- 119.** CIISA faces challenges to meet the expectations set out by contributors to this inquiry. Anonymous reporting of incidents and behaviours will allow CIISA to pick up on trends and concerns about particular people and organisations but ultimately, any form of justice will require persuading complainants to waive their anonymity. Defamation legislation will also require careful negotiation if CIISA is to ‘name and shame’.
- 120.** GDPR provisions could require CIISA to inform people if it holds data about them—such as a complaint—and to give them access to that data, for example via a Subject Access Request. Even with redactions, such actions could result in people not being comfortable in reporting to CIISA, defeating a core purpose of its creation. Subject Access Requests may also require CIISA to pause any investigation while those requests are handled. We note that the Data Protection Act 2018 includes exemptions which an organisation may be able to apply—albeit on a case-by-case basis—and also provides exemptions to specified ‘public’ and ‘regulatory’ functions which may merit consideration.

121. RECOMMENDATION

We support the creation of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA). It will help to shine a light on unacceptable behaviour in the music industry and in doing so, may reduce the risk of further harm. Crucially, it will be a single, recognisable body anyone in the industry can turn to for support and advice. CIISA must ensure that individuals who make reports are advised of their legal rights expeditiously to ensure legal deadlines are not missed. It will need to have in place robust safeguarding measures to protect those who report from retaliation and trained staff, including specialist counsellors, to support the mental wellbeing of those who call upon its services.

222 Q150 [Deborah Annetts]

223 Q319 [Sir John Whittingdale OBE MP]

122. RECOMMENDATION

We are concerned that legislative barriers may prevent CIISA from operating effectively. We call on the Government to discuss with CIISA the potential impact of GDPR requirements on its work and to take the steps required, including any legislative changes, to allow CIISA to properly discharge its functions.

123. RECOMMENDATION

The establishment of CIISA is an opportunity to educate the music industry on the rights of self-employed workers and the responsibilities of those hiring them. It can become a hub of expertise. Earlier in this report we set out how training should be part of the licensing conditions for live music venues. We described how France's National Centre of Music is working with grassroots organisations to provide training around sexual harassment and sexual violence. We ask CIISA to consider whether it could undertake a similar role in the UK, for live music venues seeking to meet new licensing conditions as well as other organisations such as recording studios and educational settings, and for that training to also include tackling issues of misogyny and gender bias.

124. RECOMMENDATION

CIISA has committed to producing an annual report. That report should include an overview on the state of the music industry with respect to levels of discrimination, harassment and abuse and diversity. Reported data should be broken down by protected characteristic. The report should include relevant findings on the adequacy of organisations' internal reporting processes, support for complainants, training on dealing with incidents of sexual harassment, the safety of women on their premises and any attempts—successful or otherwise—to silence victims of unacceptable behaviour through the use of non-disclosure agreements or similar confidentiality arrangements. Organisations about which CIISA has significant concerns should be named. Events have shown that only by calling out such behaviour will the culture that protects abusers over victims change.

125. CONCLUSION

CIISA is not a panacea for all of the problems of discrimination, harassment and abuse in the industry. It is not a statutory body. Reforms to the Equality Act 2010 remain essential in order for freelance workers to be adequately protected from discrimination. Ultimately, CIISA's effectiveness will be judged on whether it can move the instincts of organisations from putting the interests of a potentially lucrative but abusive person they view as an asset ahead of the needs of their victims. We hope CIISA will be a success. Time will tell whether the powers available to it are sufficient to drive that change.

Licensing managers

126. Managers of artists deal with the most intimate details of an artist's life and career. They help an artist navigate the industry from promotion and getting signed, through to recording, live events and tours. Some managers will work for management companies, some will be independent, some will be a friend or relative of the artist. There are, unfortunately, many examples of that close relationship being exploited by the manager and of their financial, physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse of the artist or artists. One artist told us that on reporting sexual harassment to her manager, he propositioned her, asking what he would get in return for sorting out the problem.²²⁴ Rebecca Ferguson described to us the behaviour of a company that managed her:

Staff were instructed to ruin my personal relationships, staff were told to ignore calls from my children and to not pass messages on when they tried to call me. [...] Comments were said to me or spoken of me such as; "When you earn as much money as you do, you do as we fucking say", "She's good isn't she, we just need to break her spirit", "He only wants you to perform because you're black", "When I tell you to do something you do as I fucking say". [...] Members of my team told me they were 'threatened' or 'bribed' to not work with me when I ended what I deemed to be an exploitative and abusive contract.²²⁵

