

**AN INVESTIGATION OF COPING, RESILIENCE AND
SELF-COMPASSION AMONG CONSERVATOIRE
MUSIC STUDENTS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM**

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ABSTRACT

This doctoral thesis investigates the use of coping and development of psychological resilience in musicians. Relevant literature was analysed to identify individual and environmental factors that impact on musicians' health and wellbeing (Chapters 1 and 2). Two studies are presented to explore musicians' coping strategies and resilience from both personal and environmental perspectives, aiming to address gaps in research regarding the specific mechanisms through which coping strategies, psychological resilience, and self-compassion interact with each other and impact the overall health and wellbeing of musicians.

The first study (Chapters 3 and 4) involves interviews with 16 conservatoire music students from the Royal College of Music. Through semi-structured, individual interviews, these conservatoire music students shared insights into their coping strategies and psychological resilience within the context of music-making. The interviews examined the common challenges faced by conservatoire music students during their learning and performances, as well as how they navigate these challenges. From these interviews, several themes emerged, including the general meanings of coping and resilience for musicians, understanding how musicians cope and develop resilience within their occupational activities, and the roles of institutions and support systems in supporting musicians' coping strategies and resilience. The findings from the interview study suggest a close relationship between coping and resilience; while coping encompasses the strategies and responses to challenges, resilience reflects the musician's capacity to overcome adversity. Moreover, the study underscores the significance of coping strategies and psychological resilience, particularly in the context of conservatoire music students' performance and practice. Importantly, the study reveals that the conservatoire environment significantly influences conservatoire music

students' coping, and access to support services plays a crucial role in promoting positive adaptation. These findings underscore the importance of further research into musicians' development of coping, resilience, and related aspects in their learning and performance.

The second study (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) is an online survey involving 120 conservatoire music students in the United Kingdom. The survey employed questionnaires to measure conservatoire music students' psychological resilience, coping abilities, and levels of self-compassion, followed by a self-assessment of their health and wellbeing. Additionally, the survey measured conservatoire music students' interactions with the environment and support. The survey study was divided into three parts: (1) individual factors related to coping and psychological resilience; (2) environmental factors and supporting resources related to coping, resilience, and self-compassion; and (3) connections between individual factors, environmental factors, health, and wellbeing. The findings suggest that coping strategies positively predict the overall level of coping, and positive constructs of self-compassion are also positively associated with the overall level of self-compassion among conservatoire music students. Furthermore, the findings show that coping, resilience, and wellbeing are significantly correlated, and certain coping strategies are more strongly correlated than others in promoting resilience (Chapter 5).

Regarding environmental factors, the findings suggest that conservatoire music students' academic and social self-perceptions are positively related to their overall perception of the educational environment. Nevertheless, coping, resilience, and self-compassion are positively associated with conservatoire music students' perceptions of their educational environment (Chapter 6).

Findings from the final part of the survey study show positive connections between coping, resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing among conservatoire music students. Additionally, academic and social self-perceptions are positively linked to

conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing (Chapter 7). The main findings from the survey study reveal the implications of how coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, wellbeing, and perceptions of the educational environment positively interrelate, informing future research regarding the development of mental skills, institutional support, and health and wellbeing.

The findings of this thesis are discussed (Chapter 8) regarding the implications of the research for musicians' development, particularly how psychological factors such as coping, resilience, self-compassion, and support within the music-making environment inform their health and wellbeing. One of the implications being discussed is an intervention protocol that could be employed and evaluated in future research to enhance musicians' coping and resilience from a practical perspective. Based on the findings of the interview and survey studies, the protocol is tailored to musicians' occupational, psychological and physical demands, and the need for relevant psychological and coping skills, considering their occupational challenges.

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MOTIVATION AND PERSONAL IMPACT

Besides technical training, the health and wellbeing of musicians are vital considerations, especially for conservatoire music students in higher education, including undergraduate, postgraduate, and beyond. Coping with the challenges that arise from performances and learning is critical for these musicians. While mastering instrumental skills is essential for a musician's career, how they manage pressure, performance anxiety, depression, and other challenges significantly impacts their learning and performance processes. Each musician is an individual, and the challenges they face and how they cope with them vary. This thesis is motivated by the aim of raising awareness about the importance of equipping musicians with effective coping strategies, fostering resilience, and nurturing self-compassion at the beginning stages of their careers. These tools help them overcome challenges they may face. The consideration of these psychological constructs and skills ultimately contributes to their overall health and wellbeing. I hope this thesis connects musicians to the field of research and prompts a rethinking of the importance of psychological aspects in their performance and learning.

The findings of this thesis have been encouraging, particularly in emphasising musicians' acknowledgement of the support and environment surrounding their music-making. However, as musicians, we frequently experience isolation in our practice, contemplations, and interactions with the external world. This thesis brings to light concerns that, despite certain recent albeit limited enhancements in conservatoire culture, there is reason to maintain apprehension regarding the health and wellbeing of musicians.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 Research Context

Achieving musical excellence has always been a key issue for musicians. From technical training to psychological training, there is an increasing body of research aimed at assisting musicians in improving their skills. Meanwhile, the demand for understanding musicians' health and wellbeing issues has taken centre stage, as well as the development of resources to support musicians along their study and professional pathways (López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022).

In terms of perceptions of health, existing research reveals that musicians score significantly lower than other students in tertiary education in the United Kingdom (Araújo et al., 2017; Brazier et al., 1992; Jenkinson et al., 1999). Most professional classical musicians, including orchestral players, concert performers, and chamber musicians, have undergone considerable musical training, sometimes at specialist conservatoires or institutions. Musicians' career choices and transitions, for example, a career in music teaching or performance, can be based on their identity back to the undergraduate stage (Jones and Parkes, 2009; Williamon & Thompson, 2006). Studying music in a conservatoire also includes decisive transitions for students adapting to new environments and moving between education and professional careers. To illustrate, the preparation of young musicians stepping into a new and challenging conservatoire environment is crucial to their learning and future development (MacNamara, Holmes & Collins, 2008). Towards the end of conservatoire education, the resources provided to musicians regarding career support and professional transitions are crucially important (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021).

According to a survey study by Miksza et al. (2019) on university music students' motivations and career development, music students' commitment to a long-term music

career can be a clear indicator of success in a university music performance programme. The study also explored competitiveness within the conservatoire environment and competitiveness among music students and found that university music programmes and conservatoires should consider solutions that could reduce students' perfectionism while simultaneously maintaining high expectations and standards of performance excellence (Miksza et al., 2019).

However, the musicians' transition to conservatoire training and professional careers is often accompanied by significant psychological challenges. Pecun et al. (2018) investigated musicians' experiences of psychological challenges through individual interviews with performers ranging from the pre-elite to transitioning and established elite performers. One of the findings suggested that performers' transition into a conservatoire usually involves severe psychological challenges, including but not limited to isolation, peer comparison, performance anxiety, depression, and panic disorders. In addition, adapting to a competitive conservatoire environment can be challenging for students in the initial year. Additionally, Pecun et al. (2018) pointed out that the effect of emotion in music may impact musicians' emotional vulnerability, thereby triggering psychological problems. As mentioned, the importance of musicians' transitions should be considered in music training, in which conservatoires or institutions influence musicians' development in the long term. Transitions into and out of conservatoire training pose significant psychological and environmental challenges, and there is a substantial need for musicians to be equipped with adequate coping skills (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021).

The *Musical Impact* study (<https://healthyconservatoires.org/musicalimpact>) is one such project launched by Conservatoires UK during 2014 to 2018, providing an initial and national assessment of the overall health and wellbeing conditions of conservatoire music students. The aim of the study is to enhance policies and practices within conservatoires to

provide better support for the health and wellbeing of students undertaking music education at the tertiary level. The study investigates multiple facets of conservatoire music students' experiences, encompassing their mental health, physical wellbeing, and overall welfare, alongside the factors influencing their health outcomes. Through surveys, interviews, and other research methodologies, the *Musical Impact* study collects data from conservatoire music students at conservatoires across the UK to gain insights into their health-related experiences and requirements. In addition, the *Musical Impact* study provides a broadened perspective through which conservatoire students' health and wellbeing can be supported by combining emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, and spiritual perspectives. Expanding on the findings of the *Musical Impact* study, the Healthy Conservatoires network (<https://healthyconservatoires.org>) remains dedicated to advocating for the importance and necessity of supporting the health and wellbeing of musicians.

1.2 Research Questions

Musicians' coping has typically been investigated in terms of particular coping behaviours and strategies, rarely associated with other psychological constructs, using empirically tested methods. It is desirable for research to explore how musicians' coping connects to psychological resilience (Ungar, 2011), self-compassion (Neff, 2016), and health and wellbeing (Araújo et al., 2017) to gain a holistic understanding of musicians' coping based on the context of music-making. Integrating these constructs into research on musicians' coping can offer a more comprehensive understanding of how musicians navigate the challenges inherent in their profession. Exploring how coping, resilience, self-compassion, health and

wellbeing are interconnected offers insights into how musicians adapt to stressors and maintain their overall health and wellbeing in the context of music-making.

This doctoral research investigates the particular impact of coping and psychological resilience under conservatoire settings and, more widely, the field of professional music performance. Conservatoire music education serves as a significant transition for musicians, particularly as they embark on formal music training and prepare for their future careers. Musicians are equipped with insufficient resources and skills to cope with negative emotions and challenges (Araújo et al., 2017), which may affect their wellbeing and general health. To narrow down the target group, this doctoral research focused mainly on conservatoire music students. In a wider context, musicians commonly experience negative emotions and challenges in musical activities, including performance, practice, and rehearsals. Hence, the development of coping strategies and mental strength is crucial to help musicians overcome challenges and transitions throughout their education and careers.

In recent years, a growing amount of research has revealed related constructs for understanding the health and wellbeing of musicians. Concepts related to musicians' health and wellbeing include, but are not limited to, coping, psychological resilience, health-promoting behaviours, music performance anxiety, and perfectionism. In addition, this doctoral research embraces the interactions between musicians and their learning environment – conservatoires – and it would be reasonable to investigate the surrounding environment as a potential factor that affects their health and wellbeing. Building upon this evidence, this doctoral research project takes the consideration of a conservatoire environment to a more practical level, and navigates how musicians could benefit from findings in psychology, for example, a self-compassion training intervention. Therefore, the ecological and social impacts of psychological resilience are also considered in this doctoral research.

This doctoral research proactively approaches the health and wellbeing of musicians through a positive psychological perspective. In searching for the most appropriate solutions to improve their health, aside from reporting only the general health and wellbeing conditions of musicians, an integrated approach has been adopted to draw in more mental health constructs, including coping, self-compassion, and psychological resilience from both individual and environmental perspectives. The approach of including other mental health-related measures is to demonstrate the possible benefits of coping strategies in musicians, and what aspects could be added to the development of coping abilities, such as psychological resilience and self-compassionate coping behaviours. Other aspects of enriching tools to measure musicians' mental health include coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, and environmental support throughout this doctoral research.

The inclusion of self-compassion aims to expand existing measurements of personal factors in musicians' mental health, which plays a crucial part in generalising the common characteristics of musicians in terms of musician-specific mental health concerns. Building upon the existing literature on musicians' coping behaviours and their development of coping skills in musical activities, this doctoral research project aims to further investigate the coping behaviours of musicians, with references and supporting concepts from psychological resilience, self-compassion, and environmental factors.

This doctoral research aims to explore the specific coping strategies used by musicians and how coping relates to psychological resilience. To enhance practicality and real-life applications, this doctoral research seeks to determine whether more practical individual and environmental support is needed for musicians. Ultimately, this thesis aims to benefit the establishment of supporting resources (in terms of enhancing coping support and psychological resilience) for musicians during musical training.

In particular, this research explores the health and wellbeing of musicians through the lens of coping (Araújo et al., 2017). Influential factors, including psychological resilience (Ungar, 2011), and self-compassionate aspects (Neff, 2016) are measured, including but not limited to positive reinterpretation and growth (PRG), planning (P), active coping (AC), use of instrumental social support (ISS), mindfulness, self-kindness, and common humanity. The measurement also includes supporting resources from a conservatoire environment and how musicians perceive the effects of and interactions with the musical environment. Finally, the research integrates the process of coping and resilience within the broader framework of positive psychology to explore their real-life implications and transferability.

The main aim of this research is to investigate how coping, resilience, and self-compassion are connected among conservatoire music students in the United Kingdom. The questions that this research consequently asks are:

1. What common challenges do conservatoire music students experience as they learn and perform?
2. What strategies do conservatoire music students use to cope with challenges?
3. How do conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience in their learning and performing?
4. How do conservatoire music students' coping strategies connect with other individual factors, including resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, as well as environmental factors they encounter during their learning and performing?

The above questions are addressed in the following chapters from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. First, the questions regarding the common challenges experienced by conservatoire music students and coping strategies have been addressed in Chapters 3 to 6. The question of how conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience has been

addressed in Chapters 4 to 6. Finally, regarding how coping strategies interact with other individual (resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing) and environmental factors (perceptions toward the educational environment), this question has been addressed in Chapters 5 to 7.

1.3 Research Design

Coping behaviours and psychological resilience in musicians can both develop and diminish, as they respond to various influences and circumstances. Inductive factors include experiences or strategies that enhance coping behaviours and resilience, while reductive factors contribute to their decline or depletion. Understanding this relationship is essential for effectively supporting the health and wellbeing of musicians (Kenny et al., 2012; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In the psychological context, there are measures and scales to evaluate an individual's coping and resilient capacities, such as health and wellbeing status. To gain a more holistic view of specific approaches that musicians use in coping, investigating their personal experiences would also be a sensible way to represent some musician-specific coping and resilience characteristics. In this doctoral research, the purpose of collecting data on musicians' coping behaviours is to examine them through the lens of psychological resilience, interactions with the conservatoire environment, health, and wellbeing. This doctoral research project investigates how musicians can apply coping strategies and resilience within the framework of positive psychology, focusing on their practical implications and potential for generalisation. This leads to a multi-strategy design for this research: coping and resilience levels are analysed quantitatively, and particular coping strategies used by musicians are analysed qualitatively.

A multi-strategy research design is common in examining coping and psychological resilience, as seen in the existing literature (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Mayordomo et al., 2016; Rutter, 2007; Terzy, 2013). Coping, resilience, health and wellbeing, conservatoire environment, and supporting services are all interrelated in this doctoral research, leading to a multi-strategy research design as the best fit. Throughout the investigation, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data analyses was employed, with each approach complementing the other. Therefore, the assessment of coping and resilience encompasses both an overarching evaluation and a detailed examination of musician-specific coping characteristics. Further details are discussed in the following sections, including the rationale for including specific measures in the survey study and the initial themes drawn from the interviews.

As mentioned, there are existing studies on coping and psychological resilience in the field of positive psychology, but particular studies on these topics in musicians are still insufficient in terms of practicality concerning musicians' demands and situations. The aim of investigating coping and psychological resilience from both qualitative and quantitative approaches is to ensure that most musicians' characteristics can be captured in this research. It is understandable that even some fundamental constructs of coping and psychological resilience cannot be fully transferred to musicians. Further details regarding the content of musicians' social perceptions included in this research are also presented in this chapter, particularly the scales measuring environmental factors in the survey study.

1.4 Overarching Themes

As a parallel study in line with the survey study (please see the following section regarding scales used in the survey study for further details), in terms of research design, the interview

study serves as an exploratory investigation into the coping patterns and psychological resilience of conservatoire music students, and initially, how the conservatoire environment affects their coping and development. The interview study followed a semi-open approach, in which conservatoire music students could freely share their experiences, specifically in coping with challenges and perceptions of resilience and coping support provided by the conservatoire or environment. The outcome of this interview study aims to shape the scope of the subsequent survey study, particularly regarding the measurements and areas to be included in the questionnaire. Relying solely on direct and quantitative measurements may not fully capture the characteristics of musicians in terms of coping abilities, psychological resilience, and environmental support.

The interview study also explores the journey of conservatoire music students, particularly transitioning into professional musicians. As discussed earlier, conservatoire education can be considered an important preparation for musicians to pursue their goals and aspirations in music, which is why this research focuses on conservatoire music students in tertiary education. By examining the experiences of conservatoire music students throughout their journey in the conservatoire and recognising them as musicians, issues related to coping and psychological resilience can be specifically addressed from a musician's perspective, rather than solely from a psychological standpoint. The interview flow is divided into two aspects: (1) musicians' perceptions toward coping, and (2) musicians' perceptions toward psychological resilience. By investigating coping as a process, it is possible to identify some valuable characteristics and ideas regarding how musicians cope within their professional fields in general.

Regarding the impact of the interview study, it provides a starting point for this research to link coping and resilience in musicians, where the correlation between these two topics has barely been investigated. The experience of studying in the conservatoire could be

challenging, given that perfectionism and competition between students are some obvious issues nowadays in conservatoires. Interviews could provide a safe space for conservatoire music students to share their responses in a more explicit and personal manner. Data on individual experiences are collected more efficiently during the interviews compared to a survey study. Conservatoire music students feel safer and more comfortable in the form of one-to-one interviews in which they are encouraged to share their thoughts.

1.5 Overview of Thesis

The subsequent chapter of this thesis provides a literature review that encompasses an exploration of concepts, including coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, and the influence of environmental factors on health and wellbeing. Additionally, the literature review delves into how these concepts have been ontologically defined as measures. Two empirical studies follow afterwards. Chapters 3 to 7 present interviews and survey studies, respectively, investigating musicians' coping and resilience from both personal and environmental perspectives. Chapter 8 summarises the implementation and limitations of empirical studies in this doctoral research project with reference to relevant literature and existing frameworks. Considering the implication of research, Chapter 8 includes a proposed intervention protocol for mindful self-compassionate training for musicians, with a controlled pilot study design and pre-post evaluation to determine the influence of mental skills training on musicians' coping abilities, resilience, self-compassion, and overall health and wellbeing. Finally, Chapter 8 also presents the contribution to knowledge regarding the studies conducted in this research, with a summary of further research directions and reflections on musicians' health and the professional environment.

Chapter 2 – Review of Literature

2.1 Structure of This Chapter

2.1.1 Topics Relevant to Musicians' Health and Wellbeing

This chapter reviews several topics relevant to the health and wellbeing of musicians, including coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, and environmental factors that impact musicians' health and wellbeing. This chapter is divided into seven main parts: (1) coping, (2) musicians' challenges and use of coping, (3) psychological resilience, (4) self-compassion, (5) musicians' health and wellbeing, (6) scales and measures in music psychology, and (7) summary of existing literature.

For personal (or individual) factors, coping (Carver et al., 1989), psychological resilience (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006; Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013; Friborg et al., 2005), and self-compassion (Allen & Leary, 2010; Diedrich et al., 2014; Neff et al., 2005) are categorised as the main themes in this thesis. They are positioned as personal resources that enhance an individual's general health and mental wellbeing. The definitions and impact of coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion on musicians are discussed in each subsection.

According to Carver et al. (1989), coping is primarily an internal process that involves the emotional and psychological reallocation of resources to manage difficult situations. Psychological resilience is closely related to an individual's personality (Friborg et al., 2005) and coping behaviours (Campbell-Sills et al., 2006). Furthermore, self-compassion is an individual factor that is closely related to coping (Neff et al., 2005) and self-identity (Allen & Leary, 2010; Diedrich et al., 2014). Psychological resilience and self-compassion are often linked to coping strategies. Therefore, it would be reasonable to consider these three main

topics (coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion) as personal approaches and individual capacities in this doctoral research.

Moving on to the discussion of environmental (or external) factors, several aspects and influential topics are reviewed in relation to the support provided to musicians' health and wellbeing. To achieve a comprehensive understanding of musicians' health and wellbeing, it is important to consider not only personal factors, but also environmental and psychological support, as these surrounding factors can greatly impact wellbeing (MacNamara et al., 2006). Specifically, specific environmental factors, such as social perceptions of the conservatoire educational environment, support and resources (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021), and professional pathways (López-Íñiguez & Bennett, 2020; López-Íñiguez & Burnard, 2022), are included as influences on musicians' health maintenance and wellbeing.

Investigations into the coping and mental skills used by musicians are not limited to enhancing their musical performance, but more importantly, to bring the focus of maintaining health and wellbeing in a broader context. To gain a thorough understanding of musicians' health and wellbeing, in addition to investigating individual, psychological, physical, and behavioural qualities, the interactive influence of musicians' surrounding environment is also considered in the review. Starting from personal factors drawn from existing literature that affect musicians' health and wellbeing, the latter part of this chapter concludes with important environmental factors in relation to particular health concerns and support. Based on this structure, the discussion of these topics aims to facilitate an interactive review of the existing literature on the health and wellbeing of musicians and to strengthen the close linkage between individual and environmental factors in this thesis.

In addition to the investigation of musicians' health and wellbeing, the significance of poor engagement in health-promoting behaviours has also been presented in the current

literature (Araújo et al., 2017; Ginsborg et al., 2009; Kreutz et al., 2008, 2009; Panebianco-Warrens et al., 2015; Rickert et al., 2015; Spahn et al., 2002, 2004). Research has pointed out that health-promoting behaviours are closely related to musicians' health and wellbeing, and are considered a compliment in improving musicians' health. According to Pender (2011), an individual's engagement in healthy behaviours usually results from interactions between them and their environment. As such, engagement in healthy behaviours crucially influences positive attitudes toward health. Considering the application to musicians, it is also possible to evaluate engagement in healthy behaviours in certain settings. For instance, examining musicians' healthy behaviours within a conservatoire environment, as well as their occupational characteristics and demands as musicians.

