

About:

Traditional Irish music has always enjoyed a particular position in the cultural and social life of Ireland; and more recently international success and recognition with its distinctive sound being recognized across the world. In particular, interest in traditional Irish music has grown exponentially amongst young people, with more and more learning to play in formal and informal settings. Although the contexts for learning Irish traditional music vary considerably, and often differ greatly from more formalised instrumental education, the outstanding artistic outcomes are evident in the ever increasing virtuosity and creativity in the area. In designing a syllabus for Irish traditional music, it is most important to recognize its uniqueness, and to ensure a curriculum that is broad in scope to facilitate freedom for teachers and learners coming from different settings and environments. We at the LSMD feel that we have a special affiliation with this music through our connection with one of our early professors, Arthur Darley:

Sunday Independent: Dec. 22, 1929

“Mr. Darley was a pioneer in the cause of Irish musical development, and his researches have resulted in the preservation of many works representative of the genius of bygone generations. He was for a long time associated with the Leinster School of Music as senior professor, and here as well as other spheres, he did good work in advancing the many talented pupils who came under his notice.”

Irish Times: Dec. 20, 1929

“He has come to be recognised as the greatest authority in Ireland on Irish folk music.”

Sunday Independent: Dec. 22, 1929

Among the reasons for providing assessment in education are accreditation, accountability and motivation. Wherever traditional Irish musicians gather, enjoyment and fun are always evident, and therefore the motivation for learning is often intrinsic. In Irish traditional music there are many opportunities for performance, both solo and in groups, not least through competitions and feiseanna. While competitions provide motivation for the pursuit of excellence, they do not provide general accreditation for all participants. It is important, therefore, for talented and hard-working young traditional musicians to be able to attain accreditation which equals that in other areas of music education. It is also important to note that this non-competitive offering is not a replacement for competitions and feiseanna but an addition to the musician’s educational development.