127. Despite the close working relationship between a manager and their artist, who may be a child, there are no licensing requirements. We are aware that the Music Managers Forum, a membership organisation which represents over 1,500 managers based in the UK, has a Code of Practice for its members which sets out the professional standards its members should adhere to. A failure to do so can lead to expulsion from the organisation

224 Private roundtable discussion

225 Rebecca Ferguson ([MiM0046](#))

and public censure.²²⁶ However, there is no obligation for a manager to join the MMF. Deborah Annetts, chief executive of the ISM, expressed doubt about the effectiveness of codes of practice. We asked her about the effect of the code of practice the ISM had established with the Musicians' Union:

I would say absolutely none at all. If you look at the data that we have collected, it has been a resounding failure, since we introduced it two years ago, because on that data, the evidence is that the situation is getting worse. [...] I just don't think our sector takes much notice of codes.²²⁷

- 128.** Rebecca Ferguson suggested that licensing of managers is “a bare minimum requirement” that “might start to clean things up and put some accountability on people. No training is required to work with talent unlike other talent-led industries such as football.”²²⁸ Football agents in England are required to register with the Football Association as an intermediary. As part of that registration, prospective agents have been required to take a “test of good character and reputation” and undergo a criminal record check. In 2023, FIFA brought in regulations which included prohibiting the agent working for more than one party in a transaction.²²⁹

129. RECOMMENDATION

Managers have a very important role in supporting artists' careers but incidents of exploitation show that protections are required. CIISA should work with the Music Managers Forum to develop and oversee a mandatory accreditation programme for managers in the music industry. The licensing of football agents is one example of what such an accreditation process might look like.

226 Music managers Forum ([MiM0017](#)); MMF, [Code of Practice: Complaints and disputes process](#), 2023

227 Qq139–141 [Deborah Annetts]; see also Q192 [John Shortell]

228 Q383 [Rebecca Ferguson]

229 FIFA, [New FIFA Football Agent Regulations set to come into force](#), January 2023

6 Non-disclosure agreements

- 130.** Non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) are legally binding contracts that prohibit either party to that agreement from sharing specified information with external agents. They are routinely used by businesses in matters to do with intellectual property, trade secrets or other commercially sensitive information.²³⁰ NDAs are also being used to prevent victims of discrimination, harassment and abuse from speaking about their experiences or from pursuing a resolution via an employment tribunal. Women we spoke to described how they were coerced into signing by businesses who threatened to ruin them financially or reputationally if they refused to sign.

Duress

- 131.** Power imbalances in the music sector mean that victims of unacceptable behaviour have little agency in the process of deciding whether to sign an NDA. A victim of sexual discrimination described to us the process of negotiating a settlement as “arduous and heavily stacked against me [...] despite having done nothing wrong.”²³¹ We were given multiple examples of businesses that had invented counter charges against an individual and threatened to pursue them through the courts knowing that they could not afford to defend themselves and who then ‘offered’ to drop the charges in exchange for a signature on the NDA.²³² Rebecca Ferguson explained her experience:

One claim made against me was made from a shell company. The company did not even have a bank account; it is listed as having £1 in the bank on Companies House. They made a false claim against me and I was forced to defend it. They then said, “Well, if you just write all these [nice] things about me in a letter and sign this NDA, I will make that go away.”²³³

230 [Can't Buy My Silence \(MiM0056\)](#)

231 Evidence submitted in confidence

232 Evidence submitted in confidence

233 [Q386](#) [Rebecca Ferguson]

It is clear that women are being forced by senior figures in the music industry to sign NDAs under duress. Other contributors told us:

- ▶ I had to agree to a settlement where I could leave with a glowing reference, or I would be sacked for gross misconduct with immediate effect and no money. I was given until [XXXX] to give them an answer. This put me in a huge quandary because in the music industry reputation is everything [...] Being sacked would be a death knell on my career and that was absolutely the point.²³⁴
- ▶ This threat was tactical, to force me to [XXXX] because they knew I had no money to fight. The [XXXX] was abusing his stronger financial position to force me to [XXXX] and sign a settlement agreement including confidentiality clauses, in effect an NDA.²³⁵
- ▶ [I was in] a predicament which gave no other choice but to agree to sign whatever was placed in front of me, without independent legal representation.²³⁶