Both personal and environmental factors contribute to progress in enhancing the health and wellbeing of musicians. Relevant studies and theories related to these topics are gathered in this chapter, mainly from the fields of psychology and performance science. This thesis is based on music conservatoires and performing arts, particularly focusing on music performers and their active engagement in different kinds of musical activities, including music performances, practice, and rehearsals. Wherever possible, the definitions reviewed in this chapter are embedded in the consideration of musicians' occupational characteristics, as well as the professional culture of the music industry. To obtain a more comprehensive and updated view of musicians' mental skills and coping behaviours, each of these variables are explored in greater detail below.

Following the exploration of concepts, Section 2.7 reviews how these concepts have been ontologically defined as measures, with a particular focus on the scales and measurements in the field of music psychology.

2.2 Coping

2.2.1 Definitions of Coping

Music can be a pleasant activity for relaxation, emotional balance, and cultural exchange, but there should always be a concern for the professionals behind music-making – the musicians – especially regarding potential challenges in relation to their health and wellbeing.

Considering the investigation of coping strategies and behaviours, most of the existing research on coping in music performance and musicians is exploratory (Biasutti & Concina, 2014), and interventional research on musicians' coping characteristics and strategies remains scarce.

Coping refers to an intrapersonal process that modulates thoughts, affects, and behaviours in challenging environments (Friesen et al., 2013; Gaudreau et al., 2010; Leprince et al., 2018; Lyons et al., 1998). Coping has different meanings and characteristics for different groups of people. The definitions and perspectives of coping vary, which has led to discussions on whether coping is a process or outcome.

Apart from coping as a process or outcome, theories of coping in psychology are divided into two areas: (1) focus-oriented and (2) approach-oriented. According to Carver et al. (1989), focus-oriented theories categorise coping into state and trait perspectives, and focus on an individual's internal resources and capacities to adapt to a challenge or situation. On the other hand, approach-oriented coping theories consider both individual-level (micro-analytic) and societal or contextual (macro-analytic) perspectives and evaluate coping in the context of overall wellbeing and adaptive functioning.

In addition, according to *the Oxford Handbook of Stress, Health, and Coping*, coping develops and changes depending on several factors, including vulnerability, exposure, life events, life roles, and age (Aldwin, 2011). There is a need to explore coping in terms of managing competitive situations to provide a more applicable working definition for coping

with musicians (Gould et al., 1993; Williamon & Antonini Philippe, 2020). The development of coping began with the initial definition suggested by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and later revised by Cheavens and Dreer (2009). According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping is defined as follows:

Coping refers to the constantly changing process of using cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised to be taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. (p.141)

There are several points of contention among theories regarding the definition of coping. Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) definition emphasises coping as a 'changing process' set against the concept of coping as an outcome. This provides greater flexibility to understand coping in different settings, suitable for the case of musicians, as in Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) definition, 'specific external and/or internal demands' are considered on a personal basis, with regard to a person's background, occupation, and individual circumstances.

Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) definition and theory of coping are state-oriented theories of coping. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), successful coping relies on effective adjustment of emotional functions based on challenges and problems. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggest eight classifications in their theory of active emotional coping: (1) self-control, (2) confrontation, (3) social support, (4) emotional distancing, (5) escape and avoidance, (6) radical acceptance, (7) positive reappraisal, and (8) strategic problem-solving. However, these coping functions vary in terms of individuality and situation, and adaptation to emotions may result in confusion regarding behaviours under extreme stress levels.

Furthermore, in Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) coping theory, the concepts of cognitive appraisal and reappraisal are included in coping with stress. Given that an individual needs to cope with a stressful situation, a primary cognitive appraisal will be raised within the individual to justify the impact (such as emotions, threat, and sense of challenge)

of the stressful situation and realise its meaning. After the primary cognitive appraisal (assigning the meaning of coping with stress), reappraisal (secondary appraisal) follows as a process to decide how to cope with stress and employ relevant coping strategies. Regarding the reappraisal (secondary appraisal) process, Scheier and Carver (1985) mentioned their views on the coping process:

Coping (and by implication stress) is thus determined by a secondary appraisal process, in which people attempt to determine whether or not they have at their disposal the resources necessary to deal with the threat successfully – a process that has overtones that are similar in some ways to what we have called outcome expectancy assessment. (p. 243)

Regarding the concept of coping with musicians, coping can refer to the skills and characteristics that musicians employ to overcome challenges (MacNamara et al., 2006). To expand our understanding of musicians' coping, it would be beneficial to review relevant definitions of coping from other fields similar to the situations of musicians, such as athletes who commonly face stress and anxiety during sports performance (Gaudreau et al., 2010). Definitions of coping in sports psychology embrace formal definitions of coping, which can be traced back to the 1990s. Sports psychology and music psychology share a common ground in terms of the definition and development of coping (Williamon & Antonini Philippe, 2020). Similar to how coping is considered for athletes, both musicians and athletes face stress and challenges from physically demanding performances in competitive environments.

Coming across the mental challenges faced by musicians, there is a need to navigate solutions for musicians to cope with their negative emotions, including anxiety and depression (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Kobori et al., 2011). From the perspective of coping, investigation of coping as a solution to bounce back from mental challenges has been

discussed in psychology. According to Parker and Endler (1996), coping plays an important role in handling emotional challenges, including the regulation of distress and management of problems causing distress (Parker & Endler, 1996). Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) pointed out that in addition to evaluating coping in relation to its effectiveness in stress regulation (as coping has always been jointly considered with stress and anxiety in psychology), the generation of positive affect in the process of coping with stress is underrepresented (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2000). From this point of view, research on moving beyond the basic functions of coping in dealing with stress and anxiety is desirable; for example, heading toward the investigation of positive outcomes and proactive approaches of coping could be helpful (Greenglass & Fiksenbaum, 2009; Renard & Snelgar, 2015).

2.2.2 Coping among Musicians

In the field of music psychology, music is thought to have positive effects on both audiences and performers (Kokotsaki & Hallam, 2011; Theorell & Horwitz, 2019). Musicians frequently face critical evaluations of their performance, and they can benefit from coping strategies that promote psychological resilience in the face of these challenges. In some cases, musicians' mental health can directly affect their physical health (Wesseldijk et al., 2019).

Physical and mental health are the main areas for exploring musicians' health and wellness (see Section 2.6.2 Profiling Health of Musicians). Other aspects include wellbeing, self-rated health, health-promoting behaviours, lifestyles, perfectionism, sleep quality, and fatigue in reporting musicians' health and wellbeing. However, aspects of age and sex differences in young adults' coping behaviours and abilities remain uncertain (Aldwin, 2011). Although different factors affect coping and wellbeing, a discussion of these variables' influences is beyond the scope of this literature review. This doctoral research project aimed to understand musicians' coping more explicitly, and how coping might relate to their mental

health and wellbeing. Coping remains an important aspect of mental health because of its impact on the stressful events faced by musicians (Studer et al., 2011).

Focusing on musicians' health and coping, existing studies indicate that musicians are equipped with insufficient adaptation strategies in terms of their positive health (Antonini Philippe et al., 2019; Williamon & Antonini Philippe, 2020), in which adaptation is closely related to coping abilities. Adaptation and coping are the responses to changes or challenges. Adaptation describes the process of adjusting to change, whereas coping refers to an instant response to the impact of change or challenges.

Coping strategies and skills are a variety of adaptive tools for individuals to cope with stress and challenges, including both emotional and behavioural aspects. Coping and adaptation are closely related to determining the impact and effectiveness of coping strategies. According to Bonneville-Roussy et al. (2017) on adaptive coping styles, adaptive coping mechanisms react to stress in a healthy and positive manner. Under adaptation and coping, coping responses are divided into adaptive and maladaptive, which also indicate whether coping strategies are effective (positive) or ineffective (negative).

According to the Encyclopaedia of Applied Psychology (2004), adaptive coping refers to cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage stressful conditions or associated emotional distress. Compared with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) basic definition of coping, for adaptive coping, the effective (or positive) coping strategies mainly have a positive impact on wellbeing and successfully address stress. Based on the findings of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) and Holahan et al. (1996), common adaptive coping strategies include support systems, relaxation, and physical exercise, which balance both psychological and physical wellness in response to stress. Some examples of maladaptive coping are avoidance coping and emotional distancing (Bippus & Young, 2012). The main distinctions between adaptive and maladaptive coping are whether the impact on an individual's health and wellbeing is

positive or negative, the effectiveness of coping strategies, and how well coping strategies reduce stress and assist the individual in functioning in the original or optimal state.

From the specific perspective of musicians, Williamon and Antonini Philippe (2020) highlighted the importance of adaptive coping strategies in facilitating performance success, as well as their function in psychological processes and psychological balance. Different from the perspective that is agreed in psychology, the ideal coping state for musicians would be a positive attitude or mindset (Allan, 2016). However, teaching musicians the skills required to achieve a positive mindset is challenging. According to an article by Allan (2016) on mental skills training for musicians, the mindsets or attitudes of musicians hugely influence performers and performance, in which the mindsets also reveal musicians' self-perceptions.

Research conducted by Jääskeläinen and López-Íñiguez delves into the various challenges faced by musicians in higher education, with a specific focus on Finland and the United Kingdom. They conducted a mixed-methods study to investigate the intricate relationship between workload, stress, and coping mechanisms, offering a comprehensive understanding of the complex experiences of professional music students (Jääskeläinen et al., 2022). Their systematic review of existing research consolidates knowledge of workload in higher education and proposes effective practices, highlighting key findings and recommendations (Jääskeläinen et al., 2023). Through their study of workload, livelihoods, and stress, this study provides significant insights into the interplay of these factors in the lives of musicians and their impact on their overall wellbeing (Jääskeläinen & López-Íñiguez, 2020).

Additionally, their research offers practical tools for teachers to support students in effectively managing their workloads (Jääskeläinen & López-Íñiguez, 2022). Jääskeläinen and López-Íñiguez (2022) explore the experiences of music students in relation to workload,

stress, and coping mechanisms. The study involved 155 music students from Finland and the United Kingdom. Through qualitative analysis, the researchers identified four key aspects: workload structure, individual workload, teaching and learning environments, and psychological and physiological issues. Notably, they developed 43 constructive tools for teachers, emphasising proactive communication, flexible scheduling, stress management, and holistic support. By implementing these tools, educators can better assist music students in navigating their workload and promoting overall wellbeing within higher music education institutions. These findings collectively serve as valuable resources for educators and stakeholders seeking to enhance the academic experience and wellbeing of music students in higher education.

An initial study on music students' coping indicated that the coping processes among musicians are intricate and involve multiple dimensions; it is still not clear how the coping process works in musicians. Papageorgi et al. (2010a) investigated coping strategies among conservatoire and university music students. The findings suggest that, in addition to dealing with performance anxiety, stress, and mistakes from performing on stage, extra components such as coping strategies and pre-performance mental conditions during preparation should also be considered in musicians' coping strategies. Papageorgi et al. (2010a) pointed out that musicians' coping behaviours are often related to the ideas of self-criticism, self-judgement, and perfectionism, in which these negative aspects affect the coping strategies used by musicians.

2.3 Musicians' Challenges and Use of Coping

Recent research has extensively examined various aspects of musicians' health and wellbeing, including mental health, psychological issues such as anxiety and depression, health-promoting behaviours, emotional regulation, and coping (Araújo et al., 2017;

Ginsborg et al., 2009; Panebianco-Warrens et al., 2015; Rickert et al., 2015). The *Fit to Perform* study provides valuable insights into musicians' health perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours, especially given the concerning lack of health-promoting behaviours among conservatoire music students, which are closely linked to coping skills (Araújo et al., 2017). However, gaps persist in our understanding of coping behaviours across different age groups, particularly among young adults, including conservatoire music students (Brazier et al., 1992; Jenkinson, 1999; Kreutz et al., 2008, 2009; Perkins et al., 2017; Spahn et al., 2002, 2004).

2.3.1 Health-Promoting Behaviours

Considering the impact of health-promoting behaviours on musicians' health and wellbeing, Ginsborg et al. (2009) compared the health behaviours of conservatoire music students and non-music performance students (nursing and biomedical science students). Findings suggest that music making entails significant physical and emotional demands. Therefore, there is a need for musicians to adopt healthy lifestyles and engage in health-promoting behaviours to achieve their full potential (Ginsborg et al., 2009).

To further illustrate the impact of health-promoting behaviours in musicians, Panebianco-Warrens et al. (2015) evaluated 144 undergraduate music students on their health-promoting behaviours and psychological wellbeing through self-reporting, and demonstrated significant correlations between health-promoting lifestyle, self-efficacy, self-regulation, and emotional state (Panebianco-Warrens et al., 2015). Panebianco-Warrens et al. (2015) showed that health-promoting behaviours are positively correlated with several aspects of mental health, including self-efficacy, self-regulation, and emotional states. On the other hand, Rickert et al. (2015) suggested that poor health awareness and knowledge of injury prevention leads to injury. Both Panebianco-Warrens et al. (2015) and Rickert et al. (2015) concluded that education on health and wellbeing, as well as health-promoting

behaviours, should be embedded into the music school curriculum, thereby urging a change in the conventional conservatoire environment.

In addition to health education for musicians, Matei et al. (2018) designed and evaluated a compulsory health education course for first-year undergraduate music students at a UK conservatoire. The course covered topics such as hearing protection, physical and psychological health, and health-promoting behaviours. Students perceived the course content as important, and recognised that musicians' health is interconnected with their artistic development and overall quality of life. Incorporating health education as a core component acknowledges that musicians' success depends not only on technical skills but also on their physical and mental wellbeing.

2.3.2 Negative Emotions

Most existing studies on musicians' mental health are either exploratory or gain a comprehensive understanding of specific mental health issues in musicians, and the intervention type of study remains minor. One example of intervention studies is the study by Braden et al. (2015) on psychological intervention looking at music performance anxiety (MPA). Braden et al. (2015) highlighted a potential gap in group-based cognitive-behavioural interventions within music schools to help musicians develop skills to overcome the effect of MPA. The study also provided insight into practical interventions or solutions to existing health and wellbeing problems of musicians, moving beyond the theoretical knowledge of musicians' health and wellbeing.

Musicians commonly experience negative emotions, particularly during demanding and intensive musical activities such as performance and practice (Aráujo et al., 2017). In terms of the high amount of preparation, concentration, and physical strength, these occupational demands provide the potential for coping as a solution (Carver et al., 1989;

Lazarus, 1993). In some cases, the mental and physical pressures caused by musical activities exceed the resources or capacity of a musician to handle. Musicians' coping strategies and styles are relatively personal when compared to other existing coping strategies. There is clearly a gap between the psychological demand, physical strength required for musical activities, and the approach to maintaining performance quality. Therefore, coping with these challenges is crucial.

2.3.3 Coping Strategies Used by Musicians

Coping strategies have been investigated across various professional domains including sports science, psychology, education, and music. Based on current research findings, common strategies employed by musicians include breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, positive reframing, task-oriented coping, and medication (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Burin & Osório, 2017; Dews & Williams, 1989; Kobori et al., 2011). These coping strategies have predominantly been observed among undergraduate music students coping with music performance anxiety (MPA).

Drawing from Burin and Osório (2017) on music performance anxiety (MPA), musicians' employment of coping strategies can be classified into cognitive and behavioural categories. This classification acknowledges that while some coping strategies may involve conscious cognitive processes, others may appear as behavioural responses, which may occur even without explicit cognitive awareness in certain circumstances. Although researchers have not widely agreed upon this categorisation, tracing back to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), coping should have an effect on cognition and behaviours. Beyond the common coping strategies mentioned above, Studer et al. (2011) explored coping with stage fright in detail. A total of 190 university music students completed a questionnaire measuring their negative feelings about MPA, experiences of stage fright, and coping strategies. The results

suggested that the most effective coping approaches for musicians' MPA were breathing exercises, medication, and self-control techniques. At the same time, breathing exercises and self-control techniques were considered as effective as medication (Studer et al., 2011). Coping strategies mentioned in Studer et al. (2011) conclude the benefits of coping for musicians, which coping can be a tool to control stress and anxiety particularly during performance.

The above coping strategies are no doubt specific and tangible; to broaden our understanding of musicians' coping mechanisms, it is also critical to evaluate the core elements in their coping behaviours. Hence, the existence of *Fit to Perform* (Araújo et al., 2017) is a crucial milestone in understanding musicians' coping strategies. Araújo et al. (2017) delved into the health-related perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of higher education music students. As mentioned in Araújo et al. (2017), coping is relevant as it relates to how musicians manage the challenges they encounter in their academic and musical activities. Understanding coping strategies used by musicians can provide insights into their ability to effectively manage the demands of their training and performance activities. This understanding is crucial for identifying areas where support and interventions may be needed to enhance musicians' coping skills and overall wellbeing. Several subscales from the COPE inventory were selected in the *Fit to Perform* study to evaluate musicians' coping behaviours, the selection of subscales is considered based on musicians' activities and professional standpoint (Araújo et al., 2017). The selected subscales in *Fit to Perform* were positive reinterpretation and growth (PRG), focus on and venting of emotions (FVE), active coping (AC), planning (P), suppression of competing activities (SCA), and use of instrumental social support (ISS). Mental disengagement (MD) was excluded from the final report because of its low internal reliability. Data from the *Fit to Perform* study of musicians' coping strategies were analysed in relation to different instrumental groups and genders (Araújo et al., 2017).

According to the results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses on subscales of coping, Araújo et al. (2017) demonstrated that when analysed collectively, sex, level of study, and instrumental group significantly predicted subscales in the COPE Inventory, including the use of instrumental social support (ISS, 6%) and focus on and venting of emotions (FVE, 7%). Moreover, the use of instrumental social support and the focus on and venting of emotions were consistently predicted by sex and level of study. For instance, within the dataset of *Fit to Perform*, female postgraduate students tend to use more coping strategies related to instrumental social support and focus on and venting of emotions (Araújo et al., 2017). As such, gender differences, level of study, and particularly the use of instrumental social support and focus on and venting of emotions provided the potential to further examine musicians' coping characteristics, including comparisons with general university students (McConkey & Kuebel, 2022; Nogaj, 2017).

Furthermore, it would be beneficial to explore the relationships between different coping strategies used by musicians. This includes investigating how specific coping strategies may be interconnected or influence each other. In the *Fit to Perform* study (Araújo et al., 2017), no correlation analysis was conducted between the subscales of coping, particularly between the use of instrumental social support (ISS) and focus and venting of emotions (FVE). In terms of potential benefits, conducting further correlation analysis and investigations, including the analysis of coping strategies individually or their correlation with specific demographic factors such as sex or instrument group, could enhance our understanding of the interactions between different coping strategies. By expanding the correlation analyses between coping strategies, an initial development on how problem- and emotion-oriented coping interacts with musicians' coping behaviours can be explored (Lazarus, 1993).

Another point that the *Fit to Perform* study did not pick up is the extended variety of coping behaviours of different types of musicians. In *Fit to Perform*, participants involved in data collection are conservatoires students in the United Kingdom, meaning that specific coping strategies are analysed at the tertiary education level only. Differences in age can be used to justify musicians' use of coping strategies in a wider context, especially in the development and process of coping skills throughout their transitions from students to professionals (Aldwin, 2011; Perkins et al, 2017).

Further exploration of musicians' specific coping strategies and building upon and enhancing existing coping strategies should be considered equally important. The investigation of coping strategies and related behaviours in musicians is a longitudinal progress, as musicians' coping could be personal where a coping strategy might vary in each individual. The ultimate goal of investigating musicians' coping strategies could lead to the enhancement of psychological resilience, with growing support for handling the challenges faced by musicians at different times and occasions. Further details of psychological resilience are discussed in the following section.

2.3.4 Coping in Conservatoires

Following Papageorgi et al. (2010b) on coping strategies in conservatoire and university music students, the environment – conservatoire – had a significant impact on how students coped with challenges and psychological issues. Considering coping as a changing topic when applied to different domains, musicians' coping experiences are personal. General findings from psychology in understanding coping might not be fully applicable in revealing how musicians cope, as well as the specific characteristics of their coping behaviours. While the literature and theories in psychology have provided insights into coping mechanisms and strategies, it is important to recognise that musicians may have unique coping strategies that

are specific to their situation. For example, musicians may use their musical skills and talent as coping mechanisms, which may not be applicable in other fields or situations.

Additionally, the demands and pressures of music education may differ from those of other fields, and may require unique coping strategies. Therefore, it is important to consider specific contexts and circumstances when studying musicians' coping mechanisms. In light of this concern, an open exploration of revisiting conservatoire music students' experiences and perceptions is sensible. The investigation of coping within conservatoires also follows the study by Perkins et al. (2017) on enablers and barriers to music students' optimal health. Perkins et al. (2017) found that support services and the environment are part of the enablers, while for support services (for music students to cope with challenges in achieving optimal health), a conservatoire-wide provision is also mentioned as an important factor. Existing studies have pointed out the influence of conservatoire and environment on coping, and this study presents the impact of the environment from the perspective of conservatoire music students.

2.4 Psychological Resilience

As demonstrated in existing research, psychological resilience and coping within the reaction to stress are closely related; both psychological resilience and coping serve as predictive factors for each other (Cameron et al., 2007; de la Fuente et al., 2017). This section discusses different definitions and theoretical perspectives of psychological resilience, followed by what influences or impacts resilience, tools for measuring resilience, and what is known about resilience among musicians and relevant populations. This underpinning research is discussed below.

2.4.1 Definitions of Resilience

In current literature, there are a number of definitions regarding ‘psychological resilience’ or ‘resilience’. The concept of resilience was first introduced by Holling (1973) in ecology and is referred to as:

Resilience determines the persistence of relationships within a system and is a measure of the ability of these systems to absorb changes of state variables, driving variables, and parameters, and still persist. In this definition resilience is the property of the system and persistence or probability of extinction is the result. (p.17)

The initial definition of resilience by Holling (1973) provided a basic idea of how resilience should work, specifically in the field of ecology and the environment. Later on, in 1996, Holling took resilience further into its relationship with stability, where unlike the concept of stability, resilience implies the capacity to change, adapt and persist during unexpected adverse events or conditions (Holling, 1996; Holmes, 2017).

Resilience has been introduced across various disciplines from a socio-ecological perspective. According to Carpenter et al. (2001), who commented on Holling’s idea of resilience, Carpenter et al. (2001) summarised several aspects and components of social-ecological resilience:

Based on this interpretation [the socio-ecological perspective], resilience has the following three properties: (a) the amount of change the system can undergo (and implicitly, therefore, the amount of extrinsic force the system can sustain) and still remain within the same domain of attraction (that is, retain the same controls on structure and function); (b) the degree to which the system is capable of self-organization (versus lack of organization, or organization forced by external factors); and (c) the degree to which the system can build the capacity to learn and adapt. (p.766)

2.4.1.1 Development of Psychological Resilience

Although earlier discoveries of resilience mostly occurred within ecology, the ecological fundamentals of resilience were later reflected in the development of resilience in psychology and sociology. Specifically, elements of change, adaptation, and persistence are brought from social-ecological resilience to humans as solutions to face and cope with unexpected events or challenges. The concept of resilience, known as psychological resilience, has been brought to the field of psychology and applied to humans in recent years. Concerning resilience in the human domain and psychology, Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) proposed that psychological resilience comprises positive adaptation and that adversity is an important element in developing psychological resilience in humans, where adaptation also serves as an important component closely related to psychological resilience.

Moving beyond the ecological perspective of resilience, psychological resilience can be explored through coping and protective behaviours in a specific environment (Ungar, 2011). According to Ungar (2011) in the field of psychology, resilience refers to an individual's ability to overcome adversity and continue his or her development. From Ungar's perspective, resilience is considered at the individual level based on one's capacity, different from other definitions or perspectives that resilience is a standardised process. Ungar (2011) also suggested that other than an individual concept, resilience could be seen as a social construct embedded into wellbeing, where resilience relies on an individual's navigation to resources and negotiation for resources. The environmental viewpoint of resilience proposed by Ungar (2011) emphasises the importance of surrounding external resources for an individual, given that there is appropriate health support, resources, and services in that scenario. Resilience from an environmental perspective can be understood if a specific social setting is known and familiar. For instance, to explore the resilience of

musicians through the definition established in Ungar (2011), a thorough navigation of the musical environment is also required.

From an educational perspective, the definition of resilience is broad. According to Horne and Orr (1998), psychological resilience is a fundamental quality of individuals, groups, organisations, and systems as a whole to respond productively to significant changes (Horne & Orr, 1998, p. 31). Compared to the environmental viewpoint of resilience in Ungar's research, the definition of resilience by Horne and Orr (1998) is relatively general, describing that resilience builds upon responses to a significant change, while various individual and organisational actions in the process of developing resilience or responding to change are not specified or standardised within the educational context.

2.4.1.2 Contributors to Resilience

In relation to health and wellbeing, a common definition of psychological resilience refers to “the sustained growth as a result of a healthy response to stressful situations” (Mansfield et al., 2016, p. 79). As mentioned by Mansfield et al. (2016), both personal and contextual resources contribute to the overall development of psychological resilience, as well as the use of particular strategies. Personal and contextual resources involve motivation and social and emotional competence, where strategies mainly refer to the use of coping strategies, including problem solving, goal setting, and maintaining work-life balance (Mansfield et al., 2016). Mansfield et al. (2016) also identified a framework of resilience in an educational context with five overarching themes: (1) understanding resilience and the positions of resilience in (2) relationships, (3) wellbeing, (4) motivation, and (5) emotions. Similar to the earlier discussion on coping with whether the topic should be treated as a process or outcome, the definition of resilience established by Mansfield et al. (2016) defined resilience as an outcome after successful and healthy responses to stressful situations. However, in the study

by Mansfield et al. (2016), specific responses on how to be resilient were not clarified from the health and wellbeing perspective, similar to the case of defining resilience in education.

Considering resilience in higher education, according to Kinchin (2017), who mapped the terrain of pedagogic frailty, the study mentioned the importance of resilience in university education, where the capacity of psychological resilience is highly determined by an individual's personal resources, such as emotions and social competence. According to another study by Martin and Marsh (2006) on resilience in an educational context, academic resilience develops with individual confidence (self-efficacy) and low levels of anxiety within the learning environment. A total of 402 Australian high school students completed an instrument that measured academic resilience (students' ability to effectively deal with challenges, adversity, and pressure in the academic environment), between-network predictors (using the Student Motivation and Engagement Scale), and between-network educational and psychological outcomes (including students' enjoyment of school, class participation, and general self-esteem). The findings suggest that lower levels of anxiety are significantly correlated with higher levels of academic resilience, while self-efficacy is a significant predictor of academic resilience. Martin and Marsh (2006) also mentioned that the development of individual self-efficacy restructures student learning to maximise opportunities for success, thus providing a basis for the enhancement of academic resilience.

The multidimensional meanings of psychological resilience can also be traced back to fundamental research by Egeland et al. (1993), arguing that the construction of resilience consists of both fixed and changing factors. Resilience is affected by both an individual's personality and the consequences of interacting with the individual's environment (Egeland et al., 1993). Considering the context of this doctoral research, the psychological resilience of musicians could be understood and investigated through their coping behaviours in musical

activities, as well as interactions with the conservatoire or professional environment in the musical field.

2.4.2 Resilience in Music Training

Resilience training interventions exist in professional fields such as medical careers, police forces, and sports performers (Sarkar & Fletcher, 2017). The focus of resilience development differs among professions because of specific demands and working environments. However, research on psychological resilience in musicians or in the field of music, including both psychological and physical resilience, is still scarce. As mentioned, investigations of musicians' psychological resilience have started to grow in recent years.

Holmes (2017) discussed the transfer of the resilience framework from psychology to music, music performance, and training. The research by Holmes (2017) reinforced a critical point of understanding musicians' resilience, asking "what is the relevance of resilience to musicians and what constitutes resilience in the context of music performance?" (Holmes, 2017, p. 116). Holmes (2017) pointed out that the significant challenge faced by musicians is their aim towards a successful and sustainable music performance career, where they are challenged by environmental situations and events throughout the process of developing their professional careers. From this viewpoint, psychological resilience in musicians, as discussed by Holmes (2017), has emerged as an influence of the environment, taking into account the development of individual resilience. The interactions between the personal development of resilience and the environment are discussed later in this chapter, exploring the impact of musical and professional environments on musicians' mental health, psychological resilience, and coping (see Section 2.6.3.2 Social Environment and Resilience).

The appropriate definition of psychological resilience for musicians should be thoroughly considered in this doctoral research project, especially considering the significant

demands and challenges of musical performance and activities. Psychological resilience in this doctoral research is not limited to personal aspects but also implies interactions between individuals and environments (Egeland et al., 1993). For musicians, institutions are responsible for supporting the development of psychological resilience (Kegelaers et al., 2020).

Kegelaers et al. (2020) specifically investigated the relationship between mental health issues and resilience among musicians. A total of 64 musicians (including music students and professional musicians) completed a survey measuring symptoms of mental health issues (General Health Questionnaire 12-item version), resilience (Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale 10), hours of practice, and physical health and health-promoting behaviours. The findings suggest that musicians experience high levels of depression and anxiety, while compared to professional musicians, music students experience significantly more symptoms of mental health issues. Moreover, resilience and general physical health are negatively correlated with depression and anxiety (Kegelaers et al., 2020). The study by Kegelaers et al. (2020) revealed an initial understanding of how resilience influences the health and wellbeing of musicians, especially music students.

In terms of variables that might confound notions of resilience as they relate to the study's demographics, several concerns have been pointed out in the current literature. Ang et al. (2018) investigated the association between demographic characteristics and resilience among nurses in Singapore. The findings suggested that marital status, age group, years of experience in the field, educational qualification, and job grade were significantly associated with resilience, where a greater amount of experience in these variables resulted in higher resilience levels. Within the field of music, Kegelaers et al. (2020) collected a number of demographic variables related to the measurement of musicians' psychological resilience, including age, gender, years since starting to play their main instrument, professional status

(i.e., student or professional), and principal instrument. Findings from Kegelaers et al. (2020) showed that professional musicians resulted in higher resilience scores than music students; however, no significant differences were found among musicians playing different types of instruments.

In addition to these basic demographic variables, socioeconomic status (SES) and cultural background have also been found to influence resilience. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2018), socioeconomic status is related to spending on education and students' ability to perform and enjoy a sense of wellbeing. For instance, OECD (2018) depicts a specific framework of resilience in students with immigrant backgrounds to explain why they perform worse at school and report lower levels of social and emotional wellbeing than the general population. With regard to the educational environment, occupation, household resources, parental situations, and particular variables were found to have a significant impact on how specific populations understand and perceive resilience. The OECD (2018) concluded that socioeconomic status affects the process from adversity to adjustment. For example, parental and occupational status directly affect the number of resources that a household can allocate to a child's upbringing, which is associated with the family's ability to nurture and the child's cognitive development. Socioeconomic status also reflects the number of educational resources available for students, including the equipment and learning environment. Meanwhile, cultural status, including time spent parenting and access to social networks, translated into one of the students' resilience variables. See Figure 2.1 for a detailed expression of how socio-economic status affects resilience.

Figure 2. 1 How socio-economic status affects the resilience process



Note: This figure was produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 2018, and it summarises how socioeconomic status and cultural status affect the resilience process. From “Resilience and The Socio-economic Status of Students with An Immigrant Background”, by OECD, 2018, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education*, p. 153. Copyright 2018 by OECD.

Existing literature on psychological resilience agrees that resilience should be built in an individual during the early stages of development (Boyden & Mann, 2005; Campbell-Sills et al., 2006; Greenberg, 2006). Proactive development of psychological resilience is closely linked to interactions with changing environments. In this doctoral research, conservatoire settings and professional fields of music should be considered when investigating the psychological resilience of musicians. With reference to the context of developmental psychology (Grotberg, 2003), the aim of including psychological resilience in this doctoral research is to understand the risk and protective factors that enable an individual to overcome or be resilient to adverse life experiences.

2.4.3 Resilience as a Musician

Psychological resilience, such as understanding coping in musicians, is another area worth exploring in relation to musicians’ backgrounds and research contexts. Although coping and resilience are related, they are also distinct concepts. Coping is the process of reducing the

immediate negative impact of stress, whereas resilience is the process of promoting positive long-term outcomes and is always adaptive. It is important to note that coping can be either adaptive or maladaptive. There are existing resilience training interventions in medicine (mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques, cognitive-behavioural therapy, peer support and debriefing sessions, education on self-care and stress management), police force (trauma-focused training, mindfulness and relaxation techniques, cognitive-behavioural therapy, and team-building exercises), and sports (goal-setting and visualisation exercises, team building, and communication training) (Sarkar & Fletcher, 2017). Resilience training interventions (and resilience in general) for musicians are rare. However, investigations into musicians' psychological resilience have grown in recent years.

Holmes (2017) proposed a transfer of the concept of resilience from psychology to musical performance and training. Holmes (2017) asks “what is the relevance of resilience to musicians and what constitutes resilience in the context of music performance?” (p. 116). Holmes (2017) pointed out that aspiring towards a successful and sustainable music performance career is a significant challenge faced by musicians challenged by environmental situations and events throughout their professional career development. As musicians begin to experience career-related demands and stressors, the educational environment plays an important supporting role. It has been proposed that institutions should be responsible for supporting the development of students' psychological resilience (Kegelaers et al., 2020). Developing a clearer understanding of the interactions between individuals and their environments can also help provide insights into musicians' psychological resilience (Egeland et al., 1993). To further explore the application of resilience or psychological resilience in musicians, it is crucial to understand the meaning of resilience in musicians and music performances.

2.4.4 Looking at Coping and Resilience Together in Musicians

Based on research on the relationship between resilience and coping, there is evidence that the two constructs are related. De la Fuente et al. (2017) found a positive and significant relationship between the association and prediction between resilience and coping strategies in undergraduate students' academic achievement. Both resilience and coping strategies have been found to predict academic achievement (De la Fuente et al., 2017). A higher level of psychological resilience has been found to relate to better coping, fostering the use of adaptive coping styles, and benefiting mental health and wellbeing (Wu et al., 2020). Van der Hallen and colleagues (2020) conducted a cross-sectional network analysis between coping and resilience. Their findings suggest that although coping and resilience are distinct, they are related in terms of their interactive characteristics. The use of social support, active coping, goal efficacy, and planning are crucial factors in bridging the gap between coping and resilience. These initial findings suggest that coping and resilience are related to some degree and that one seems to influence the other.

Egeland et al. (1993) proposed that resilience development is affected by both an individual's personality and the consequences of interacting with their environment (Egeland et al., 1993). Psychological resilience and coping are relevant yet distinctive constructs in terms of emotion regulation and capacity. Subtle distinctions differentiate between resilience and coping. While coping refers to dealing with challenges or stressors, resilience refers to coping with adversity (challenges or stressors) and achieving positive adaptation (even within challenging environments). One could consider coping and coping strategies as behavioural aspects of reacting to stress, whereas resilience is the capacity of one's coping ability.

Within the context of music making, psychological resilience within musicians could be understood and investigated through their use of coping behaviours, as well as interactions with the conservatoire or professional music-making environment. A clear understanding of

the interactions between musicians and their environments would reveal the impact of how coping and resilience are connected. In addition to individual factors, the music-making environment is crucial to understanding how these constructs relate to musicians. To expand the discussion on musicians' coping, investigating the existence of this potential relationship among musicians would be a significant contribution.

2.5 Self-Compassion

Self-compassion or 'self-compassionate coping' is an individual coping behaviour that relies heavily on internal resources and coping strategies. Following the previous discussion on psychological resilience, self-compassion led to a more detailed investigation of individual factors in coping behaviours and mental health. As revealed in the recent literature, for individuals across different domains, self-compassion can be regarded as an underlying strategy when coping with negative emotions and challenges (Costa et al., 2016; Diedrich et al., 2014; Germer & Neff, 2013; Lam, 2018). However, the impact of using self-compassion in coping with negative emotions specifically raised by musical activities has barely been explored in psychological literature. Developing self-compassion as a centralised topic in coping and mental health areas is worth considering.

According to the theory of self-compassion in positive psychology, a noticeable difference exists between self-esteem and self-compassion. Earlier research on self-esteem often focused on self-confidence and self-criticism but neglected the reactions and approaches to failures and negative emotions (Kelley & Farley, 2019). Compared to self-esteem, self-compassion focuses more on aspects of personal resources to cope with failures and unpleasant experiences. Simultaneously, self-compassion facilitates a more manageable approach for individuals to enhance their mental skills and responses to challenges (Neff, 2003; Neff & Vonk, 2009). Commonly seen in recent literature, self-compassion serves as an

alternative version of self-esteem, in which self-compassion is comparatively more encompassing, considering that a wider range of perspectives has emerged in self-compassion.

2.5.1 Components of Self-Compassion

According to Neff's (2003) grounded theory of self-compassion, the positive construct of self-compassion includes three aspects: (1) self-kindness, (2) common humanity and (3) mindfulness. These components can be understood as the process of understanding self-compassion and a collective definition of self-compassion (Neff & Germer, 2017; Neff & Vonk, 2009; Raes et al., 2011).

First, starting with self-kindness in self-compassion is the first step in changing individuals' self-perceptions, including being gentle and understanding of themselves (Germer, 2009; Leary et al., 2007; Neff & Germer, 2017). Second, common humanity emerges as individuals seek common feelings or understanding with others experiencing similar challenges or scenarios. To a certain degree, common humanity replicates the concept of social connectedness. In this doctoral research, common humanity is closely related to the particular social environment of music performance and the community of musicians. Third, mindfulness is included in understanding self-compassion, although it is often studied as a separate topic in psychology. For further discussion regarding mindfulness among musicians, Czajkowski et al. (2022) investigated the effects of an 8-week mindfulness course on students at a leading conservatoire. The findings from their study suggest that incorporating mindfulness training into music education could holistically benefit students, enhancing their music practice and personal lives through improved self-awareness, coping strategies, and emotional regulation.

Emphasising the practicality of mindfulness, as in existing mindfulness-based training programmes, the function of mindfulness within self-compassion is relatively immersive (rather than implementing the complete idea and practices of mindfulness in psychology). At this point, mindfulness describes a balanced awareness of an individual's mindset or is treated as an attitude.

In contrast to the positive constructs of self-compassion, there are three aspects in the measurement of self-compassion: (4) self-judgement, (5) isolation, and (6) overidentification (Neff, 2003; Neff & Germer, 2012). In addition to the positive constructs of self-compassion, some of the negative aspects of self-compassion will also be discussed in this research, and the development of musician-specific training interventions in the future (e.g., self-judgement and over-identification) appears fairly prevalent among musicians (Kelley & Farley, 2019). In terms of measuring self-compassion, the Self-Compassion Scale theorises that better performance in positive aspects usually predicts lower scores in these negative aspects. The negative components of self-compassion exist as extreme results of the positive constructs mentioned earlier.

2.5.2 Self-Compassion in Musicians

From the viewpoint of clinical psychological therapy, self-acceptance suggests the basis of self-compassion in practice. To illustrate, when an individual encounters negative emotions and experiences, a self-compassionate perspective should represent an optimal impact by not exaggerating it (Neff, 2003; Neff et al., 2007). According to research by Germer and Neff (2013) on self-compassion in clinical practice, to the extent of implying self-compassion in practice, self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness could be seen as a package of changing attitudes and responses to negative emotions (or psychological challenges raised by musical activities in the case of this doctoral research).

Apart from the influence of self-compassion on mental health issues as mentioned in the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme (see Section 2.7.3 Self-Compassion in Practice), the impact of self-compassion on general health and wellbeing in general is also presented in the literature. Homan and Sirois (2017) explored the positive impact of self-compassion on physical health and health-promoting behaviours. A total of 176 individuals completed a survey measuring self-compassion (12-item Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form), health outcomes (RAND-36), perceived stress, and health behaviour. A significant positive but indirect effect of self-compassion on physical health was found; in particular, kindness, acceptance, and mindfulness bore the benefits of stress reduction and promotion of health behaviours. Furthermore, based on the research by Breines and Chen (2012) on the relationship between self-compassion and self-improvement, a higher level of self-compassion results in higher self-improvement motivation, supporting the important criteria of positive adjustments in self-compassion.

In order to better justify the impact of self-compassion, group characteristics of musicians should be taken into the account of self-compassion. Following initial research into self-compassion level of musicians (Kelley & Farley, 2019; Lam, 2018), in terms of professional demands and training environment, there is a difference between musicians and general population regarding their self-compassion level. This difference suggests that the navigation of self-compassion should be adapted according to the characteristics of different domains and backgrounds.

According to Kemp (1996) on the personalities of musicians, musicians are relatively introverted compared to other populations, predicting a greater chance of disconnecting from the social environment or share of emotions. Considering the group characteristics and professional demands of musicians, more specific concerns are raised regarding the emerging psychological measures in this research, especially performance-related challenges, including

performance anxiety and perfectionism (Van Kemenade et al., 1995). Another study by Kelley and Farley (2019) linked self-compassion and performance anxiety in music students to justify the potential relationship between them. However, the correlations between performance anxiety and the components of self-compassion were not as significant as expected, except for the over-identification subscale (Kelley & Farley, 2019). Therefore, especially later in the data collection of this doctoral research, the relationship between musicians' performance anxiety and over-identification (one of the negative constructs of self-compassion) could be worthy of exploration.

Birkett (2014) points out that self-compassion is correlated with experiences of failure or trauma. Although musicians might not be experiencing the exact scenarios of 'traumas' as stated in psychological studies, the experiences of mistaken or unsatisfying performances could trigger significant emotional impact. The inclusion of self-compassion in this doctoral research serves as an important component in assessing overall mental health (rather than considering an exact psychological problem). As discussed earlier in this section, the effectiveness of using self-compassion in mental health issues, including stress, anxiety, and depression, is significant, which also serves as a tool for individuals to enhance their mental wellbeing.

2.6 Musicians' Health and Wellbeing

It would be beneficial to assess the health and wellbeing of musicians after reviewing the specific coping strategies and considerations that apply to them. As the health and wellbeing of musicians serves as an overarching theme throughout this doctoral research, there are different factors that affect the level of health and wellbeing. For instance, within the field of psychology, lifestyle, health-promoting behaviours, sleep quality, coping strategies, mental

health, and other potential factors are commonly considered influential factors in health and wellbeing (Brazier et al., 1992).

The main goal of this thesis is to examine the coping mechanisms and psychological resilience of musicians, with a particular emphasis on their health and wellbeing, as well as related topics. In addition to discussing health and wellbeing as a conceptual topic, evaluation of surrounding factors provides a way to understand health and wellbeing more practically, especially through particular actions and constructs seen on musicians. Particularly for musicians, who face specific occupational demands and challenges, it is reasonable to consider their health and wellbeing by considering some musician-specific concerns, such as coping with intensive music-making and psychological pressure from performance, practice, and rehearsals (Ascenso et al., 2016).