132. NDAs prevent boards and shareholders from fully understanding the culture of their organisation and undermine attempts to improve working practices.²³⁷ They discourage victims and whistleblowers from coming forward, and gag those who do. Those who sign agreements often profess to feeling guilty, even complicit, at being unable to warn others as a consequence of their NDA.²³⁸ Worst of all, NDAs and similar confidentiality agreements are used to force victims from their jobs and keep perpetrators in theirs, allowing them opportunity to commit further harm. We were told how one perpetrator of sexual harassment remains in his post, continuing to attend conferences and music industry events around Europe—and that one of his areas of activity is mentoring young female artists.²³⁹

133. Another contributor described how women at an organisation which she had left having signed an NDA had since contacted her about their treatment. They told her they were being bullied and discriminated against for being female in a culture that was toxic, “But even with these women I have had to stress to them I am not allowed to discuss what happened to me.”²⁴⁰

234 Evidence submitted in confidence

235 Evidence submitted in confidence

236 Katie Waissel ([MiM0057](#))

237 Can't Buy My Silence ([MiM0056](#))

238 Can't Buy My Silence ([MiM0056](#)); evidence submitted in confidence

239 Evidence submitted in confidence

240 Evidence submitted in confidence

Impact on career

- 134.** People who have signed an NDA reported that doing so had made it challenging to gain employment elsewhere because it was difficult to answer potential employers' questions about their previous employment. They also questioned the extent to which the employer upheld their side of the agreement. We were told:

the consequence of this whole awful battle is I now have a reduced career; I struggled to get work in the months after leaving [...] I also feel I am ostracised by certain quarters of the industry; after I left I received an email from a very senior [XXXX] where he made it clear he had heard negative rumours about me, numerous other people stopped returning my calls and I stopped being invited to many industry events. I also have to lie to people's faces about why I left.²⁴¹

One contributor explained how the NDA process affected her confidence:

But to be silenced, in exchange for money further exasperated my trauma. Further shame. I feel sickened by having to brush this entire chunk of my life under the carpet, never to speak of the [XX] years of employment is a challenge in itself. But the cash was a saviour to me when working suddenly became impossible [...] but my confidence, my previously outgoing personality never recovered. I became a shadow of my former self. Riddled with fear and self-loathing.²⁴²

- 135.** We are very grateful to everyone who responded to our call for evidence on NDAs. One told us they wanted us to see their story to help protect other people from perpetrators of harassment and abuse in the music industry. Some of those we have received reports about are household names. We took the decision that we would not publish the evidence we received, to allow people the space to tell us their stories without fear of retribution.

Legislation

- 136.** The Government accepts that the misuse of NDAs is a problem. The recently passed Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023 prohibits the use of NDAs in higher education in relation to complaints of sexual misconduct, bullying and harassment.²⁴³ We asked the Minister for Women and Equalities whether something could be done across sectors, including music. We note that the Minister was sympathetic to the argument. She told us that primary legislation would be required and that the Department for

241 Evidence submitted in confidence

242 Evidence submitted in confidence

243 [Higher Education \(Freedom of Speech Act\) 2023](#)

Business and Trade was working with the Ministry of Justice on “an elegant solution”.²⁴⁴

137. Our inquiry is focused on the music industry. However, while this sector has a unique set of challenges, those working in it are not alone in being silenced by NDAs. We make the following recommendations to address failings in music but they are equally applicable across society and their implementation need not be restrictive to one industry.

138. RECOMMENDATION

The Government should urgently bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit the use of non-disclosure and other forms of confidentiality agreements in cases involving (a) sexual abuse, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct; (b) bullying or harassment not falling within (a) and (c) discrimination relating to a protected characteristic. We are encouraged that the Government is working on such proposals but urge expediency.

139. RECOMMENDATION

We have heard distressing evidence on the effects on the mental health of people silenced by a non-disclosure agreement. The Government should consider the potential merits of a retrospective moratorium on NDAs for those that have signed them relating to the issues we have outlined, with an assurance that they cannot be pursued for cost recovery should they choose to discuss their experiences.

140. RECOMMENDATION

Until the law is changed banning the misuse of NDAs, anyone being asked to sign an NDA should have an automatic right to seek advice from qualified lawyers at CIISA. No individual should be provided with legal advice by a law firm also acting for the other party.

141. RECOMMENDATION

CIISA should collect and annually publish data on the use and threatened use of NDAs in the music industry.