2.6.1 Health in Positive Psychology

Instead of identifying negative symptoms that affect musicians' health, a more proactive approach to health might be worth investigating to address the need to proactively enhance health and wellbeing. According to Seligman (2008), health can be approached through the lens of positive psychology, which also explores better mental health in certain aspects, including positive emotions, engagement, purpose, positive relationships, and positive accomplishments (p. 4). Seligman (2008) strengthened that "being psychologically well" is defined by certain measures, including biological, subjective and functional status, however "being psychologically well" is qualitatively different from the absence of mental illness. This extends to the advantage of positive health, where it does not necessarily limit its application in individuals suffering or recovering from psychological issues but also its proactive benefits for the general population.

The conceptual framework of positive health is divided into subjective, biological and functional variables. According to Seligman (2008), subjective measures of positive health refer to an individual's own perception of his/her psychological state, including the sense of positive physical wellbeing, absence of somatic symptoms, confidence, control over health, life satisfaction, and positive emotions. Second, biological measures are used to evaluate an individual's physiological function, including heart function, pulmonary disease, osteoarthritis, and diabetes mellitus. Nevertheless, functional variables in positive health evaluate an individual's function based on laboratory test data (positive physical capacity) and personal ecology (person-environment fit), in which personal ecology in positive health measures the optimal state of adaptation between an individual's bodily function and lifestyle demands.

In this doctoral research, it would be appropriate to examine the functional category of positive health in musicians as a means to effectively enhance their overall wellbeing. Functional variables in examining positive health emphasise the "person-environment fit" in adaptation, meanwhile maintaining the consideration of personal and ecological characteristics (Seligman, 2008). The "person-environment fit" mentioned in Seligman's study might imply in musicians as well (conservatoire music students in particular), as it is crucial to understand the impact on health from how musicians fit or adapt to the conservatoire environment while studying, rather than just considering health at an individual level. Embracing the concept of positive health and its functional perspective, the topic 'health' can be more specifically shaped according to the scenarios faced by musicians. In terms of value and appropriateness, the lens of positive psychology is worth considering for how researchers might support musicians in coping with the challenges raised by conservatoire and musical training.

Positive psychology would lead to research on musicians' wellbeing from an optimistic perspective, with the ultimate aim of maximising its benefits to a wider community of musicians, contributing to the development of health and wellbeing in every musician. Rather than depicting negative behaviours and ill-being, the health of musicians could be seen from several positive aspects. The elements of positive psychology in this thesis mainly refer to musicians' psychological wellbeing, adaptive coping, and emotion regulation. The use of positive psychology differs from former deficits-focused approaches; exploring musicians' health and wellbeing through the lens of positive psychology uses an eudaimonic approach rather than emphasising negative symptoms or problems, such as anxiety, depression, and perfectionism. The study by Ascenso et al. (2016) explored the meaning of wellbeing in musicians following the PERMA model, which looked into wellbeing through positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishments.

Considering the occupational demands of musicians, positive emotions are likely linked to musical playing, the sense of engagement is experienced by different types of ensembles, and meaning also emerges in the nature of music making. In terms of musical experiences, 'relationships' regulate and respond to musicians' positive functioning. A sense of accomplishment mainly develops based on individual goals and their positions in group performance (Ascenso et al., 2016).

2.6.2 Profiling Health of Musicians

2.6.2.1 Overall Health and Wellbeing

According to a study by Williamon et al. (2009) on profiling musicians' health, wellbeing, and performance, the evaluation of musicians' health and wellbeing can be divided into physical and mental fitness. Williamon et al. (2009) explored a collative measurement of health and wellbeing aspects for musicians, including physical strength and flexibility,

cardiovascular fitness, health-promoting behaviours, anxiety, and perfectionism. In a sample of music students from the Royal College of Music (n=59) and Royal Northern College of Music (n=32), music students tended to fall below their target BMI, and only under 40% of students achieved above-average cardiovascular fitness, while most frequently achieving below average or average. Pain has also been reported to be a significant factor in preventing music students to perform. Regarding mental health and wellbeing, in terms of fatigue, significant correlations were found with perfectionism, trait anxiety, health promotion, and self-regulated learning. Williamon et al. (2009) reported a trend toward poor fitness among musicians, including a high chance of injury and pain problems. A later study pointed out that pain and physical discomfort caused by injuries could affect musicians' overall physical health (Kenny & Ackermann, 2009).

In a study by Araújo et al. (2017) investigating the health of higher education music students, the findings also suggested that injury and ill-health are common among musicians. According to research by Percen et al. (2017) on musicians' experiences of psychological challenges, musicians with successful performance careers often suffer from social isolation, huge practice volumes, injury, perfectionism, and psychological pressure owing to the maintenance of high performance standards. To an extreme extent, other conditions such as musculoskeletal and neuromuscular overuse (Zetterberg et al., 1998), anxiety-related disorders, and music performance anxiety are common problems for musicians in intensive performance careers (Kobori et al., 2011; Percen et al., 2017).

2.6.2.2 Health and the Musical Environment

Existing literature has investigated certain health concerns during the transition to full-time music education, particularly the transition to conservatoire training. According to MacNamara et al. (2006), environment, practice, and competitiveness are overarching

challenges for incoming music students. Some examples of challenges raised by the new learning environment are the increased amount of deliberate practice, expectations of others, and competitive nature of conservatoire. The above problems indicate some of the main difficulties faced by musicians when adapting to a conservatoire environment.

Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) presented an in-depth investigation of musicians' health and wellbeing, which analysed musicians' general health, physical and psychological health, and social relationships and support accordingly. A total of 126 musicians completed a survey evaluating their wellbeing through quality of life, general health, physical health, psychological health, social relationships, and environment (using the World Health Organisation Quality of Life-BREF questionnaire). The study by Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) explored wellbeing among college music students and amateur musicians in Western Switzerland. The results suggested that college music students' quality of life, general health, and physical health were comparatively lower than those of amateur musicians. This indicates the need for higher health awareness and promotion among college music students to achieve healthy music making (Antonini Philippe et al., 2019).

In terms of physical health, college music students reported poorer physical health than amateur musicians, possibly due to the excessive practice and performance anxiety problems commonly found among music students (Williamson & Thompson, 2006). Interestingly, for psychological health, the findings in Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) suggested a higher level of psychological wellbeing among musicians who participated in judged performances and competitions, while female musicians tended to have lower psychological health scores. In the study by Antonini Philippe and colleagues (2019), musicians' health and wellbeing were approached from two perspectives: musical activities as either a (1) facilitator or (2) disruptor of health and wellbeing. As mentioned, the point suggested by Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) is closely related to the occupational concerns of

musicians, given that music-making can be a stressful and physically demanding activity, but serves as the main activity throughout musicians' performance careers.

Existing findings conclude that other than personal factors that affect musicians' health and wellbeing, social relationships and support could also positively encourage musicians' wellbeing (Antonini Philippe et al., 2019; Ascenso et al., 2017). The impact of social and environmental factors is discussed in Section 2.6.3 – Environmental factors and their impact on musicians' health and wellbeing.

2.6.3 Environmental Factors and their Impact upon Musicians' Health and Wellbeing

2.6.3.1 The Importance of External Factors

In this doctoral research, the approach to investigate the health and wellbeing of musicians is not limited to individual factors, but also expands to the influences of external or environmental factors. Developing based on individual factors that impact musicians' health and wellbeing, coping, and psychological resilience is related to interactions with the environment and access to support within the community. Moving beyond personal resources, as mentioned in the discussions on coping and self-compassion, the resources provided to musicians in terms of environmental support are also critical in this doctoral research. Taking coping and psychological resilience as examples, the proactive approach to enhancing capacities for coping and resilience is largely determined by the resources and support provided to musicians (Cameron et al., 2007; Pierce, Sarason & Sarason, 1996; Schneider & Chesky, 2011). In particular, the meaning of psychological resilience on musicians, which does not certainly limit individual resources, contributes to resilience, as well as the importance of external and environmental support. This section discusses environmental factors that can impact musicians' health and wellbeing both positively and negatively.

Conservatoires and university music schools often have competitive, perfectionistic, and teaching considerations. Conservatoire and musical training environments are more critical than they used to be (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021; Miksza et al., 2019). There have been more initiatives to investigate musicians' health and wellbeing in Western music education. Examples include the pioneering *Musical Impact* project (<http://healthyconservatoires.org/musicalimpact>) and the Healthy Conservatoires Network (<https://healthyconservatoires.org>) in the United Kingdom. In the United States, the Health Promotion in Schools of Music Project (HPSM) serves as the same medium as *Musical Impact* and Healthy Conservatories UK to promote and advance musicians' health and wellbeing framework (Chesky et al., 2006).

While the Healthy Conservatoires Network and HPSM are both health promotion initiatives, the *Musical Impact* project mainly focused on the screening of musicians' health and wellbeing conditions, which helps researchers to understand part of the crucial health and wellbeing issues among musicians. However, initiatives aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of musicians are still desirable. These existing programmes raise awareness of how conservatoires or music education environments influence musicians' health and wellbeing. Musicians' skill development, including coping and mental skills, could benefit from the wider attention of environmental factors (Ceci et al., 2003; MacNamara et al., 2006). Parkes (1986) investigated the role of environmental factors and situational characteristics in coping and mental skills. The findings suggest that environmental factors (including social support and demand) are significant predictors of direct coping and suppression, which underpins how environmental factors affect health and wellbeing, particularly mental health.

This doctoral research project also aimed to highlight the importance of institutional culture and learning in enhancing the health and wellbeing of musicians. Findings from the report by Papageorgi et al. (2010a) investigated professional and personal development of

music students. The findings suggest that a positive learning and institutional environment allows musicians to flourish and realise their potential in a supportive learning community. Papageorgi et al. (2010a) also suggested that the coping skills of music students are not limited to the context of music performance and technical preparation but may assist music students at a professional development level. For example, some non-performance-related skills should be considered to help music students facilitate a smooth transition from student to professional life, including strategies in employment opportunities and organisational and networking skills (Papageorgi et al., 2010a).

As mentioned earlier, resources for musicians to cope with challenges and emotional difficulties are determined by the training and support they receive. Therefore, to better understand the model for supporting and developing musicians' health and wellbeing, environmental factors are an important part of the structure of this research topic. Demands raised by the environment are constantly changing as musicians have different characteristics and careers throughout their music development. Therefore, in line with the concept of coping mentioned in this chapter, coping with a changing environment can also be a challenge for musicians (MacNamara et al., 2006).

To review the influence of external and environmental factors on musicians' health and wellbeing, three areas are discussed in this section: (1) social perspectives, (2) support and resources, and (3) professional pathways. When discussing these areas, the main background and settings refer to the music education environment, particularly music conservatoires. Transitions throughout formal training in music are being considered, especially when entering higher education and entering professional careers (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021). Musicians' transitions usually involve changes in the surrounding environment, activities, and mental status that require resources to cope with the next stage. As for musicians, when they graduate from college and enter professional careers,

adjustments to a new stage in their careers are crucially important, such as the transition from a student to a professional musician or to a planned career. In addition to the internal resources of musicians, it would also be helpful to consider how the educational environment can support them with appropriate resources during transition.

2.6.3.2 Social Environment and Resilience

Following the concept of psychological resilience discussed previously (see Section 2.4.1 Definitions of Resilience), psychological resilience contains both personal resources and interactions with the environment. Part of the research on resilience is based on an individual's exposure to the environment; for example, the impact of the learning environment on the personal development of children and teenagers.

In light of this doctoral research project, the ecological factors that affect psychological resilience are mostly influenced by the musical training environment, particularly in conservatoire settings. As the target participants in this doctoral research are primarily conservatoire music students, educational and performance-based training environments are the 'social environments' to be considered. As mentioned earlier in reviewing psychological resilience (see Section 2.4.2 Resilience in Music Training), from an ecological perspective, interactions between perceptions of the performance-based learning environment and musicians could affect their overall development.

Considering the relationship between resilience, the environment, and musicians' development, Holmes (2017) explored the concept of resilience from a musician's real-life perspective. As mentioned by Holmes (2017), artistic creativity and the musical environment are constantly changing, making environmental and risk factors more critical in musicians' development of resilience. According to Holmes (2017), musicians commonly face challenges arising from the environmental risk factors:

Of these, uncertainty and unpredictability are key - a more or less universal lack of Professional and financial security, threats to work/life balance, anxiety, and considerable external pressures are all continuing and sometimes debilitating sources of stress for many musicians, even at the highest levels of expertise. (p. 119)

‘Environment’ in sense of this doctoral research also includes the impact of social context and significant others, during challenges at different times musicians facing (MacNamara et al., 2006). By linking (1) the environment as an influential factor with (2) enhancing musicians’ psychological resilience and coping abilities, this doctoral research aims to build upon the potential relationship between these two topics on the path to professional musicians (Papageorgi et al., 2010a). As mentioned, to justify the position of coping in the discussion of the environment, it is essential to investigate psychological resilience and its link to coping. In addition to individual factors, social resources also influence coping (Holahan et al., 1996; Pierce et al., 1996). Although there are no direct relationships among the environment, psychological resilience, and coping found in the existing literature, given that the importance of social resources in both coping and resilience has been shown in previous research, it is important to further investigate the potential linkage between these topics.

Setting the conservatoire as a focused educational environment in this doctoral research, it is important to draw insights from the field of education to explore psychological resilience while discussing environmental impact. Although there are no specific scales in research that evaluate the environmental factors of a conservatoire, there are some relevant studies focusing on the conservatoire environment itself. Environmental enablers and barriers are the main evidence for the influence of social perceptions. To understand the relationships between health, wellbeing, and conservatoire, the environment should be considered as the foundation of this investigation.

A qualitative study by Perkins et al. (2017) identified several enablers and barriers to optimal health among conservatoire music students. Perkins et al. (2017) investigated the influence of music conservatoire settings on music students, and their findings were generated by interviewing conservatoire music students. Based on these findings, the enablers and barriers can be divided into three aspects: (1) lifestyle, (2) support services, and (3) environment. Support services and environmental factors are most related to the context of this doctoral research, given that lifestyle is relatively individual and subjective in generalising findings, whereas the exploration of support services and environmental factors will be more capable of reflecting the majority and practical situations. For the enablers and barriers to support services, sub-themes included support sources and conservatoire-wide provision (enablers), lack of sufficient support, and low levels of health awareness (barriers). The relevant details of the support service factors are discussed in Section 2.6.3.3 Support and Resources.

According to Perkins et al. (2017), environmental factors, including relationships and networks, also enhance music students' health, in addition to performance success and enjoyment. The above environmental enablers are closely associated with performing as sources of enjoyment and achievement, as well as building strong networks and supportive communities. These enablers are considered within the educational environment of a conservatoire, which shows the possibility of emerging findings in more educational research based on the context of environmental factors. It is also necessary to minimise the environmental barriers suggested by Perkins et al. (2017), including negative performance feedback, psychological distress, and overwork.

On the idea of enablers and barriers raised by the environment, according to Sarkar and Fletcher (2014), when encountering challenges, individuals attempt to utilise and optimise their mental qualities to cope with the stress and pressure that they experience, in

which this can be regarded as a process of building up one's psychological resilience.

Because of this mechanism, psychological resilience impacts individuals' abilities to protect themselves from stressors and influences whether a challenge is viewed as an enabler or barrier.

2.6.3.3 Support and Resources

From the above summary of perceived enablers and barriers in optimising health among musicians within the conservatoire, support services play a key role in enhancing the health and wellbeing of musicians (Perkins et al., 2017). To expand the discussion on perceived enablers and barriers in terms of support services, it is essential to consider the sources of support and their intensity. Given that musicians usually find conservatoires competitive (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021; Pecun et al., 2018; Perkins, 2013; Perkins et al., 2017), they seldom seek support from their peers and avoid discussing anxiety, which causes them to be exposed to others' judgement (Papageorgi et al., 2010b). From the existing literature, most research has concluded that institutions do not provide enough support, at least from the students' perspective (Araújo et al., 2017; Perkins et al., 2017; Schneider & Chesky, 2011). In light of this concern, institutions should be more proactive in providing support to musicians as well as facilitating better communication and confidence.

Although there are currently some ways of support introduced by conservatoires (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021; Studer et al., 2011), the effectiveness of these support services still cannot be maximised. According to research by Studer and colleagues (2011) on musicians' stage fright and coping, respectively, 65% and 85% of undergraduate music students expressed a strong need to receive more support, especially information and assistance regarding stage fright. There are several concerns regarding support and resources raised from existing literature and fellow musicians, including but not

limited to the type, amount, and intensity of support, influence, and health awareness elements in support services. These aspects determine the level of effectiveness and implementation of the support services and resources provided by a conservatoire environment. It also explains how these support resources can help musicians practically with respect to their occupational demands, rather than general services.

While providing the most appropriate and effective support services to musicians or musicians would be an ideal solution, there are extra elements aside from the nature of the support services itself. As mentioned in Perkins et al. (2017), support services are likely to be provided by the administration, teaching faculty (Norton, 2016), and management (Atkins, 2013; Williamon & Thompson, 2006). Therefore, the consideration of support services in music conservatories is related to other practical constraints regarding specific settings and demands of particular conservatories.

In practice, the function of support services and resources is to directly encourage musicians' health and wellbeing. According to a study on mental wellbeing among university-level music students in Australia and the United States (Miksza et al., 2019), universities and higher education institutions can help improve their mental wellbeing and educational outcomes through better support services. Miksza et al. (2019) used an online questionnaire to survey 293 undergraduate and graduate music students from two university music schools in the United States and Australia. These findings suggest that stress is a significant negative predictor of vitality among university music students. Moreover, the study discussed practical recommendations for helping music students deal with sources of stress in their university or in conservatoire environments (Miksza et al., 2019).

The practical recommendations mentioned in the study by Miksza et al. (2019) have implications in teaching:

Developing programs with qualities similar to those described by Zander et al. (2010),

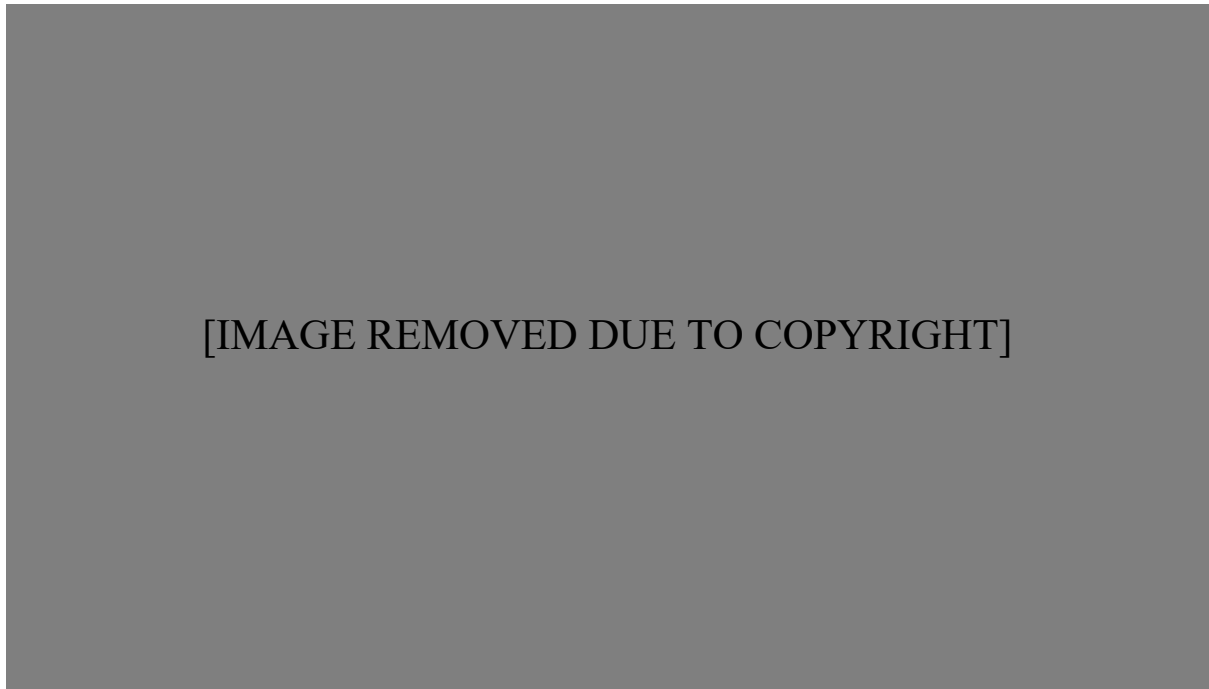
providing ways for students to increase their adaptability to new stressors, such as systematic training in coping methods and relaxation techniques, and explicitly working to socialize students with others (faculty, support staff, and peers), would seem to be a productive way forward.

University-level music programs could also consider preparing students to use approaches to problem solving, such as seeking help, and methods for viewing unexpected failures and setbacks as opportunities to learn and grow. (p.15)

From an environmental perspective, recommendations in Miksza et al. (2019) are closely related to the context of this doctoral research. It is important to improve the support and resources provided within the conservatoire environment and to ensure that assistance is widely available for musicians to access when coping with stressors and challenges.

Nevertheless, Miksza et al. (2019) also introduced a conceptual model of stress, environment, peer relationships, and adaptability to discuss students' mental wellbeing in higher education music programmes or conservatoires (see Figure 2.2). This model demonstrates how peer relationships and adaptability can mitigate stress and vitality. Miksza et al. (2019) conceptually depicted the moderating effect of stress on vitality among music students. However, other than peer relationships, the influence of musicians' surrounding environment (conservatoire) was not considered in this model. As mentioned in Miksza et al. (2019), a conservatoire learning environment is a crucial factor in supporting students' optimal functioning, including the adjustment of environmental conditions to students' needs (Rickert et al., 2015; Saphn et al., 2004). Conservatoires served as a factor that directly affected musicians' learning and training, where young musicians were immersed in such a competitive environment. The competitive environmental constraints of conservatoires are closely related to musicians' career aspirations and affect their intention to pursue a musical career (Miksza et al., 2019).

Figure 2. 2 Model of the relationship between students’ stress and wellbeing



Note: This figure was produced by Miksza, Evans and McPherson in 2019, and it summarises the conceptual model depicting the moderation of the relationship between students’ stress and well-being by perfectionist tendencies, adaptability, and quality of peer relationships. From “Wellness Among University-level Music Students: A Study of the Predictors of Subjective Vitality”, by P. Miksza, P. Evans and G. E. McPherson, 2019, *Musicae Scientiae*, p. 7. Copyright 2019 by Peter Miksza, Paul Evans and Gary E. McPherson.

At this point, the conservatoire environment not only influences musicians’ development in a one-way manner but the responses and adaptations of musicians to their learning environment should also be considered as interactive factors. Bonneville-Roussy et al. (2017) investigated music students’ motivation alongside insights into coping, environment, and career development. Bonneville-Roussy et al. (2017) used multiple group path analysis, and 605 students were involved in data collection. The findings suggested two important patterns in music students’ coping: (1) engagement-coping strategies (coping that actively deals with stress and related emotions) used by music students led to stronger musical career intentions and (2) music students’ increased use of engagement coping led to higher grades and positive affect. Conversely, engagement coping was predicted by

autonomous coping (i.e. coping triggered by intrinsic motivation). Following the significant relationship found by Bonneville-Roussy et al. (2017), where adaptive coping styles resulted in stronger musical career intentions, this study also pointed out a possible research direction towards environmental conditions, career motivation, and educational outcomes. Further details regarding how musicians' career development is influenced by their training environment are discussed in Section 2.6.3.4 Professional Pathways.

In summary, in the competitive climate of conservatoires and music schools, external support services and resources for musicians are essential. Other than musicians' individual resources for coping or handling challenges, the external supporting services and resources provided by conservatoires are also crucial in strengthening musicians' capacities to cope with challenges and enhance their resilience. In particular, the external support provided to musicians is an important source of resilience (see Section 2.4.2 Resilience in Music Training for the discussion of enhancing resilience through the provision of external support) in countering competitive performance and performance goals (Miksza et al., 2019; Murayama & Elliot, 2012), which mediates the negative effects of socially prescribed perfectionist music training. Considering conservatoires and music schools as the main providers of environmental support and resources for musicians, it is crucial to decide the appropriate types of support services as well as their delivery to musicians (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021). Based on the context of this doctoral research, instead of advocating for conservatoires to make a broader range of support services available to music students, this research aims to make the case for the use of self-compassion as a means of enhancing resilience and supporting health and wellbeing. Given that current support and resources for music students' poor health and wellbeing continue to be insufficient, other constructs including psychological resilience or self-compassion might be possible solutions to address the limited resources provided by conservatoires or the environment.

2.6.3.4 Professional Pathways

Following a discussion of musicians' social perceptions, support services, and environmental support, these topics within a conservatoire setting may have an impact on the educational outcomes of musicians. According to a report from the Department of Education (UK) in 2017, the successful career planning of university graduates directly reflects graduate outcomes (Shury et al., 2017). Specifically, the report (Department of Education, 2017) highlighted the importance of graduates' transitions in employment and graduate outcomes, whether employment is professional, managerial, non-professional, full-time, or part-time. However, the report (Department of Education, 2017) was presented using a relatively ordinary approach for assessing the general environment of tertiary education, in which the case of musicians was not specified.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter (see Section 2.6.3.1 The Importance of External Factors), the environmental influences of music training and conservatoires significantly affect musicians' future development as professional musicians in the industry. A critical milestone for musicians is the transition to formal music training or higher education. Likewise, the timepoint of musicians entering the professional music industry is worth exploring (Burt & Mills, 2006). Musicians position themselves within conservatoires according to their abilities and interests as they come to know their fit in potential professional fields for the future (Perkins, 2013). Career planning of musicians is one of the indicators of a university music performance programme or conservatoire's educational success. It also makes sense that successful music education should provide sufficient insights for musicians to define their career directions and profiles, especially when most students have a strong commitment to pursuing a career in music (Miksza et al., 2019).

López-Íñiguez & Bennett (2020) investigated the relationship between higher music education experiences and professional work among classical musicians. Career narratives were collected from eight internationally respected performers who were also proficient in multiple roles. The study demonstrated the importance of essential professional capabilities in music education, in which musicians who viewed themselves as lifelong learners were better equipped to establish and sustain successful music careers. In addition, the findings from López-Íñiguez & Burnard (2022) regarding musicians' motivations and career-related meaning-making indicate that postgraduate students, in particular, possess a strong musical calling, emotional attachment to music, and recognise the importance of continuous learning for thriving in the profession.

Interactions made during conservatoire training are important for musicians, especially in competitive and critical learning environments. As such, musicians' interactions with their learning environments influence their future career development at a certain level. Musicians face realistic challenges in choosing music as a career, including financial constraints, networking, uncertainty, and increased competition within the industry (MacNamara et al., 2006). Alongside these challenges during transitions into the professional music industry, musicians are facing more uncertainty in terms of their performance or learning, yet there is a need to consider how to support students effectively and efficiently in terms of preparing them for future careers.

Concerning the close relationship between the learning environment and musicians, especially conservatoire music students, from the perspective of institutions, the educational environment is responsible for stimulating students' engagement in professional development and networking to support their transition into professional musicians (Papageorgi et al., 2010b). The potential of musicians to learn and develop their careers is more than just talent, but more importantly, their psychological behaviours, attitudes and strategies to overcome

challenges in their pathways (Kenny & Ackermann, 2009; Kenny et al., 2012; MacNamara et al., 2008).

2.7 Scales and Measures in Music Psychology

2.7.1 Measuring Coping – COPE Inventory

For this doctoral research, the measurement and elements of coping are based on the Coping Orientation to Problems Experienced (COPE) inventory developed by Carver et al. (1989). The COPE inventory is divided into (1) problem-focused coping and (2) emotion-focused coping, with each category containing five subscales. Problem-focused coping included active coping, planning, suppression of competing activities, restraint coping, and seeking instrumental social support. For emotion-focused coping, items related to seeking emotional social support, positive reinterpretation, acceptance, denial, and turning to religion were included. In addition to these two general coping areas, the measurement of coping responses is also plugged into the COPE inventory, including focus on and venting of emotions, and both behavioural and mental disengagement. The inventory explains itself by laying out its subscales and items measured, evaluating overall coping ability, or examining details of particular coping styles that are possible using the COPE inventory (Carver et al., 1989). To bring the COPE inventory further in the context of musicians, it would be useful to examine appropriate subscales and areas related to musicians' engagement, specifically, exploring the coping strategies used by musicians and how these strategies relate to these subscales in the COPE inventory.

The action and process of coping occur at both the cognitive and behavioural levels, requiring individuals to manage or perhaps maximise their resources to appraise stressors or sources of mental pressure. In a recent investigation more specific to musicians, coping had a

certain impact on achieving excellence in performance. For example, Pecen et al. (2018) summarised several sources of coping used by musicians (regarding the transition from conservatoire music students to professional performers), including but not limited to good teachers, friends and family, self-help literature, health habits, and psychological strategies. The discussion also pointed out that coping behaviours and sources of support are slightly different among performers across different levels of expertise, in which the use of psychological coping skills is more noticeable in transitioning musicians and professional performers (Percen et al., 2018). Percen et al. (2018) suggested that, based on the subjective definition of career success and performance excellence, organisational and psychological coping skills are tailored to every musician in achieving such success. Within the musical field, research on musicians' coping has mainly focused on emotion-oriented, task-oriented, and avoidance coping.

Recent research on athletes' coping strategies can be classified into three dimensions: mastery coping, internal regulation coping, and goal coping withdrawal (Compas et al., 2001; Leprince et al., 2018; Nicholls et al., 2016). Nicholls et al. (2016) suggested a refined understanding of coping strategies: (a) mastery coping in athletes in an attempt to take control of stressful situations and eliminate stressors (including task-oriented coping and problem-focused coping); (b) internal regulation coping as an attempt to manage internal responses to stress (including emotion-focused and distraction-oriented coping); and (c) goal withdrawal coping as an attempt to ease the efforts of athletes to achieve goals (including disengagement-oriented coping and venting emotion). According to Nicholls et al. (2016), within the field of sport psychology, the results suggested that mastery coping strategies were positively correlated with performance, whereas internal regulation and goal withdrawal coping were negatively associated with performance. The initial research on athletes' specific coping strategies is directed toward mastery coping, providing some references to the

investigation of musicians' coping, given that the nature of musicians is similar to that of athletes in terms of their high performance standards and demands.

In terms of the classification of coping, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) classified coping strategies as problem- and emotion-focused. Later, more research provided insights into a detailed classification of coping strategies, including task-oriented, disengagement-oriented, and distraction-oriented coping (Connor-Smith et al., 2000). However, the classification of coping strategies does not necessarily contradict each other. As mentioned in Nicholls et al. (2016) on the classification of coping and the relationship between different coping strategies, for instance in sporting performance, the classifications do overlap across literature, and it is important to utilise different ways of categorising coping when attempting to compare studies of coping classifications.

In particular, for musicians, the elements used to measure their coping abilities share a common ideology with a broader understanding of mental health. Coping is often related to stress and anxiety in mental health, while coping could be a process of balancing a musician's emotions and maintaining normal functioning during stressful events (MacNamara et al., 2008). Hence, while investigating the mental health and wellbeing of musicians, coping could be a practical starting point to realise the strategies used in challenges in relation to psychological mentalities. Embracing the path of proactively supporting musicians in this research, the area of coping does not limit the study to behaviours after certain problems occur but also comprises the practical enhancement of musicians' coping skills and abilities before problems appear (Araújo et al., 2017). To achieve musical excellence, supporting factors that enable musicians to cope successfully with their challenges are crucial (MacNamara et al., 2006). Supporting factors and resources for musicians are discussed later in this chapter (see Section 2.3.4 Environmental Influence – DREEM and Section 2.3.5 Musician's Professional Profile).

However, the general model of coping established in psychology may not be fully applicable to musicians. According to an earlier study on the enablers and barriers in optimising the health of conservatoire music students, the specific process and time point of musicians' development of coping skills during music training remain uncertain in the existing literature (Perkins et al., 2017). Targeting musicians in particular, how they cope effectively and sustain optimal health and wellbeing remains questionable.

To summarise, the definitions of coping are clearly stated in the current literature, such as in the fields of psychology and sport psychology; however, specific definitions of musicians' coping remain unclear. A possible solution to this knowledge gap would be to investigate musicians' coping behaviours with reference to existing discussions in sports psychology, where researchers have attempted to link the similar foundations of musicians' and athletes' performances (Williamon & Antonini Philippe, 2020). Exploring the meaning and mechanisms of musicians' coping by examining common coping strategies used in the field offers a direct approach to understanding coping within a musical context. As discussed in this section, in the case of musicians, understanding coping from both cognitive and behavioural perspectives would be appropriate, as coping is not limited to the psychological level (for example, coping with stress and anxiety), but also revealing in practice.

2.7.2 Measuring Resilience – CD-RISC

There are several scales for measuring psychological resilience in positive psychology, including but not limited to the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) (Cassidy, 2016), the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008), the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) (Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007; Scali et al., 2012), the Ego Resiliency Scale (Prince-Embury, 2013), the Predictive 6-Factor Resilience Scale (Rossouw et al., 2017), the Resilience Scale (Wagnild & Young, 1993), the Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA) (Friborg et

al., 2003), and the Scale of Protective Factors (SPF) (Ponce-Garcia, Madewell & Brown, 2016). These scales serve as the main scales for measuring psychological resilience in the field, where each has different strengths and focuses on different aspects of resilience (Windle et al., 2011).

For example, the Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA) and Scale of Protective Factors (SPF) set themselves in clinical psychology and health settings, providing insights and identifying protective factors against traumatic experiences and suggesting causes of certain psychological disorders. According to Friberg et al. (2003), the 33-item Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA) includes several sub-constructs in its measurement, including personal competence, social competence, personal structure, family coherence, and social support. The RSA was constructed with both intrapersonal (personal and dispositional attributes) and interpersonal (family and external support systems) protective factors to consider adaptation to psychosocial adversities (such as emotional and mental challenges), which facilitates psychological resilience. Specifically, in the personal competence construct, the subscales of the RSA were derived to measure perceptions of the self and planned future (Friberg et al., 2003). However, the derived personal competence construct in the RSA does not directly reflect an individual's capacity for psychological resilience. Another resilience measurement is the Scale of Protective Factors (SPF) developed by Ponce-Garcia et al. (2015). Similar to the structure of the RSA, the 24-item Scale of Protective Factors (SPF) measures several sub-constructs, including social support, social skills, planning behaviour, and goal efficiency. The RSA relies on measuring protective factors to evaluate the overall resilience level without categorising the subscales into different components of resilience. Comparing between RSA and SPF, the social support aspect served as a core element in both scales, however, coming to the sub-elements of personal or intrapersonal aspects, both scales had different intentions other than 'personal planning'.

In addition, some measures of resilience do not evaluate intrapersonal or external factors. Taking the 30-item Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30) as an example, its scale design represents resilience within the educational field and is significantly affected by academic performance rather than assessing interpersonal or intrapersonal aspects of resilience. Developed by Cassidy (2016), specifically designed for students' resilience in academic activities, the ARS-30 assesses the process aspects of resilience by measuring a list of adaptive cognitive-affective and behavioural responses in students' academic studies. Instead of categorising subscales into intrapersonal and external aspects, the ARS-30 divided its resilience measurement into three factors: (1) perseverance, (2) reflecting and adaptive help-seeking, and (3) negative affect and emotional response (Cassidy, 2016). Comparing the ARS-30 with the above resilience scales, the constructs are contrastingly different, where sub-scales are not categorised according to specific evidence found in psychology but rather based on observation of the educational environment.

In light of the best fit in measuring psychological resilience in this doctoral research, as well as addressing the demands and challenges faced by musicians, it is essential to adopt a scale that is embedded with more inclusive measurements of resilient aspects, such as stress and pressure, mental strengths, and interaction with the musical environment. As mentioned in the previous section, given that musicians commonly face anxiety during preparation and performance, it is important to measure resilience appropriately in terms of occupation and relevant activities rather than using specific resilience measurements designed for clinical settings.

Most of the scales mentioned above tend to embrace a specific aspect of psychological resilience, such as emotional regulation, changes in behaviours, and the ability to adapt. Some of them are designed for specific settings, such as the Academic Resilience Scale (ARS-30), Predictive 6-Factor Resilience Scale, Resilience Scale for Adults (RSA), and

the Scale of Protective Factors (SPF), which focus on certain aspects, including academic performance, pathway analysis of resilience, or are particularly designed for adults. These scales already included participant characteristics in their measurements and targeted specific groups of people. In contrast, some scales tend to be more inclusive than those designed for specific settings. For example, the Brief Resilience Scale, Ego Resilience Scale, and Resilience Scale can be used for the general population, given that the measurements are mostly evaluated as an overall score without clear sub-categories. Among the major scales of psychological resilience, the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC) provides the most suitable measuring tool for use in this doctoral research.

The Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC), originally developed by Connor-Davidson (2003), embraces measurement standards in clinical psychology. In a review of resilience measurement scales by Windle et al. (2011), the CD-RISC is one of the few scales that bear significant psychometric standards. The CD-RISC consists of five components of psychological resilience: (1) competence, (2) acceptance of change and security in relationships, (3) trust and tolerance of stressful and negative affect, (4) control, and (5) spirituality. The original CD-RISC is a 25-item measurement. In particular, the 10-item version (CD-RISC-10) is better because of its stronger internal validity based on factor analysis, which indicates a more precise overall measurement of psychological resilience (Scali et al., 2012).

The impact of psychological resilience can be seen through its practical implications in real life, for example, existing interventions for resilience training in different professions and workplaces. In addition to coping, changes in musicians' behaviours triggered by interactions with the environment can be explored in a wider context, including the impact of psychological resilience (Lewin, 1951). According to a review by Robertson et al. (2015) on existing resilience training interventions, the outcome of resilience training can be

summarised in four domains: (1) enhancements in mental health and subjective wellbeing, (2) psychosocial aspects, (3) physical or biological aspects, and (4) overall performance (Robertson et al., 2015). Supported by empirical evidence in resilience training and intervention, the impact of psychological resilience in enhancing observed behavioural performance (Arnetz et al., 2009), mental health, and wellbeing explains its inclusion in this research, testifying to its impact in the musical field. The above categories embraced the overarching theme of mental health and wellbeing in this research, maintaining the scope of this research to positively improve the performance of musicians. Psychological resilience is an additional consideration when preparing musicians with sufficient resources to handle the challenges raised by studies and musical training.

Resources and different kinds of support provided during musical training are critical to musicians' resilience capacity, to this point, these resources and support refer to external assistance helping musicians' building up their resilience. For example, counselling, mental support, and student services can be considered common resources that contribute to the resilience of musicians. The importance of these external resources and support is to compensate for possible shortages in musicians' individual resources to be resilient, as their surrounding environment can help them strengthen their resilience. When individuals cannot cope with challenges or difficulties on their own, external resources and support available from their environment are ready to help them overcome these challenges. This process is closely related to the ecological characteristics of psychological resilience, in which individuals interact with their professional environment. These resources and support also have an impact on their transitions to professional careers, given that these resources are available for musicians until graduation or even a short period after leaving college.

Understanding how resilience develops in musicians is crucial, particularly given the unique nature of the musical field (Burton et al., 2010; Jennings et al., 2013; Pidgeon et al.,

2014). This is especially pertinent for conservatoire music students, as the conservatoire environment may significantly influence their coping behaviours and resilience development. Therefore, exploring practical applications of psychological resilience in training programs and interventions could inform tailored approaches for musicians, potentially integrating mindfulness- and compassion-based practices.

2.7.3 Self-Compassion in Practice – SCS and the MSC Programme

The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) 12-item version is a validated psychometric tool adopted in the field of psychology to measure levels of self-compassion (Neff, 2003). SCS-12 assesses six dimensions of self-compassion, each represented by two items. These dimensions include self-kindness versus self-judgement, common humanity versus isolation, and mindfulness versus over-identification. The full version of the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) contains 26 items, while the 12-item version is a shorter version that measures the same six dimensions of self-compassion. The primary difference lies in the number of items used to measure each dimension. However, SCS-12 is often preferred in research studies or clinical settings where time constraints may limit the use of longer instruments (Neff, 2003; Raes et al., 2011).

Further research has been conducted in the field of positive psychology to correlate other concepts related to self-compassion. Concerning the practical implications of self-compassion, existing interventions are based on the initiative of self-compassion. For example, the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme is a real-life example of applying self-compassion in context.

Focusing on the perspective of mindfulness in self-compassion, the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme is a psychological intervention that collaborates elements of self-compassion with another psychological topic, mindfulness, in certain exercises and

strategies (Costa & Pinto-Gouveia, 2011; Germer & Neff, 2013). A pilot study and randomised controlled trial (RCT) by Neff and Germer (2013) evaluated the effectiveness of an 8-week MSC programme. A total of 21 participants were recruited for a pilot study examining the change in levels of self-compassion, mindfulness, and wellbeing, and the findings suggested that there were significant post-gains in the above aspects after participating in the MSC programme. Moreover, the gains in outcomes were maintained at 6 months and one-year follow-up as shown in the findings. The RCT findings in the same study also suggested that MSC programme participants (n=25) reported significantly greater increases in the level of self-compassion, mindfulness, and wellbeing compared to the waitlist control group (n=27) (Neff & Germer, 2013).

In summary, the MSC programme has been shown to be effective in tackling psychological problems and improving overall wellbeing. The MSC programme demonstrated a way to enhance self-compassion, mindfulness, compassion for others, and life satisfaction. Simultaneously, MSC intervention also leads to a decrease in mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, and emotional avoidance (Neff & Germer, 2013).

2.7.4 Musicians' Health and Wellbeing – SF-36

Evaluating the health and wellbeing of musicians primarily relies on self-reports and individual assessments. This approach is crucial because it allows musicians to reflect personally on their own health and wellbeing, offering insights that may not be captured through external observations alone. One common scale that measures health from a functional perspective is the Short Form-36 (SF-36) Health Survey. Further details are provided in this section. Self-reporting is often used to assess the health and wellbeing of musicians. For example, a study by Koops and Kuebel (2019) used an online survey to examine university music students' self-reported mental health and mental illness in the

United States and investigated their emotional connection to music making related to self-reported challenges. Another study by Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) on understanding wellbeing among college music students and amateur musicians in Western Switzerland also made use of self-report; however, Antonini Philippe et al. (2019) mentioned that self-reports could have been influenced by social desirability and stressful or difficult periods during which musicians filled in the questionnaire, such as incidents of injury and personal issues. Nevertheless, for self-compassion (or compassion), self-reporting is a common method for developing measures for evaluating the subject (Gilbert et al., 2011). Drawing from the above examples, although self-reporting has limitations in terms of participants' perceptions, it is still a feasible way to approach some health and wellbeing issues of musicians while providing individual insights. In particular, for this doctoral research, where specific mechanisms of musicians' coping and self-compassion have not been clearly presented in the current research, self-reporting would be a tool to gather insights related to these psychological issues in the population of musicians.