244 [Oral evidence](#) taken on 13 December 2023, HC (2023–24) 393, Q119 [Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch]

7 Conclusion

- 142.** In this Report we have focused on improving protections and reporting mechanisms, and on necessary structural and legislative reforms. The main problem at the heart of the music industry is none of these; it is the behaviour of men—and it is almost always men. As Rachel Grace Almeida, deputy editor of Crack Magazine, told Vice News:

Blaming the “culture” of the music industry is the biggest deception of them all. Informal work environments shouldn’t be breeding grounds for inappropriate behaviour; partying with someone doesn’t invite sexual misconduct. Alcohol doesn’t assault women—people do. The problem isn’t our behaviour but the fantasy men project onto it. Going to a club show and accepting a drink from a male colleague doesn’t mean we want to sleep with you. It means we would like a drink.²⁴⁵

- 143.** Too often, problems of discrimination, harassment and misogyny are seen as women’s issues—that it is their role to experience, avoid, overcome, withstand, analyse, discuss and understand misogyny so that men don’t have to.²⁴⁶ More often than not, women are left with the discussion and the expectation to enact change while being hindered by men who do not wish to amend their ways to accommodate others. While necessary, preventative measures risk normalising behaviours and place the responsibility on women as potential victims rather than men as potential perpetrators.²⁴⁷ Delphi Mangan, a sound technician, told us:

Ask Angela or initiatives to protect each other from being raped or spiked in venues are pretty paltry offerings in the face of a system that teaches young men that our consent is not of paramount importance and that there is not consistent punishment for violating that boundary.²⁴⁸

- 144.** Educating boys and men on misogyny and consent, how to respect and better support women and to recognise the additional challenges they face will be more transformative than any of the measures set out in this report.²⁴⁹ However, reports from the education system are not positive.

245 Vice News, [How the Music Industry Silences Women and Nonbinary People](#), 26 July 2022

246 Delphi Mangan ([MiM0008](#))

247 Professor Bethany Klein et al ([MiM0001](#))

248 Delphi Mangan ([MiM0008](#))

249 Anonymous submission ([MiM0005](#))

Boys' behaviour, in part due to the toxic influence of social media, is troubling. In 2021, Ofsted found evidence that peer-on-peer sexual harassment was commonplace in schools and that sexist language, behaviours and attitudes persisted unchallenged. Children were not telling teachers and other adults about their experiences because such behaviour had become normal.²⁵⁰ Until we tackle this behaviour in schools, and at home, we will not deliver the transformation that society requires.²⁵¹

145. RECOMMENDATION

The Government must develop and introduce a new strategy in schools, aimed specifically at boys on issues of misogyny, sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

Conclusion

- 146.** Women in the music industry have had their lives ruined and their careers destroyed by men who have never faced the consequences for their actions. Much of the evidence we received has had to remain confidential, including commentary on television shows and household names. That is highly regrettable but demonstrates the extent of the use of NDAs and the culture of silence. People in the industry who attend award shows and parties currently do so sitting alongside sexual abusers who remain protected by the system and by colleagues. The music industry has always prided itself on being a vehicle for social change; when it comes to discrimination, and the harassment and sexual abuse of women, it has a lot of work to do.

250 Women and Equalities Committee, [Attitudes towards women and girls in educational settings](#), Fifth Report of Session 2022–23, HC 331

251 Laura Snapes ([MiM0013](#))

Conclusions and recommendations

1. We expect the music industry to act on our recommendations and call on industry bodies to respond to the recommendations relevant to their work. (Recommendation, Paragraph 5)

Representation and discrimination

2. Music colleges, conservatoires and other educational settings need to do more to address the gendering of instruments, roles and genres and improve the visibility of and support for female role models. The Government and industry bodies should offer increased, funded and targeted opportunities for women and girls to study subjects and to engage in training in areas of the music industry that remain male-dominated and where women are made to feel unwelcome. (Recommendation, Paragraph 16)
3. Women have significant additional barriers to pass to get a foothold in the music industry and must navigate acts of passive aggression, ridicule, and misogyny to have a sustainable career. Female artists are routinely undervalued and undermined, endure a focus on their physical appearance in a way that men are not subjected to, and have to work far harder to get the recognition their ability merits. Despite increases in representation, discrimination and misogyny remain endemic. These concerns are intensified for women faced with intersectional barriers, particularly racial discrimination. (Conclusion, Paragraph 34)
4. Section 14 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides protection from discrimination on the basis of a combination of two relevant protected characteristics presents a limited understanding of how overlapping characteristics are used to discriminate against individuals and prevent the most vulnerable from bringing harassment claims based on their actual experience. The Government should bring section 14 of the Equality Act into force and consider whether an amendment to that section is required to better protect those facing intersectional inequality. Businesses are already aware of their responsibilities to equality of treatment under the Equality Act; bringing section 14 into force would impose minimal additional burdens. (Recommendation, Paragraph 35)