Mental health issues and measurements are relatively subjective compared with the more straightforward approach of measuring an individual's physical health with established and mainly quantifiable measurements. Embracing the approach of measuring musicians' health through self-reporting leads this doctoral research into a more diverse direction by delving into various aspects of their psychological wellbeing. Through self-reports, musicians reflect on their mental health, offering perspectives that may not be readily apparent through other assessment methods. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of the unique challenges and stressors that musicians face, as well as the coping mechanisms they employ to navigate these challenges. Additionally, self-reporting enables musicians to take an active role in their health management, fostering a sense of autonomy in addressing their wellbeing. Overall, this method broadens the scope of the research, providing valuable and holistic

insights into the health of musicians. The measurements of musicians' mental health and coping benefits from the inclusive assessment of other related aspects mentioned above, where musicians' interactions with the psychological challenges raised by musical activities can be understood comprehensively (Pauley & McPherson, 2010).

2.7.5 Environmental Influence – DREEM

To take the potential of optimal health enablers and barriers in musicians further (see Section 2.6.3.2 Social Environment and Resilience), quantitative measurements might be a solution to involve more participants in this doctoral research project (Parkes, 1986; Perkins et al., 2017; Roff et al., 1997). A quantitative approach is useful to support and test the theory of health enablers and barriers in real-life situations, aiming for greater objectivity. Musicians can also be easily compared to other students in higher education in terms of learning and teaching environments, given that conservatoire music students can also be referred to as higher education students. By comparing musicians' situations with similar populations, particularly the higher education sector, insights could be obtained regarding the specific characteristics of musicians or conservatoires that affect the development of their mental health. In other words, a possible comparison would be able to present if those optimal health enablers and barriers are commonly experienced by most higher education institutions, or if only some of them are applicable to conservatoires or musicians. Furthermore, a comparison between conservatoire music students and higher education students can contribute to the investigation of environmental factors in resilience, specifically in the search for particular factors affecting musicians' mental health, aside from the general factors found in existing research.

As there are no obvious measurements for musicians' use in assessing environmental and educational factors in a conservatoire setting, existing measurements used in other research regarding higher education are considered in this doctoral research. In search of a

persuasive perspective to evaluate the importance of environmental factors for enhancing musicians' health, it is important to match the demands and challenges raised by the conservatoire environment. After a thorough review of the existing literature on education, the Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure (DREEM) was found to be the most suitable model to reveal musicians' situations (Roff et al., 1997). The components of the DREEM scale correspond to the environmental factors contributing to psychological resilience. This alignment is evident in how the educational context, where most musicians engage, influences characteristics that promote resilience. Given that conservatoire music students are primarily situated within the educational sector, it is imperative to examine how educational environments shape factors relevant to resilience. At the same time, students' perceptions of the educational environment are significant, which the DREEM scale emphasised, as psychological resilience can vary among different individuals and does not mean that resilience level is the same because of the same environment. In brief, the DREEM concludes with important aspects that would match the explanation and influence of environmental factors on conservatoire music students. DREEM values learning, teaching, self-perceptions, atmosphere, and social factors, where these fundamentals structure the overall educational environment. In particular, students' social self-perceptions mentioned in the DREEM measure their interactions with others and the educational environment.

2.7.6 Musician's Professional Profile

Although successful music training should also consider the attachment of musicians' career intentions, path analysis is an important task in this doctoral research project. Specifically, path analysis can be helpful in showing the relationship between musicians' education and professional careers, as well as showing in detail how the transition happens.

In this doctoral research project, the planning of professional career pathways mostly refers to the transition from higher education to professional musicians. For instance, the process of musicians graduating from conservatoires (or music schools) and starting their careers or music-related businesses. Another transition point considered in path analyses would be incoming conservatoire music students, starting from the beginning of formal music training in conservatoires, as mentioned earlier. Indeed, career development is an important consideration for musicians in the long term, and researchers should not overlook the transitional phase of studying at the conservatoire.

2.8 Summary of Existing Literature

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the qualitative and quantitative theories and instruments utilised to investigate and measure musicians' coping and psychological resilience, emphasising the progress made in delineating individual and environmental factors within this thesis. The discussion explored significant tools for assessing musicians' coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, wellbeing, and the surrounding factors contributing to the improvement of coping strategies and overall health and wellbeing, as incorporated in both interview and survey studies.

As presented in the existing literature, current solutions to the problem of musicians' common experiences of ill health and poor mental wellbeing remain insufficient. Other than personal factors, supporting musicians' health could be approached from various perspectives, including but not limited to teaching and physical support, support for career development, and psychological support. However, specific coping strategies used by musicians with regards to personal factors (psychological resilience and self-compassion) and environmental factors (social environment, support and resources and career planning) have been shown to be unknown. Musicians' coping with and development of psychological

resilience does not necessarily or solely rely on personal factors, and the influence of the musical environment might be crucial in establishing a clearer understanding of these topics. Furthermore, environmental factors, educational environment perceptions, social perceptions, and individual academic perceptions are included in this research, as there has been little research on drawing environmental considerations in understanding musicians' development of coping and resilience.

Focusing on the distinction and relationship between coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion, these factors are considered to have a direct impact on musicians' health and wellbeing, particularly in handling stress and challenges. As discussed earlier (see Section 2.2 Coping), coping strategies in musicians rely on managing both psychological status and practical reactions to challenges or stressors. With that being said, psychological resilience and self-compassion are distinctive constructs related to coping; however, they are considered as relevant constructs related to the management of emotions and psychological capacities while coping.

Evidence in the literature supports the relationship between coping, resilience, and self-compassion. For instance, De la Fuente et al. (2017) found a positive and significant relationship between the association and prediction of resilience and coping strategies in undergraduate students' academic achievement. Both resilience and coping strategies predicted academic achievement. Furthermore, higher psychological resilience relates to better coping and fosters adaptive coping styles and benefits in mental health and wellbeing (Wu et al., 2020). Resilience and coping served as interactive predictors of each other, and resilience expanded the measurement of musicians' mental health and wellbeing.

Allen and Leary (2010) described the potential relationship between coping and self-compassion as follows:

Self-compassion may be a valuable coping resource when people experience negative

life events. People who are self-compassionate are less likely to catastrophize negative situations, experience anxiety following a stressor, and avoid challenging tasks for fear of failure. (p.9)

Self-compassion can be a form or type of coping resource in terms of emotion regulation that can be used alongside coping strategies. Gathering the initial discussions and findings on the relationship between resilience and self-compassion with coping, it would be helpful to investigate whether the relationships between these topics remain similar in terms of musicians' coping.

Considering the lack of clarity in defining coping, resilience, and self-compassion constructs, especially concerning musicians, additional empirical studies are needed to refine current understanding and investigate practical applications through interventions customised for musicians. The potential efficacy of interventions such as the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme remains largely unexplored in the context of musicians, highlighting the need for specialised studies in this area (Germer & Neff, 2013).

Understanding the effectiveness and importance of coping, resilience, and self-compassion in enhancing musicians' health and wellbeing is essential, especially in the context of limited resources provided by conservatoires and institutions. Psychological constructs, including self-compassion and resilience, offer possible avenues for enhancing musicians' health and wellbeing, necessitating further investigation and intervention studies tailored to their unique occupational demands and challenges.

Chapter 3 – Interview Study Part I: Musicians’ Perceptions

Toward Coping

3.1 Introduction

This chapter documents the first phase of this doctoral research project in response to the following questions aligned with the overarching aim:

Research Question 1. What common challenges do conservatoire music students experience as they learn and perform?

Research Question 2. What strategies do conservatoire music students use to cope with these challenges?

This interview study conducted in this phase focuses on two primary themes: conservatoire music students’ (1) perceptions toward coping and (2) perceptions toward psychological resilience. As discussed in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.3 Musicians’ Challenges and Use of Coping and Section 2.4.2 Resilience in Music Training), musicians’ occupational demands may reflect their perceptions of coping and psychological resilience. These aspects were explored alongside their interactions with the challenges posed by music-making and the specific occupational demands faced by musicians. To comprehensively understand coping and psychological resilience within the context of musicians, an examination of their experiences and perceptions regarding these concepts would be necessary.

3.1.1 Study Aims and Research Questions

The aim of this interview study was to explore the perceptions of coping and psychological resilience among conservatoire music students, aiming to understand the factors that influence their coping strategies, including the unique environment of conservatoires. Through a semi-structured interview approach, this chapter addresses the core psychological challenges encountered by conservatoire music students during performances and practice sessions, as well as how they navigate these obstacles. The methodology and study design are detailed in the subsequent section.

This study aimed to investigate how conservatoire music students manage challenges and what factors contribute to their coping mechanisms. Exploring various aspects of coping, the study focused on three key themes: identifying sources of opportunities and challenges, understanding coping strategies employed, and evaluating the significance of coping mechanisms. To follow, the second part of the study explored various aspects of resilience, focusing on three key themes: the general meaning of resilience for musicians, understanding resilience in musicians' occupational activities, and the roles of institutions and support systems in musicians' resilience. By examining the perceptions of coping and resilience among conservatoire music students, the study aimed to provide valuable insights into the overarching research questions.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Participants

Sixteen conservatoire music students at the Royal College of Music, London participated in the interviews in the current chapter. Participants included undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at the Royal College of Music, London, majoring in music performances. In terms of principal studies, there were participants majoring in string instruments (n=6),

woodwind instruments (n=4), brass instruments (n=2), vocal studies (n=2), and pianos (n=2). Among the participants, 5 were undergraduate students (in the Bachelor of Music programme) and 11 were postgraduate students (either in the Master of Music or Master of Performance programme). Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 27 years, with a mean age of 22.87 years old. In terms of nationality, nine participants were British home students and seven were international students, including one American participant, one Danish participant, one participant from Hong Kong, one Australian participant, one Italian participant, and two German participants. In terms of gender, seven participants identified themselves as male, while nine identified as female.

3.2.2 Data Collection

The study used a semi-structured interview approach to allow flexibility in understanding the perceptions of coping and resilience. The interview protocol used in this study was designed to align with its objectives of understanding musicians' experiences and perceptions of coping and resilience (see Appendix for the interview protocol), while still allowing for the flexibility to alter the question order based on the natural flow of the interview. The interview focused on the participants' backgrounds, musical journeys, and perceptions of coping and resilience in conservatoires. Participants were asked about their musical background, milestones in their musical journey, and perceptions of the biggest opportunities and challenges in conservatoire education. The participants were then asked about their coping strategies and the importance of coping and resilience in preparing for their musical career. Finally, participants were asked about their perceptions of psychological resilience and whether they believed it was their responsibility or college's responsibility to support their resilience.

The standard interview protocol ensured that all the participants were asked the same set of questions regarding data consistency. As marked in the interview protocol, the interviewer was allowed to use probes to follow up responses from the participants and facilitate in-depth engagement. Allowing follow-up questions enabled participants to express relevant thoughts that may not be included in the interview protocol, in addition to revealing further research directions. Prior to the study delivery, three pilot interviews were conducted with postgraduate students from the Royal College of Music, London. Feedback from the pilot interviews contributed to enhancing the use of wording and the order of questions.

3.2.3 Procedure and Ethics

The study was promoted among student groups with a poster as a call for participants. Undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctorate conservatoire music students studying at the Royal College of Music, London, were invited to participate in this study. Potential participants at the Royal College of Music, London were contacted via email with a brief introduction to the project. For those showing interest in participating in the study, details of the interview location and time were mutually agreed upon by the interviewer and interviewee. All participants were informed that confidentiality and pseudonymity were in place following the RCM Research Ethics Guidelines. Before the interviews started, the participants were reminded explicitly that they could choose not to participate in the study for any reason or stop the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable with the subject matter or questions asked. At the end of the interview, participants were reminded of the links to online sources of support, including services available through the RCM, including Student Services and Togetherall (formally Big White Wall), as well as the NHS (<https://www.nhs.uk>) and Samaritans (<https://www.samaritans.org>), in the event that participation has led to distress, as well as the researcher's contact details. The interviews ranged from 45 to 60

minutes in length, were audio-recorded using a designated recording application on a smartphone, and transcribed using Otter.ai.

3.2.4 Data Handling and Analyses

The aim of this study was to explore conservatoire music students' perceptions of coping and psychological resilience to provide a clear understanding of the determining factors (including the conservatoire environment) that may affect their use of coping strategies.

Therefore, the transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. Responses from participants, including both words and phrases, were inductively coded and then organised into overarching themes. Thematic analysis is capable of summarising complex data and is not tied to a philosophical viewpoint, allowing the accessible communication of research findings (Robson, 2011, p. 477).

The procedure and steps used in this study are as follows:

- Relevant words and phrases (meaning units) were identified within the transcripts
- The coding and organisation of meaning units were centered around the themes of coping and resilience
- Clusters of codes, including repetition, indigenous categories, missing and unexpected data were calculated, to identify the priority of themes and concerns
- Based on the importance of themes, individual differences were considered

Transcription software (Otter.ai) was used during the analysis stage solely for transcribing audio into text. Subsequent coding, grouping into themes, and coding counts were performed using Microsoft Word and NVivo software. In the following sections of this chapter, quotes included are what the participants had actually said, and every quote follows by the location in the transcripts.

3.3 Findings

Based on the interview protocol designed for this study, two main areas were investigated: musicians' (1) experiences of coping and psychological resilience and (2) perceptions of coping and psychological resilience. Two distinct yet related constructs were presented. The findings relating to experiences and perceptions of coping are discussed in the present chapter; precedingly, the findings relating to experiences and perceptions of psychological resilience are discussed in the following chapter (Chapter 4).

3.3.1 Background of Participants

Most of the participants started learning music or their instruments at a young age; some attended conservatoire training or junior music department prior to education at the Royal College of Music, London. In terms of motivation to learn the instrument or pursue music as a formal subject, the rationale includes family influence (for instance, family members' encouragement, or family with a musical background), teacher's encouragement, music as an embedded in school education (for instance, school programme, or exposure to a musical environment), and intrinsic motivation (musical instrument to the participant's liking). When asked about the motivation to learn music, one postgraduate flautist summarised her intrinsic motivation and passion:

I chose the flute because it was the instrument that came the most naturally to me. I do I look. Basically, I'm an all-round of a person. So, like, as I was saying before, like, I play lots of instruments and I get my joy from like all areas of music, which is why it was kind of strange that I chose to go to a concert what I could definitely fit the bill more of a university student. But yeah, and I chose music. I think I chose music

just because I am very sensitive to the wrong word. I mean, I am sensitive to the point, and it's like, I get goosebumps really easily. Like I get really engrossed in anything to do with the arts really, like if I go and watch a musical, I want to be like a musical set a kid, or if I go and watch a dance or something like that, I want to come out, I want to be a ballerina. I get really engrossed in the performance aspects of things. And music is the thing that comes most naturally to me. So, I think that's why I chose music. (Transcript 15, p. 2, timepoint 03:05)

To study music in the conservatoire, participants pointed out that teachers' availability at the institution and exposure to the wider musical environment are key considerations in choosing the place of study to pursue further training.

Participants were asked to recall some of the milestones in their musical journey as a way for them to share their experiences. Most participants mentioned that being admitted to the Royal College of Music or to the junior conservatory department was undoubtedly one of the milestones. Prior to joining the college, participants considered several milestones in common, including success in competition and grade exams, orchestral engagements (leading roles in performances, working with acclaimed conductors, and performing in renowned venues), solo performances (debut with orchestra and in recital), experiences of studying abroad, scholarships, and learning with a new teacher. The findings showed that the milestones were academic-related (college admission and conservatoire training) and performance-related (competition, orchestral roles, and solo performances). It is noteworthy that when conservatoire music students mentioned milestones related to performances, only being awarded in competition, leading roles in orchestra, or performing as soloists were considered milestones in contrast to ordinary performance engagements.

The findings were organised into general themes and subthemes derived from the opportunities and challenges perceived by musicians. There are three general themes regarding perceptions of coping: (1) sources of opportunities and challenges, (2) coping approaches, and (3) the importance of coping. Within the theme of sources of opportunities and challenges, the findings were presented in two sub-themes: whether the opportunities and challenges are perceived from an occupational perspective (as a musician) or arising from the music-making environment (including the conservatoire).

Next, themes of the impact of coping on health and coping approaches are presented. Within the theme of coping approaches, the findings were presented into four sub-themes of coping strategies: physical, behavioural, cognitive, emotional, and task-oriented coping strategies. This part of coping strategies also includes conservatoire music students' rationale for employing particular coping strategies.

Finally, the theme of the importance of coping was presented from the perspectives of conservatoire music students, conservatoires, and musicians' careers. Following the discussion of the importance of coping, the final part of the findings revealed the relationship between coping, challenges, and the music-making environment. Nine sub-themes emerged from the analysis, clustered into the overarching themes of sources of opportunities and challenges, coping approaches, and importance of coping (see Table 3.1).

Table 3. 1 Summary of themes and sub-themes identified in conservatoire music students’ perceptions toward coping

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
1 Sources of opportunities and challenges	1.1 Sources of opportunities 1.2 Sources of challenges	1.1.1 Performances 1.1.2 Auditions 1.1.3 Competitions 1.1.4 Orchestral projects 1.1.5 Masterclasses and studio classes 1.1.6 Personal networks 1.1.7 Proactive engagement in performance 1.1.8 Institution, faculties, teachers and peer networks 1.1.9 Teaching activities 1.2.1 Competition and comparison 1.2.2 Psychological challenges 1.2.3 Uncertainties 1.2.4 Time management 1.2.5 Physical health
2 Coping approaches	2.1 Physical coping strategies 2.2 Behavioural coping strategies 2.3 Cognitive and emotional coping strategies 2.4 Task-oriented coping strategies	2.1.1 Physical exercises and activities 2.1.2 Alexander Techniques 2.2.1 Support network 2.2.2 Stretching, muscle relaxation and breathing exercises 2.2.3 Mental skills 2.2.4 Self-care 2.2.5 Taking breaks 2.3.1 Change of mindset and perspective 2.3.2 Positive reframing 2.3.3 Religious belief 2.3.4 Control of emotions 2.4.1 Analysis of problem 2.4.2 Preparation and planning 2.4.3 Realisation of demands
3 Importance of coping	3.1 Coping as music student 3.2 Coping within conservatoires 3.3 Coping in musicians’ careers	3.1.1 Mental health 3.1.2 Access to support network 3.2.1 Institutional support 3.2.2 Effective execution of support 3.3.1 Adapting to different environments 3.3.2 Prolonging careers

3.3.2 Sources of Opportunities

As the participants in the present study were conservatoire music students, they reported that being admitted by the institution and performances as part of their study (including solo, chamber groups, and orchestra) were key milestones at the RCM (n=9). However, for conservatoire music students, milestones do not necessarily focus on solo performances but tend to shift to more participation in orchestral and chamber music (n=8). A final-year undergraduate violist reflected on her experiences and studies:

I guess that when I was younger, the milestones were things like getting my grade eight, and getting into the National Youth Orchestra was a milestone. And then obviously, like getting into college. Since college, I think the milestones have been more or not. So, when I played, I was not much of a solo player; I preferred orchestral and chamber music. So, milestones would be more like playing principal in a project or something like that, rather than like winning a competition or something like that. (Transcript 7, p. 2, timepoint 05:02)

The discussion of milestones in the RCM led to further reflections on opportunities for conservatoire music students. From the performance perspective, participants reported that auditions (n=2), competition (n=10), and opportunities to perform for the general public (n=2) were considered opportunities. The findings also suggest that sharing ideas through performance is an important aspect for musicians looking for opportunities:

So, I think even if you are, if you have a concert, and two people turn up, I am already sort of doing what I want, bringing the music I have learned to someone else, and not just to me in my living room or whatever. So, I think you know, everything you do,

that's outside the practice room is an opportunity, I think. (Transcript 9, p. 3, timepoint 07:09)

Regarding opportunities within the institution, performance was still the main opportunity for conservatoire music students to strive for (n=14). The opportunities for orchestral players were mostly orchestral projects assigned by the institution (n=4). Other opportunities in performing include master classes (n=5), studio classes (n=1), and orchestral projects.

I think that the classes here are very important. Like, we have many different master classes and different studio classes, which we can learn from different aspects of what we need to do. Yes. And, like doing clarinet classes with them (teachers), and how to prepare our bit, how to be better the second clarinet player in the orchestra. During master classes, we can learn different repertoires as well, as many students play different uncommon repertoires. We can know more about this and more about trading these pieces. The repertoire class here yesterday, into the most interesting thing I think I have here, like we have, we can play with other woodwind members too to form an ensemble for a symphony or orchestra work. (Transcript 4, p. 5)

In terms of the sources of opportunities for musicians to engage in performance and music-making, the findings of this study suggest that they were a mixture of raising from musicians' individual careers and from a conservatoire environment. For opportunities raised from their careers as musicians, participants reported that personal networks were an important source of opportunities (n=4). Through personal contact and recognition from others of their own playing and performance standards, the network built up by conservatoire

music students would lead to more performance or collaboration with musicians in the field (for instance, composers and conductors). Participants reported that the peer network played a part in the flow of available performance opportunities, while building connections during the years of study was important. Proactive engagement in performance opportunities is key for opportunities to approach conservatoire music students directly (n=4), as conservatoire music students put themselves forward and self-promoted within the community (Transcript 9, p.4, timepoint 09:17). Conservatoire music students expressed that they were actively seeking opportunities instead of opportunities coming to the musicians, including ensemble projects and master classes:

I don't think the opportunities come to you. Definitely not... I made an effort to kind of be like, I'd love to be involved in any project. And like if any master classes or if you ever need to buy that, like, I am happy to fit in. (Transcript 5, p.5, timepoint 16:04)

Beyond the performance opportunities that approached musicians directly, participants mentioned that further opportunities came from the institution, faculties, teachers, and peer networks (n=11). For orchestral musicians, auditions and orchestral projects mostly come from the institution, so often they engage in performance through external networks (for instance, recommendations from sponsors and external connections). One participant mentioned that teaching services available at the RCM were sources of opportunities for teaching activities. The majority of opportunities were approaching internally through the institutional network, particularly career services, for instance, the Creative Careers Centre at the RCM (n=3). However, it is worth noting that the performance opportunities provided by the institution were insufficient to meet all the students' needs.