5. Although female representation in the music industry is improving, particularly at senior levels, progress is not uniform and gender imbalance remains entrenched in certain areas. The music industry and government should increase investment in diverse talent and make more funding available to the schemes that support it. Pathways to careers for women working in the sector must improve, particularly in key gatekeeping roles such as A&R and other male-dominated areas including sound engineering and production. (Recommendation, Paragraph 42)
6. To allow progress to be monitored, record labels should commit to regular publication of statistics on the diversity of their creative rosters. All organisations with more than 100 employees should be required to publish data on the diversity of their workforce and gender and ethnicity pay gaps. (Recommendation, Paragraph 43)
7. Organisations in the music industry should provide mandatory equality, diversity and inclusion training. These steps are required because misogynistic and discriminatory behaviours remain entrenched despite increased representation. (Recommendation, Paragraph 44)

Legislative and other related changes

8. Having children should not be a barrier to a career in the music industry, yet the evidence we have seen suggests otherwise. While large employers are taking welcome steps to support parents with childcare responsibilities, the industry as a whole needs to reflect on how it can better support parents to combine parenthood with a successful career in music. Increased awareness of the time pressures on parents, improved childcare support and better flexible working arrangements are required across the music sector to relieve gender disparities and aid the progression of women to senior positions. (Recommendation, Paragraph 51)
9. Reform of parental leave for freelancers is overdue. The current system places the burden of childcare onto the mother and offers no financial support for self-employed fathers or same-sex partners wanting to share childcare responsibilities. The Government should bring forward legislation to allow self-employed mothers and fathers to share parental leave and pay and for the leave to be taken non-consecutively as is the case with PAYE employees. (Recommendation, Paragraph 52)
10. Freelance workers in the music industry are more likely to be discriminated against yet in many cases do not have the same level of protections under equalities legislation as those subject to more formal working relations. The Government recognises this, as it does the benefits of extending the time limit to bring Equality Act-based cases to the Employment Tribunal. However, in both cases it has failed to make the necessary changes,

meaning vulnerable people continue to be unable to access the support they need while perpetrators of discrimination and harassment are allowed to go unpunished. We do not accept that the volume of work in the courts system is a reason for further delay. (Conclusion, Paragraph 61)

- 11.** The Government should bring forward legislative proposals to extend the protections relating to discrimination and harassment in the Equality Act 2010 to include all freelancers. Limitation periods for Equality Act-based discrimination and sexual harassment claims should be extended to six months. In the meantime, the Government should set out clearly—in its response to this report—which freelance workers are currently entitled to protections under the Equality Act and which are excluded from that protection. (Recommendation, Paragraph 62)

Sexual harassment and abuse

- 12.** We support the Office for Students' proposed new condition of registration aimed at protecting students from harassment and sexual misconduct. Its effectiveness will depend, in part, on students and staff feeling both able to recognise and report misconduct and that any complaints will be taken seriously. OfS guidance should stipulate that internal reporting pathways must be clearly signposted and independent of the structures and relationships in which harassment and abuse may occur, for example internally via a dedicated pastoral officer or externally to Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority. (Recommendation, Paragraph 74)
- 13.** The OfS should also require educational settings to ensure that all staff, permanent, temporary and those visiting, are aware of policies around abuse and harassment, including the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. People invited to teach students should undergo background and reference checks and be in no doubt of expectations with regard to conduct. Eminent musicians should not be exempt from these safeguarding duties. (Recommendation, Paragraph 75)
- 14.** Too often in the past, institutions have put protecting their reputations ahead of a duty of care for their students. The OfS's proposals for potential loss of funding and/or accreditation should help challenge that mindset. We urge the OfS to implement the new condition as swiftly as possible and to enforce it robustly. (Recommendation, Paragraph 76)
- 15.** A recording studio should be a safe space for all those who work there. Frequently this is not the case, and commercial self-interest is prioritised over personal safety. We recommend that all commercial recording studios should be licensed. That licensing process should include a sexual harassment risk assessment to ensure that adequate measures are in place to protect the safety of those who work there, particularly during out

of hours sessions, and clear reporting pathways when incidents do occur. Studios where there are repeated instances of harassment and abuse should lose their licence. Contracts should allow for termination in the event of inappropriate behaviour. (Recommendation, Paragraph 80)

- 16.** The Government's weakening of the Worker Protection Act 2023 has let down women already vulnerable to sexual abuse and harassment in insecure work settings. While we welcome the duty on employers to take 'reasonable steps' to protect their employees from sexual harassment, without third-party harassment liabilities, it will be harder for employees to bring a case against employers who have failed to protect them from sexual harassment from audience members and from staff they have not employed. While few cases were brought under the previous provisions, in removing them the Government underestimated their deterrent effect and encouragement of best practice. There is overwhelming support for their reinstatement. (Conclusion, Paragraph 89)
- 17.** The Equality Act 2010 should be broadened to impose a duty on employers to be proactive, rather than simply reactive, in protecting workers from third party sexual harassment and for a statutory code of practice to support them in doing this. A statutory duty would create a clear and enforceable legal requirement on all workplaces to safeguard workers, and help bring about cultural change in the workplace. Employment tribunals should impose greater penalties in cases where perpetrators of harassment and bullying behaviour are found to have acted vindictively against complainants. (Recommendation, Paragraph 90)
- 18.** Guidance for employers and employees, including freelancers, on the new duty to protect from sexual harassment, should set out how employers should prevent and manage sexual harassment coming from third parties in the absence of legal protection, including how all parties can report it, regardless of employment status. (Recommendation, Paragraph 91)
- 19.** Public funding and licensing of music venues should be made conditional on those premises taking steps to tackle gender bias, sexual harassment and abuse. This should include the training of venue staff by accredited organisations that work in the sector. The Government should review international examples, such as the measures introduced in France, Ireland and Barcelona, and introduce similar policies in the UK. The Government should consider making funding available to smaller venues to enable them to meet this condition. (Recommendation, Paragraph 96)
- 20.** Security Industry Authority accreditation for security staff to work at live music venues should include training on dealing with discrimination, sexual harassment and abuse. That training should be survivor-led and provided by accredited organisations dedicated to improving safety for women. (Recommendation, Paragraph 98)

- 21.** Expecting women to change in front their male peers or in their car, or to share rooms or beds with male colleagues while on tour, is unacceptable and raises safety concerns. The music industry needs to improve its facilitation of mixed groups. As a minimum, venues that host live music should provide adequate, separate dressing room facilities for women and gender nonconforming musicians. (Recommendation, Paragraph 100)
- 22.** Sexual harassment and abuse in the music industry remains widespread. Aggressors act with impunity while victims who report actions against them very often face further harm by doing so. It is disappointing but not surprising, that non-reporting is high. Organisations should not assume a low incidence of reported cases means they do not have perpetrators of harassment and sexual abuse within their employment. They should instead reflect on why anonymous surveys in the industry return high figures of misconduct, yet their internal surveys do not. (Conclusion, Paragraph 108)
- 23.** Awareness of what constitutes inappropriate behaviour and discrimination needs to be improved and reporting pathways made clear. A reporting structure needs to be available to everyone working in the industry, not just those who have access to HR departments, which we heard were at best ineffective and at worst damaged the victim further. The industry is moving in this direction with the establishment of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority; the question is whether it will have the necessary levers to be effective. (Conclusion, Paragraph 109)

Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority

- 24.** We support the creation of the Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority (CIISA). It will help to shine a light on unacceptable behaviour in the music industry and in doing so, may reduce the risk of further harm. Crucially, it will be a single, recognisable body anyone in the industry can turn to for support and advice. CIISA must ensure that individuals who make reports are advised of their legal rights expeditiously to ensure legal deadlines are not missed. It will need to have in place robust safeguarding measures to protect those who report from retaliation and trained staff, including specialist counsellors, to support the mental wellbeing of those who call upon its services. (Recommendation, Paragraph 121)
- 25.** We are concerned that legislative barriers may prevent CIISA from operating effectively. We call on the Government to discuss with CIISA the potential impact of GDPR requirements on its work and to take the steps required, including any legislative changes, to allow CIISA to properly discharge its functions. (Recommendation, Paragraph 122)