When asked about various kinds of performances that occurred within the institution, however, one postgraduate clarinetist pointed out that the number of opportunities available is not really evenly shared with all students (Transcript 4, p. 4). Despite the possibility of an uneven distribution of performance opportunities, conservatoire music students generally benefit from the contacts provided by the institution:

I think college provides such an amazing kind of way to get contact ... Sometimes people come to me as an artist, not because they have heard me from college, but a lot of things I see through college, especially like the bulletin that they (Creative Careers Centre) sent around every week, and kind of apply the things that way. (Transcript 13, p. 3, timepoint 06:39)

Teachers and faculty members were also reported as sources of opportunities, including studio classes hosted by professors (n=4). One postgraduate singer also mentioned that her teacher often suggests performance opportunities and competitions available and gives students the opportunity to perform in master classes. Although opportunities were provided through the institution and professional networks, conservatoire music students were still responsible for proactively seeking and engaging in these opportunities.

3.3.3 Sources of Challenges

Following the discussion of opportunities as musicians, participants were asked to reflect on the biggest challenges or difficulties faced by conservatoire students in general. There were several challenges found in participants' responses, including (1) competition (comparison among peers and with experienced musicians, industry culture, and criticism), (2) psychological challenges (performance anxiety, feelings of insecurity, self-doubt, stress,

depression, and mental breakdown), (3) uncertainties (career planning and financial pressure), (4) time management (intensive practice and learning new repertoires), and (5) physical health (pain and injury). These challenges arose mainly from the occupational demands of conservatoire music students and were related to music performance.

A significant challenge that strikes conservatoire music students is competition or culture of comparison within the music industry (n=10). Music competitions were mentioned as opportunities in the previous section; however, competition here refers to the constant comparison with peers and other musicians in terms of performance standard capacity as well as the competitive environment of music-making:

In the conservatoire, there is this competition of getting the most opportunities, which is both from the students, but also from the persons who sit with the power to choose. When the same people are chosen. A lot of times it makes like, this makes it very weird. Yeah, the balance in finding what is the purpose of getting better students? What is the purpose of selling an institution as a good place to study? Yeah. But this differs, of course, in what kind of voice type? What kind of person? What age you are, whatever. There's a lot of factors playing into that. (Transcript 3, p. 4, timepoint 10:07)

Apparently, competition among musicians was a concern for most of the participants – conservatoire music students, to the point that competition limited conservatoire music students' creativity and enjoyment in music-making (n=2). A postgraduate violinist recalled her experiences of undergraduate studies, stating that there was a lot of competition and comparison at the beginning when she tried to learn to enjoy playing music during the course of her four-year study (Transcript 5, p. 2, timepoint 04:06). Competition also varied

depending on the instruments; a violist participant mentioned that predominantly solo instrumentalists were more competitive than chamber group musicians (Transcript 7, p. 4, timepoint 11:36). The participant further summarised the competition among peers and assessments faced by a conservatoire music student:

One of them is definitely the fact that you are directly up against your peers and friends. If you go to a union, or a studying geography, or something like that, you do exams, and obviously all your friends do those exams as well. But you do not have to sit in class and have your friends like, and tell your friends what they did right and wrong in that performance, and you are not being I guess you are being graded against them in your exams, but no one has the same personal level as you are in music. I think Yeah. It's just the competition...

I think in faculty classes, you are obviously critiquing each other. So that has its own, I do not want to say problems, but it can have its own effects on competition and like competition among your friends and peers. Also, like your final exams, you have an external adjudicator comparing you all with each other. (Transcript 7, p. 5, timepoint 13:10 – 14:14)

In addition to competition, psychological challenges have been reported as one of the sources of challenges for conservatoire music students (n=8). As reported by participants, performance anxiety negatively affected musicians on the stage and perceptions of the audience, leading to overthinking, self-doubt about under-preparation, and performance standards (n=5). Pressure from performance and music-making also led to feelings of insecurity:

I know a lot of my friends who are saying they like they hear people like probably like the best people in the department. And they're like, I am never going to sound like that. I'm never going to be able to play like that. I think everyone experiences it, but it just makes you feel a bit insecure. (Transcript 12, p. 6, timepoint 12:48)

Overall, responses from participants showed that music-making tends to trigger stress, including substituting or ad-hoc performances (n=4), expectations from the audience (n=3), and mistakes and failures (n=5). These psychological challenges were often related to broader problems, such as depression and mental breakdown in conservatoire music students (n=2).

Conservatoire music students also mentioned different types of uncertainties as sources of challenge (n=5), including financial uncertainties, career pathways, unexpected mistakes, and feedback on performance. Given that performances mainly happened live, participants mentioned that unexpected mistakes were considered variable and might put stress during performance and preparation (n=3). Nevertheless, among these uncertainties, future careers after graduation have been reported as critical challenges:

... one of the biggest sorts of thoughts I have recently is, you know, it's this uncertainty of what is happening after, after you graduate, after your masters, even if you do your masters, what then because, you know, if you studied law, and you get your degree, the chances that you get high paid actually job is very high with your education, but in music, you can finish the degree. And still nothing is going to happen, because no one is going to give you concert opportunities as a president with your degree. I mean, you have to, you know, it's a lot of luck, as well.

(Transcript 9, p. 4, timepoint 11:29)

As musicians rely on different performance engagements and opportunities to sustain their careers, piling concert performances, competitions, practice, etc., participants mentioned that time management also appeared to be a significant challenge (n=5). Time concerns also involved preparing new and great numbers of repertoires in short notice, which was challenging in balancing workload and practice (n=3). Another challenge was physical health issues related to practice and performance (n=7). An undergraduate pianist stated that after long hours of practice, pain and injury were common problems among conservatoire music students, sometimes this kind of physical health problems persist in musicians' future careers (Transcript 13, p. 8, timepoint 23:26). The negative impact of the injury also developed further psychological challenges, including feelings of shame, self-blaming, and exposing injury as a weakness to peers (n=3).

3.3.4 Impact of Coping on Health

Following the exploration of opportunities and challenges for conservatoire music students, the interviews conducted in this study explored how conservatoire music students cope with challenges and difficulties. Prior to the report of conservatoire music students' coping strategies, the findings clarified the relationship between musicians' coping and health in first place. When asked about what comes into the musician's mind in terms of coping and health, one postgraduate clarinettist highlighted that stress from performance and preparation affected the musician's physical health, which might also lead to sleep and diet problems (Transcript 4, p. 6).

Yet another participant reported that coping and health were closely related, quoting that *"[coping and health are] very closely related, almost the same thing. When you cope, it is to protect or maintain your health and wellbeing. Faced with these challenges. Health is an important part of that"* (Transcript 6, p. 6, timepoint 16:23). The above quote shows that

the act of coping proactively contributes to one's health and wellbeing or protects one's health. It is important to clarify that coping and health are closely connected when assessing the findings of the coping approaches and strategies found in this study.

To report the findings on coping strategies used by conservatoire music students to cope with challenges and difficulties, this section is divided into the following categories: (1) physical coping strategies, (2) behavioural coping strategies, (3) cognitive and emotional coping strategies, and (4) task-oriented coping strategies.

3.3.5 Coping Approaches

3.3.5.1 Physical Coping Strategies

Commonly found in conventional coping strategies, physical coping strategies have been found as one of the coping approaches among conservatoire music students. Several participants mentioned that physical exercise was helpful in coping with stress from musical activity (n=3). A postgraduate singer pointed out that physical exercise serves as a distraction from stress in music-making:

When I started incorporating yoga, or, you know, doing exercise as practice as well, it's sort of kept my mind not stressing about practising like, you have to be in a room with a piano. (Transcript 3, p. 4, timepoint 13:03)

Furthermore, physical activities such as distraction were not considered avoidance coping but rather as balancing stress while coping (n=2). A postgraduate bassoonist reported that physical activities were ways to reshape his perspectives and balance stress and challenges:

If I have had a long, stressful day in college, cycling home is a brilliant thing.

However tired, I'm actually just a half hour cycle home is a really great way of clearing my mind...

Walking is another thing I like to do, just to clear my head. So, if I am in the middle of a practice session, there's something particularly musically related, if I am in the middle of a practice session, is that really going well, whatever, and I will leave the room, I will leave all my stuff that I will leave the room and then go for a walk, go get some water, and then go for a walk for half an hour or something like that... But also, then I come back fully refreshed, to start a new on something and just to think slightly differently about that. I find that a very good mechanism to explore musical problems further, when I have had a bit of time to sort of mull over them in my mind.

(Transcript 16, p. 8, timepoint 25:15 & 27:06)

Conservatoire music students also reported that physical activity actively helped with coping (n=3). Physical activities, including yoga, gyms, running, and swimming, were embedded in a musician's routine to relieve stress. In discussions on physical activities as coping strategies, conservatoire music students mentioned that the regularity of physical activities within their routines was important (for instance, arranging gym classes at least twice a week), as this ensured that musicians were constantly gaining positivity from physical activities.

Other than physical activity, some conservatoire music students (n=3) mentioned that Alexander Techniques were one of their physical coping strategies. A postgraduate violinist spoke of the training on Alexander Techniques received during his study at the institution:

I would say the Alexander technique is probably the best thing that has happened to me in college. This has completely changed my physical approach to playing. It has helped me a great deal with coping with the pain that I used to have. (Transcript 8, p. 8, timepoint 28:05)

Given these comments on the impact of physical activities and Alexander Techniques on coping, it is apparent that these physical coping strategies had a positive influence on musicians' physical health and how they perceived conservatoire training.

3.3.5.2 Behavioural Coping Strategies

Participants also reported coping strategies that modified their actions to manage stress and challenges. According to the American Psychological Association's Dictionary of Psychology, behavioural coping strategies have several forms, including seeking social support or otherwise obtaining help from others, directly attempting to resolve problematic situations, adjusting customary activities, and expressing emotions.

Several conservatoire music students reported that a support network served as an important coping strategy or source of coping (n=10). The support network could include people around conservatoire music students, including their families, teachers, friends, and counsellors. For their support networks, conservatoire music students reach out to different people regarding the nature of the challenges and gain different perspectives. An undergraduate violist commented on the importance of her support network as a musician:

I guess like talking to your friends, who are also at a music college and have exactly the same. They lived in the same way. They also face this competition. Yeah. And then having that support network is really important. Sometimes, you can get; you can

think quite irrationally about it. Yeah. You can comment that someone said and blow it where proportionate. And if you talk to a friend about it, who has seen things like that happen, they have had something that happened to themselves. He could say that this happened to me, and I felt awful about it for one day. The next day, I thought about it more reasonably. And then I felt better. So, having yeah, having a support network, a support network of understanding people, I think, is another way that I cope. (Transcript 7, p. 7, timepoint 21:29)

Making use of support networks, musicians would seek different sources of support when encountering challenges, such as support from teachers on performance and practice, while seeking advice on mental challenges (stress and personal issues) from counselling. Further, the above quote also shows the hint of self-compassion in the musician's support network, in particular, common humanity, where musicians would share with people who understand their occupational challenges for coping advice. More details regarding self-compassion among musicians are discussed in later sections.

In particular, to cope with the physical demands of music-making, participants pointed out a list of behavioural strategies, including stretching (n=1), muscle relaxation (n=2), and breathing exercises (n=2). As for psychological challenges, participants reported that mental skills (n=2), such as imagery and meditation, were useful strategies to cope with the stress raised by performance and practice. In light of performance anxiety, an undergraduate cellist mentioned that getting used to performing on stage is one of the coping strategies to overcome the fear of public performance (Transcript 11, p. 5, timepoint 16:41).

At a more general level, conservatoire music students reported that self-care was important for coping (n=3). An undergraduate pianist commented that when coping with stress from practice, self-control over length of practice and looking after his physical and

mental wellness (fit to play) were important actions to facilitate coping (Transcript 9, p. 8, timepoint 26:09). Participants also mentioned that taking breaks from practice was important for maintaining their own physical fitness (n=2). This further leads to the maintenance of a healthy lifestyle, including hydration. A healthy diet would be helpful in ensuring optimal conditions for musicians.

3.3.5.3 Cognitive and Emotional Coping Strategies

Following physical and behavioural coping strategies, musicians adopted coping approaches at cognitive and emotional levels. In coping with challenges and stress, conservatoire music students reported that a change in mindset and perspective was a cognitive coping approach (n=14). An undergraduate violist commented on her approach to coping with injuries in terms of changing perspectives:

I changed my way of thinking in the first year. Now, now I am in the fourth year, think more positively and more kind of, rationally, not just about injury, but just about, you know, I would get way too stressed about things in the first year. And now, I have learned to not get stressed about things that are not worth getting stressed.
(Transcript 7, p. 8, timepoint 25:12)

Changes in perspective and mindset were related to positive reframing in coping, as mentioned by the participants during the interviews (n=2). Another challenging situation for musicians was the comparison within the industry, where musicians strived to cope with the pressure from high-standard performance by peers and professionals. An undergraduate cellist talked about her approach to refocus in comparison to other musicians:

I try to remind myself that we all have different paths, and they're working, there's, and I am working mine. At this point, it is not for me, but sometime in the future, maybe just try to let it be and focus on what I have to do now. (Transcript 11, p. 5, timepoint 13:57)

As seen in the quotes above, the process of changing perspectives and mindsets involves self-adjustment and flexibility. Mentioned by a few participants, focus on performances' feedback and reframing the meaning behind influences their approaches of coping with the pressure of comments (n=3). This change of focus is also related to self-determination and self-confidence in one's own musical playing, a postgraduate singer spoke of her process of reframing:

And try and rationalise my thoughts rather than thinking, oh, I am never going to get there and try and attend, or listen to actually recording myself or something that I have made, that's good. And that I know will make me remember that I am good. And that, I am going to get that. So, try and sort of spin it on its head and make it like a positive thing. Just that it was not the right time or whatever. But yeah, you have got to try and not compare yourself with other people as well, which is hard. (Transcript 10, p. 5, timepoint 15:15)

One participant mentioned faith (or religious beliefs) as one of her coping strategies at a cognitive level, relieving stress through praying. However, as the scope of this study does not include the influence of religious beliefs and generalisability, it was excluded from consideration of the coping strategies used by the majority of musicians.

To follow cognitive coping strategies, conservatoire music students reported on particular strategies related to emotional control (n=3). Emotional coping strategies carried a small part alongside cognitive coping in the findings of this study, where participants mentioned coping attitudes and the impact of personality on the coping process. A postgraduate singer reported that musicians' autonomy is important in coping, as it defines the pathways and decisions of a musician's career (Transcript 3, p. 3, timepoint 07:07), in which personality also plays an important role in coping. Another participant mentioned that, as he is a calmed person in general, his personality bears a great influence on his coping approaches, enabling him to be more relaxed under challenges and stress (Transcript 8, p. 8, timepoint 27:33).

In addition to emotional coping strategies, one participant reported that self-encouragement was an effective approach:

Well, I remind myself that it will be better. And then, I practised I can do this. In the end, the world will not stop turning. Just trying to experience it, and not when you experience any stress during practice. (Transcript 11, p. 6, timepoint 19:50)

Summarising the cognitive coping and emotional coping strategies used by musicians, two aspects were shown to be related, yet distinctive, in the findings. The adjustment of musicians' perspectives and mindsets is often related to their emotional states and even their personalities. From the participants' discussions, it is apparent that coping through positively reframing stress and challenges was commonly used by musicians and how they perceived external comments and judgements in music making.

3.3.5.4 Task-Oriented Coping Strategies

As discussed in Section 3.3.2, musicians experience challenges in performance anxiety and preparation, time management, career uncertainties, and injuries. These problems appear to be realistic and practical in musicians' careers where task-oriented (or problem-oriented) coping strategies are adopted. Conservatoire music students reported that analysis of problem contributes to coping (n=4), a participant stating that *'know how to solve with breaking it into small pieces and actually knowing when I'm going to do what is very helpful for me'* (Transcript 11, p. 6, timepoint 20:57).

As musicians are constantly preparing repertoires, pressure on preparation and anxiety develop. In light of this demand, several participants reported that sufficient preparation and planning played an important role in coping (n=9). Musicians agreed that starting preparation early allows more time to learn repertoires, practice, and rehearse while simultaneously reducing uncertainties in performance. An undergraduate harpist commented on the relationship between preparation and reduction of uncertainties:

I try to learn the piece backwards so that I just know it, and that I know, I can play it. And then that makes me feel better if I am going out like, okay, I know this piece like, nothing's going to go wrong. And yeah, so, a bit of preparation and do actually reduce uncertainty. (Transcript 12, p. 7, timepoint 15:38)

Another postgraduate singer spoke of the importance of preparation as a coping strategy for learning new repertoires:

I try and do all the work, learn it, translate it, etc., as early as possible. So, if we have got it, I do not know, on Monday, and you have got to sing it in class the next

Monday. do not leave it until Thursday because it is just going to add to the stress. So, as early as possible, even if it's just like spending a little bit of time on it just to get to grips with what you have to do... It makes you feel calmer, because you know that you are gradually getting on top of it. (Transcript 10, p. 5, timepoint 12:46)

To handle multiple performance commitments and repertoires, practice planning plays an important role in minimising stress. Sufficient preparation enabled musicians to perform with confidence and time to manage the challenges (n=3). One participant mentioned that reducing workload, including performance and teaching, could contribute to better planning.

Moving on from preparation and planning, conservatoire music students reported that focusing on the demands of the tasks helped them cope. Based on the task, for instance, participants mentioned that more performing experiences on stage reduced stress in public performances (n=3). A postgraduate clarinettist spoke of how more performance experiences enhanced their coping abilities:

One thing is like the amount of experience, such as the number of chances we can somehow cope with it. More opportunities mean more opportunities that we can get used to them. And I think by the number of opportunities, I can slowly get used to the stressful environment. (Transcript 4, p. 9)

With more exposure to performance and experiences on stage, another participant added that coping ability was enhanced by going through occasions to respond to criticism, which also hinted at the development of resilience (further findings regarding resilience are discussed in the following chapter).

Facing injury and financial uncertainties, conservatoire music students reported that these challenges could be coped with task-oriented strategies, including seeking medical assistance (Transcript 7, p. 8, timepoint 24:42) and taking up more jobs for income.

In concluding musicians' coping strategies, a few participants mentioned that learning or starting to cope with challenges as early as possible benefits musicians' careers from students to professionals. A postgraduate singer spoke of the importance of learning to cope with their early careers:

Music is a difficult industry to be in. And so, I think if you can cope with that, well from this point where we are students, and we are learning that we have the space to kind of cope with it and make mistakes, because it's not like a big job or something that we have to do well, that I think it will definitely help later. (Transcript 10, p. 9, timepoint 28:05)

3.3.6 Importance of Coping

Following the discussion regarding challenges and opportunities, sources of coping, and coping strategies, participants spoke of the importance of coping in different areas. This section discusses the importance of coping as conservatoire music students by dividing them into the following subthemes: (1) importance of coping as conservatoire music students, (2) importance of coping within conservatoires, and (3) importance of coping in musicians' careers.

3.3.6.1 Importance of Coping as Conservatoire Music Student

Participants were asked about the importance of coping strategies as conservatoire music students, and most of the responses showed that coping was an important part. Adapting to a

new environment for studying at conservatoires could be challenging for conservatoire music students. One postgraduate clarinettist mentioned that coping is very important for handling mental problems, as it is a priority to ensure that his study progresses normally (Transcript 1, p. 10, timepoint 34:30).