- 26.** The establishment of CIISA is an opportunity to educate the music industry on the rights of self-employed workers and the responsibilities of those hiring them. It can become a hub of expertise. Earlier in this report we set out how training should be part of the licensing conditions for live music venues. We described how France’s National Centre of Music is working with grassroots organisations to provide training around sexual harassment and sexual violence. We ask CIISA to consider whether it could undertake a similar role in the UK, for live music venues seeking to meet new licensing conditions as well as other organisations such as recording studios and educational settings, and for that training to also include tackling issues of misogyny and gender bias. (Recommendation, Paragraph 123)
- 27.** CIISA has committed to producing an annual report. That report should include an overview on the state of the music industry with respect to levels of discrimination, harassment and abuse and diversity. Reported data should be broken down by protected characteristic. The report should include relevant findings on the adequacy of organisations’ internal reporting processes, support for complainants, training on dealing with incidents of sexual harassment, the safety of women on their premises and any attempts—successful or otherwise—to silence victims of unacceptable behaviour through the use of non-disclosure agreements or similar confidentiality arrangements. Organisations about which CIISA has significant concerns should be named. Events have shown that only by calling out such behaviour will the culture that protects abusers over victims change. (Recommendation, Paragraph 124)
- 28.** CIISA is not a panacea for all of the problems of discrimination, harassment and abuse in the industry. It is not a statutory body. Reforms to the Equality Act 2010 remain essential in order for freelance workers to be adequately protected from discrimination. Ultimately, CIISA’s effectiveness will be judged on whether it can move the instincts of organisations from putting the interests of a potentially lucrative but abusive person they view as an asset ahead of the needs of their victims. We hope CIISA will be a success. Time will tell whether the powers available to it are sufficient to drive that change. (Conclusion, Paragraph 125)
- 29.** Managers have a very important role in supporting artists’ careers but incidents of exploitation show that protections are required. CIISA should work with the Music Managers Forum to develop and oversee a mandatory accreditation programme for managers in the music industry. The licensing of football agents is one example of what such an accreditation process might look like. (Recommendation, Paragraph 129)

Non-disclosure agreements

- 30.** The Government should urgently bring forward legislative proposals to prohibit the use of non-disclosure and other forms of confidentiality agreements in cases involving (a) sexual abuse, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct; (b) bullying or harassment not falling within (a) and (c) discrimination relating to a protected characteristic. We are encouraged that the Government is working on such proposals but urge expediency. (Recommendation, Paragraph 138)
- 31.** We have heard distressing evidence on the effects on the mental health of people silenced by a non-disclosure agreement. The Government should consider the potential merits of a retrospective moratorium on NDAs for those that have signed them relating to the issues we have outlined, with an assurance that they cannot be pursued for cost recovery should they choose to discuss their experiences. (Recommendation, Paragraph 139)
- 32.** Until the law is changed banning the misuse of NDAs, anyone being asked to sign an NDA should have an automatic right to seek advice from qualified lawyers at CIISA. No individual should be provided with legal advice by a law firm also acting for the other party. (Recommendation, Paragraph 140)
- 33.** CIISA should collect and annually publish data on the use and threatened use of NDAs in the music industry. (Recommendation, Paragraph 141)

Conclusion

- 34.** The Government must develop and introduce a new strategy in schools, aimed specifically at boys on issues of misogyny, sexual harassment and gender-based violence. (Recommendation, Paragraph 145)

Formal minutes

Wednesday 24 January

Members present:

Caroline Nokes, in the Chair

Dr Lisa Cameron

Carolyn Harris

Kim Johnson

Bell Ribiero-Addy

Misogyny in music

Draft Report (Misogyny in music) proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 146 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to.

Resolved, That the Report be the Second Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available, in accordance with the provisions of Standing Order No. 134.

Adjournment

Adjourned till Wednesday 31 January at 2.00pm

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Wednesday 26 October 2022

Dr Nicola Puckey, Senior Lecturer, Department of English, Creative Writing and American Studies, University of Winchester; **Dr Cassandra Jones**, Lecturer in Criminology, Department of Applied Social Sciences, Forensics and Politics, University of Northumbria; **Dr Rosemary Hill**, Senior Lecturer in Media and Popular Culture, Department of Media and Performance, School of Music, Humanities and Media, University of Huddersfield; **Charisse Beaumont**, Chief Executive, Black Lives in Music [Q1-50](#)

Wednesday 8 February 2023

Vanessa Threadgold, Founder and Managing Director, Cactus City Studio; **Melinda Kelly**, Member of Management Team, Safe Gigs for Women; **Vick Bain**, Founder, F-List; **Nadia Khan**, CEO, Women in CTRL [Q51-98](#)

Wednesday 19 April 2023

Jen Smith, Interim CEO, Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority [Q99-110](#)

Deborah Annetts, Chief Executive, Independent Society of Musicians; **YolanDa Brown OBE DL**, Chair, British Phonographic Industry; **Jamie Njoku-Goodwin**, Chief Executive, UK Music [Q111-152](#)

Wednesday 24 May 2023

Marta Pallares Olivares, Head of International Press and PR, Primavera Sound Festival; **John Shortell**, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Musicians' Union; **Lauren Down**, Managing Director, End of Road Festival [Q153-203](#)

Wednesday 28 June 2023

Jessica Carsen, Senior Vice President, Sony Music UK; **Natasha Mann**, Director of Diversity and Inclusion, Universal Music UK; **Isabel Garvey**, Chief Operating Officer, Warner Music UK [Q204-283](#)

Tuesday 18 July 2023

Rt Hon Sir John Whittingdale OBE MP, Minister of State for Media, Tourism and Creative Industries, Department for Culture, Media and Sport; **Victoria MacCallum**, Deputy Director, Creative Industries and Media Bill, Department for Culture, Media and Sport [Q284-343](#)

Wednesday 13 September 2023

Annie Macmanus, DJ, Broadcaster and Writer; **Rebecca Ferguson**, Singer/Songwriter [Q344-390](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website. MiM numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Anonymised ([MiM0005](#))
- 2 Anonymised ([MiM0024](#))
- 3 Anonymised ([MiM0007](#))
- 4 Anonymised ([MiM0004](#))
- 5 Association of Independent Festivals ([MiM0019](#))
- 6 BPI (British Phonographic Industry) ([MiM0038](#))
- 7 Black Lives in Music ([MiM0029](#))
- 8 British Phonographic Industry ([MiM0042](#))
- 9 Bullying and Harassment in the Music Industry (BaHMI) ([MiM0026](#))
- 10 Cactus City Studio Community Interest Company ([MiM0027](#))
- 11 Can't Buy My Silence ([MiM0056](#))
- 12 Creative Industries Independent Standards Authority ([MiM0043](#))
- 13 Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport ([MiM0039](#))
- 14 Ferguson, Ms Rebecca ([MiM0046](#))
- 15 Festival Republic ([MiM0051](#))
- 16 Gross, Sally Anne (Reader, University of Westminster); and Musgrave, Dr George (Academic, University of Westminster / Goldsmiths, University of London) ([MiM0003](#))
- 17 Incorporated Society of Musicians ([MiM0009](#))
- 18 Independent Society of Musicians ([MiM0054](#))
- 19 Klein, Professor Bethany (Professor of Media and Communication, University of Leeds); Dobson, Dr Eddie (Principal Enterprise Fellow in Music Technology, University of Huddersfield); Haddon, Dr Mimi (Senior Lecturer in Music, University of Sussex); Hill, Dr Rosemary Lucy (Senior Lecturer in Media and Popular Culture, University of Huddersfield); and Williams, Ms Jenessa (PhD Candidate in Media and Communication, University of Leeds) ([MiM0001](#))
- 20 Lady of the House ([MiM0035](#))
- 21 Lincoln-Hyde, Mx E. A. (Assistant lecturer, SOAS University of London) ([MiM0032](#))
- 22 Mangan, Delphi (Sound Technician, Freelance) ([MiM0008](#))
- 23 Music Producers Guild ([MiM0031](#))

- 24 Musicians' Union ([MiM0020](#))
- 25 PRS for Music ([MiM0028](#))
- 26 Puckey, Dr Nicola (Senior Lecturer, University of Winchester) ([MiM0014](#))
- 27 Raine, Dr Sarah (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Limerick) ([MiM0010](#))
- 28 Snapes, Laura (Deputy music editor, The Guardian) ([MiM0013](#))
- 29 The Association of Independent Music (AIM) ([MiM0036](#))
- 30 The F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0045](#))
- 31 The F-List for Music CIC ([MiM0034](#))
- 32 The Ivors Academy of Music Creators ([MiM0055](#))
- 33 The Ivors Academy of Music Creators ([MiM0022](#))
- 34 The Music Managers Forum ([MiM0017](#))
- 35 Thompson, Samantha ((Former) Head of Music / Senior Agent, William Morris Endeavour) ([MiM0018](#))
- 36 Turner, ([MiM0006](#))
- 37 UK Music ([MiM0037](#))
- 38 UK, Sony Music (Sony Music UK) ([MiM0052](#))
- 39 UK, Universal music (Universal Music UK) ([MiM0048](#))
- 40 Waissel, Ms Katie (Director, O.W.H.L) ([MiM0057](#))
- 41 Warner Music UK ([MiM0049](#))
- 42 WeAreMusic.info ([MiM0041](#))
- 43 Webb ([MiM0015](#))
- 44 Women in CTRL ([MiM0033](#))