Another participant also mentioned that given that the workload and training at the conservatoire were intensive, access to a support network as a coping strategy enabled her to maintain balance between work and social life (Transcript 5, p. 8, timepoint 29:04). In particular, when encountering burnout (Bernhard, 2010) from intensive performance and facing instability as a professional musician after graduation (as discussed in Section 3.3.2), coping has important functions. A postgraduate flautist spoke about the importance of coping in the transition from student to professional:

I had a chat with quite a few professional musicians in my year. And so many of them spoke about burnout, and all these things and, and also, you know, in the situation where the pandemic hit, and everything stopped. I know that so many people were just kind of like floating aimlessly and had no idea what to do. And it shows how full on and all-consuming the musical career is. And I think if you do not learn how to cope with that when you are a student, when you go out into the real world, and you have not got an institution that can offer you some counsellors are, can remind you to eat your five days or whatever, when you go into your real life on your own. You need to have those skills. (Transcript 15, p. 11, timepoint 40:25)

3.3.6.2 Importance of Coping within Conservatoires

As conservatoire music students, participants spoke about the importance of coping with what the institution offered (n=3). Apparently, there was support for students' health and

wellbeing at the RCM (including Student Services and counselling), and participants reported that acknowledgement of these resources is important. One postgraduate singer spoke of the importance of coping support options:

I definitely feel like if we have a problem; we know who to go and talk to and have a faculty as well. It's also really important. I don't know what other faculties like but ours is always there to chat. So, if you have an issue and really want to help us, they want to make sure we are okay. So, yeah, we definitely feel supported, I would say. (Transcript 10, p. 8, timepoint 24:22)

However, when it comes to the perception of effectiveness and personalised options of coping resources, there were further concerns about facilitating support efficiently at an institutional level. Another postgraduate violinist spoke of her views on coping and the institution:

The college has, I know, they have talks about mental health and coping strategies, I believe I have seen them. But I don't think anyone is interested in going to see that. This is another lecture. Oh, that's just boring... because, like, what I was dealing with, like, attitudes that had been developed quite early on, like through the influence of my parents, and like the and my, my role models, like all famous violinists. And also, even teachers who would say like, oh, if you want to play well, you should be practising... But I think maybe it's more of a like a community thing, rather than like something the college can actually fix. As long as the college is aware of this, I believe that they are. (Transcript 6, p. 9, timepoint 30:47)

The balance between the support offered by the institution and access to resources is an interesting aspect of discussing coping within the conservatoire. Participants' responses indicated that the coping support provided by the institution should not be excessively proactive; however, students should be able to know where to access such assistance (n=8). An undergraduate flautist spoke about how institutional support accommodated the musicians' coping needs:

It is nice not to be too proactive in the sense that not every student needs so much help. So, for a student to know where to go when they do need help, I think it is good. And I would not, I don't think I would like it if we had to go to compulsory sessions on wellbeing or compulsory sessions on how to deal with stress or that kind of thing. Because I think when you get to this age, you kind of know, all on the way of knowing how yourself deals with stress, to have the option to go to a personal or I mean, we are assigned personal advisors, so you already kind of have that contact. If you need anything, you can go to the personal advisor and they will help you.

(Transcript 13, p. 9, timepoint 27:27)

3.3.6.3 Importance of Coping in Musicians' Careers

As with musicians, coping is an important aspect of their career. A postgraduate violinist took pre-performance distress as an example and reported that having a solid and reliable routine as a coping strategy makes a huge difference in handling such challenges that musicians face throughout their careers (Transcript 6, p. 10, timepoint 34:27). Another participant emphasised the importance of coping in maintaining their own emotional health:

Yes, definitely. As I mentioned before, and you call it very depressing, but comparing yourself to other people, it is just it happens. It is just the fact that there is always going to be somebody better than you, and learning how to still be happy and not drown in that self-doubt is very important, especially as musicians. (Transcript 11, p. 7, timepoint 24:33)

Participants suggested that coping acts as an important agent for musicians to adapt to challenges (n=6), as their careers are not always smooth or great (Transcript 14, p. 11, timepoint 34:32). Most participants expressed that actively coping with challenges had a positive impact on their future careers (n=3). Quoting an undergraduate cellist, *'because coping always helps your mental health and without being healthy mentally, I can see how a career or a life over the long term can be happy and healthy'* (Transcript 11, p. 10, timepoint 33:25). Participants mentioned that challenges, particularly anxiety and stress, were unlikely to disappear for good in their careers (n=5). However, instead of ignorance having a set of effective coping methods helps prolong careers and overcome these challenges (Transcript 12, p. 10, timepoint 25:01). A postgraduate bassoonist commented on coping with musicians' occupational demands:

I think especially with music because it demands so much physically and mentally and with your time, that is very important, if we are going to pursue it, but there is also space to cope with that. (Transcript 16, p. 10, timepoint 33:42)

3.4 Discussion

The present study sought to investigate conservatoire music students' experiences and perceptions of coping, together with their interactions with challenges raised by music-making and occupational demands as musicians. The findings demonstrate varying sources of opportunities and challenges for musicians. There were three general themes in this part of the study following perceptions of coping: (1) sources of opportunities and challenges, (2) coping approaches, and (3) importance of coping. That said, the challenges experienced by musicians also lead to a set of coping strategies used by musicians based on the contexts of challenges, including physical, psychological, and task-oriented problems.

Taking a step back from how musicians cope with challenges, they began to reflect on their sources of opportunities and challenges, which involved the sources of stress and problems that need to be addressed. Unsurprisingly, performances are the biggest opportunities for conservatoire music students, both by approaching them through the conservatoire and directly to themselves. Within this context, the conservatoire community and conservatoire music students' personal networks serve as primary sources of performance engagement, which might include their teachers, peers, and professional connections within the field. Interestingly, performance has also been found to be one of the sources of challenges for conservatoire music students.

Physical and psychological demands have been demonstrated to be challenges in musicians' performance (Pecen et al., 2018), as in other professional fields, including sports and dance (Clark & Williamon, 2011). Previous research has investigated the significance of physical health and various psychological challenges in musicians, including injury, performance anxiety, and depression, which remain some of the challenges identified in the present study. In addition to these known challenges, the current findings also show that competition, uncertainties (career and financial), and time management are equally critical

challenges for musicians. These findings remind the field of research that in addition to physical and psychological demands, where personal differences might be of great concern, challenges that musicians cope with could be specifically task-oriented and commonly experienced by the majority of musicians. Uncertainties were specifically mentioned by several participants, pointing out that the unknown challenges in their career pathways and being unstable given the occupational nature of musicians are concerns that they need to cope with. Potentially linked to this, these uncertainties faced by musicians during transitions from students to professionals are 'stressors' to them, which further contribute to the understanding of musicians' coping at this time of career.

The findings of this study pointed out that the challenges experienced by musicians are context- and occupational-specific, and to understand the contributors to musicians' coping or just what coping means to musicians in general, it is necessary to explore coping in relation to the challenges raised by music-making. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggested two categories of coping: problem-focused and emotion-focused (p. 150). The coping strategies used by musicians and their categorisation found in this study are mainly in line with the distinction of Lazarus and Folkman (1984); however, musicians' coping strategies were sometimes a mixture of both categories. For instance, musicians spoke of uncertainties and competition in performance opportunities, although one aspect of coping with this challenge was changing perspectives and mindsets. However, they reported that actively seeking more opportunities and networking are also solutions to this challenge. This explains why musicians cope with challenges, and their strategies might not only point to a particular category of coping, but also adopt a hybrid coping approach.

Depending on the nature of the challenges, musicians adopt relevant coping strategies regardless of their physical or psychological approaches. In line with Parkes (1986), in terms of coping behaviours, coping in musicians also includes the consideration of individual

differences, environmental factors, and situational characteristics. Coping remains an individual topic for musicians; despite the common coping strategies mentioned in the findings, there is no one fit for all approaches in musicians' coping.

All musicians spoke of the importance of coping as musicians within the conservatoire as well as in their future careers. The benefits of adaptive and effective coping strategies prolong the professional careers of musicians. Taking Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) as an example of a challenge experienced by musicians, it could be a persistent challenge in musicians' careers, not only at their student times. Biasutti and Cocina (2014) and Burin and Osorio (2017) discussed coping strategies in light of MPA; they also showed that musicians continuously benefit from effective coping approaches throughout their careers.

Various sources of coping support were expressed, including both personal and external resources. For instance, some musicians mentioned access to counselling and support networks for advice, which enhanced their ability to cope with challenges. Some musicians have emphasised that the balance between support being provided and willingness to access is critical to avoid overwhelming them with excessive or irrelevant resources. However, in the general view of most participants, having options to access support and matching their challenges with appropriate resources to cope would enhance the effectiveness of coping. As coping remains an individual subject matter, most musicians expressed that it is their responsibility to access coping support, although awareness of coping support is needed.

3.5 Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

The field of musicians' coping perceptions remains diverse, and the present study approaches coping from musicians' perspectives and structures, offering an alternative understanding. Aside from the sources of opportunities, findings from the first part of the interview study primarily addressed the research question on common challenges experienced by conservatoire music students as they learn and perform. Conservatoire music students reported that competition, psychological challenges, uncertainties, time management, and physical health are some of the main challenges in their learning and performances. In response to the research question on strategies used by conservatoire music students to cope with challenges, conservatoire music students discussed a range of coping strategies used for different types of challenges and strategies being carried out at several levels, including physical (physical exercises, activities, and Alexander Techniques), behavioural (support network, stretching, muscle relaxation and breathing exercises, mental skills, self-care, and taking breaks), cognitive and emotional (change of mindset and perspective, positive reframing, religious belief, and control of emotions), and task-oriented (analysis of problem, preparation and planning, and realisation of demands).

As the importance of coping in musicians is justified and beneficial, this raises the question of which factors contribute to enhancing musicians' use of effective coping strategies. Conservatoire music students stated that support through both personal support networks and resources available through the institution or wider environment could be relevant to enhancing their coping. The findings revealed the importance of coping from both the perspectives of coping as a music student and coping within conservatoires, which highlighted the significance of mental health, access to support networks, institutional support, and the effective execution of support. Furthermore, the findings also underscored the importance of coping in musicians' careers, particularly in adapting to different

environments and prolonging careers. The appropriateness and effectiveness of supporting resources influenced musicians' coping approaches and how their coping skills developed throughout the study period. However, the detailed progress of how musicians perceive support influences their coping skills remains unclear.

Finally, the findings suggested a potential link between coping and resilience among musicians, as participants discussed how coping strategies could also contribute to the development of resilience. While a number of studies have begun to investigate these topics individually in the field of psychology, it would still be helpful to understand how these topics relate to and contribute to each other. Details regarding findings on resilience are discussed in the following chapter. Further research is needed to answer these questions, which also impact the health and wellbeing of musicians in general.

Based on these findings, additional areas requiring further research were proposed. Responses collected in interviews are qualitative; in order to generalise musicians' coping capacities and characteristics, further data collection using quantitative measures based on a larger sample size would be ideal. In addition, to justify the continuing impact of coping on musicians' careers, longitudinal research tracking graduates' coping in the professional field could further contribute to the findings of the present study.

Chapter 4 – Interview Study Part II: Musicians' Perceptions Toward Psychological Resilience

This chapter documents the second part of the first study of this doctoral research project in response to the following question:

Research Question 3. How do conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience in their learning and performing?

In the interview study, two main themes were explored: (1) conservatoire music students' perceptions of coping, as discussed in the previous chapter, and (2) their perceptions of psychological resilience. As detailed in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.4.2 Resilience in Music Training), musicians' views on psychological resilience may be influenced by their occupational demands. These factors were investigated alongside their experiences in music-making and the specific challenges they face in their profession.

The second part of the interview study explored various aspects of resilience, concentrating on three key themes: the general meaning of resilience for musicians, understanding resilience in musicians' occupational activities, and the roles of institutions and support systems in musicians' resilience. By focusing on these areas related to resilience in the context of music-making, this part of the study aims to provide insights into the factors contributing to the development of resilience among conservatoire music students.

4.1 Findings

From the analysis of the interview transcripts, three themes in relation to musicians' perceptions of psychological resilience were found (see Section 3.1.2 for the areas discussed): (1) generalised meaning of resilience for musicians, (2) understanding resilience in musicians' occupational activities, and (3) roles of institutions and support systems in musicians' resilience. Overarching themes were derived from the initial research questions, indicating a top-down approach to their generation. Within each overarching theme, subthemes emerged through a bottom-up approach that reflected data-driven analysis. The aim of this part of the study is to understand musicians' perceptions of resilience by asking about what this topic means to them, followed by the enablers of musicians' resilience and where the responsibility lies within the institution and musicians' individual development. Table 4.1 summarises the themes and subthemes of the current study.

Table 4. 1 Summary of themes and sub-themes identified in conservatoire music students’ perceptions toward psychological resilience

Overarching Themes	Sub-Themes	Codes
1 Generalised meaning of resilience for musicians	1.1 Resilience as the ability to adapt 1.2 Handling emotions 1.3 Contribution from coping	1.1.1 Positively bounce back from trauma 1.1.2 Capacity to carry on 1.2.1 Management of negative emotions 1.2.2 Suppression of emotions under pressure 1.2.3 Coping with adversity 1.3.1 Adaptive coping contributes to resilience 1.3.2 Personal capacity in overcoming adversity 1.3.3 Flexibility
2 Understanding resilience in musicians’ occupational activities	2.1 Enabler to resilience – Change of mindset 2.2 Enabler to resilience – Building resilience through experiences 2.3 Enabler to resilience – Support network 2.4 Barriers to resilience	2.1.1 Diversity of focus 2.1.2 Use of positive perspective 2.2.1 Process of bouncing back from adversity 2.2.2 Development of coping strategies 2.3.1 Personal support network 2.3.2 Sources of support 2.3.3 Family influences and upbringing 2.4.1 Strong competition 2.4.2 High personal standards 2.4.3 Long hours of practice
3 Roles of institutions and support systems in musicians’ resilience	3.1 Responsibilities of musicians and institution 3.2 Supporting musicians’ resilience	3.1.1 Mixture of individual and institutional responsibilities 3.1.2 Awareness of available support 3.1.3 Personal resources and responsibilities 3.1.4 Performance opportunities 3.1.5 Competitive conservatoire environment 3.2.1 Open space to discuss resilience 3.2.2 Institution’s policies 3.2.3 Workshops on resilience 3.2.4 Personalised mental healthcare

4.1.1 Generalised Meaning of Resilience for Musicians

4.1.1.1 Resilience as the Ability to Adapt

The conservatoire music students were asked about the meaning of resilience from the perspective of a musician or music student. In line with the existing understanding of resilience in psychology (see Chapter 2 for further discussion), conservatoire music students described resilience as one's ability to adapt to or return to a normal state from trauma in a positive way (n=7). In the face of uncertainties and challenges, conservatoire music students have mentioned resilience as the ability to adapt; however, adaptation differs for everyone in terms of approaches. For instance, a postgraduate violinist mentioned that resilience means being able to keep going when things are tough (Transcript 6, p. 11, timepoint 37:12).

In terms of elaborating on the meaning of resilience, participants frequently mentioned the negative impact of adversity, including trauma, uncertainties, and challenges, where resilience serves as a balancing agent in particular to the impact of adversity. Another participant commented that resilience is the ability to withstand adversity:

Resilience is the ability of a material to bounce back once it is hit or pushed right. My idea of preferring myself for my musical career is not necessarily hit. My idea is to harden myself as much as I can avoid being hit in any way.
(Transcript 8, p. 10, timepoint 34:54)

Many spoke of one of the common aspects of musicians' resilience: being able to bounce back from mistakes and carry them onto the next performance (n=4). These findings suggest that resilience is connected to perseverance and continuity among musicians in terms of overcoming adversity throughout their careers. A postgraduate singer expressed that resilience as 'the ability to take disappointments, rejection, and to deal with it in a positive

way and to be able to move on and improve and continue with your journey' (Transcript 10, p. 9, timepoint 29:15). Another postgraduate clarinetist described an example of resilience in a music performance context:

... If you make a mistake [in a performance], you just have to keep going. It is just trying to keep up the resilience to not kind of get making mistakes and not let that affect you. (Transcript 1, p. 12, timepoint 43:57)

4.1.1.2 Handling Emotions

Apart from adaptability and perseverance, conservatoire music students mentioned that handling emotions is a crucial component of resilience (n=7). Similar to the aspect of facing adversity at a physical level (as discussed above), one participant suggested that resilience could also involve the management of negative emotions (Transcript 3, p. 10, timepoint 33:26). Different types of emotional management were mentioned in the interviews. For instance, a postgraduate clarinetist's resilience reminded him of a state of absence of stress:

When you talk about resilience, it is the absence of stress. So, I think the happier side is more important than the stressed part. [...] And I think the resilience bit on my side like, I can ignore the technical part and try to express myself with the musical bit with no distress. (Transcript 4, p. 11, timepoint 38:20)

The emotional aspect and management of resilience are also related to the suppression of emotions while experiencing high-pressure situations and being able to persevere. An undergraduate flutist commented on controlling emotions through resilience.

I suppose I do not let my emotions dictate what I do. So, I tend to make decisions without being very emotional about them; I think that helps my resilience. So, if I am, if I am not often in a bad mood, but if I am in a bad mood, I do, sort of let it change what I decide to do, or decide not to go for the one opportunity because I have been offended, or whatever the case may be. (Transcript 13, p. 10, timepoint 31:59)

The above quote hints at some ideas of enablers of resilience, which will be discussed further in the following section. Focusing on the connection between resilience and the management of emotions, conservatoire music students further discussed resilience as an act of filtering through negative impacts and learned from the process of coping with adversity (n=2). For example, one postgraduate flautist commented on the meaning of resilience when facing criticism:

You know, it is really easy to do things if you are motivated to do them. However, being resilient means being able to do those things, even when you do not want to do so. I think I used to think of resilience as being really tough. If someone gave you a load of criticism, you would be fine. (Transcript 15, p. 12, timepoint 43:47)

4.1.1.3 Contribution from Coping

From going through adversity and being able to filter through its negative impact, resilience develops along with the musician's coping process. The responses from the participants in the present study also reflected the relationship between resilience and coping (as discussed in Chapter 2). In the process of coping with adversity, musicians' adaptive coping responses particularly contributed to resilience and handling of future challenges (n=2). The importance of resilience in music-making is obvious; moreover, it also contributes to the musician's

personal development. Another participant commented on the importance of resilience for musicians:

For me, this means being in a position where I can keep going. Despite anything that goes wrong, finding ways in which I can learn from that and come back from that stronger person. [...] I think with music, because it's such a highly pressured, professional environment with somebody performances where you are expected to do it at a very high level, I think it's very important that if things do not always go according to plan, that we are able to explore ways sensibly and dissect those things. So that for the next time, it can get better rather than being in a situation where if one thing goes wrong, suddenly everything else collapses because we cannot deal with it. (Transcript 16, p. 11, timepoint 36:44)

In summary, resilience appears to be a personal capacity for overcoming adversity and challenges. The diversity in terms of defining resilience in musicians remains throughout the analysis process, from defining resilience as flexibility and courage to overcoming challenges, to the inclusion of self-confidence and future planning. Independence is an important consideration in musicians' resilience. Regarding this concern, a postgraduate flautist summarised the differences between musicians and the general public's understanding of resilience:

I think people have to show exactly the same resilience in all areas of that, that personal and professional lives, like the thing about having to be resilient when you are a musician, is because you are working so independently. And it's such a, you are working on such many things that like anyone would get bored of that or frustrated at

that. So, like, yes, on a day-to-day thing, like you need to be able to cope that but like, I am sure people in office jobs need to be resilient because they probably do not like what they are doing all the time. This is the same. (Transcript 15, p. 13, timepoint 45:50)

While there may not be any apparent differences in the definition of resilience between musicians and the general public, it is important to explore the application of resilience specifically within the context of musicians. As mentioned in Kegelaers et al. (2021), the investigation of musicians' resilience often revealed more underlying challenges and mental health issues, closely related to their occupational activities and music-making.

4.1.2 Understanding Resilience in Musicians' Occupational Activities

Conservatoire music students were asked about what enabled them to be resilient, including sources of support, capacities, and relevant perceptions. The responses also highlighted the resilience of musicians in music-making. Derived from the overall theme, this section outlines several subthemes including enablers (including (1) change of mindset, (2) building resilience through experiences, (3) support networks, and (4) barriers to resilience.

4.1.2.1 Enabler to Resilience – Change of Mindset

One participant commented that the development of resilience is an internal process, where their own capacities and persistence to cope could grow personally without particular external support (Transcript 1, p. 13, timepoint 46:11). Within musicians' individual development, factors related to diversity of focus as an enabler in developing resilience were identified (n=5). In particular, a change in mindset encourages resilience (n=4) and

encourages the use of a positive perspective (n=2). One postgraduate clarinetist highlighted how a change in one's mindset encourages resilience:

For a long period of time, all students had the same playing style, such as playing like a metronome and without any musical styles. This is why many of them are really afraid of being wrong during the performance. [...]

For myself, I think focusing on the good part is more important than focusing on the mistakes. So, I think by changing my mindset, helped me be more resilient in it.

(Transcript 4, p. 11, timepoint 39:13)

As an enabling factor, the change in mindset also hints at the development of perseverance in musicians, as adjusting one's own mindset might help musicians carry onto upcoming challenges or adversity in their careers. An undergraduate harpist expressed how her thoughts affected her resilience:

I think you have got to have this sort of mind frame that you just have to carry on. And that you are not a quitter. And then, you cannot give up. Because I think a lot of people have thought about what point and their musical career like, oh, I have had enough, I am going to give up like, it is not for me. But you just have to persevere and carry on. Yeah. Because yeah, it is hard. But life is hard. So you just have to carry on.

(Transcript 12, p. 11, timepoint 30:27)

Changes in mindset as an enabler of musicians' resilience might sound similar to the change in mindset and perspective as a coping strategy (as discussed in the previous chapter), which further supports the close connection between coping and resilience. To elaborate, a

change in mindset serves as a coping strategy and at the same time contributes to the development of resilience. In particular, the participants (n=2) suggested that positive perspectives in terms of changing mindsets had an effective impact on resilience. A postgraduate violinist elaborated on this point with an example of reacting to feedback from a performance:

For example, if someone gives negative feedback, you can either let it really bring down your self-esteem. Or you could say, well, that's one person's opinion, and maybe some of what they said is valid, and do not think about it and get a range of opinions and keep improving. Instead of just being like, oh, I suck, or, like you, have one bad performance. And you are like oh, I guess I am just not meant to do music. That would not be resilient. So, a resilient thing to do would be like oh, which happened sometimes. But next time, it would be better. (Transcript 6, p. 11, timepoint 37:31)

Closely related to the discussion of musicians' coping previously (see Chapter 3), the importance of positive perspectives in resilience reminds us of the use of positive reframing in coping strategies. Based on the prediction that coping contributes to the development of musicians' resilience, positive reframing is an effective coping approach that would also contribute to their resilience.

Self-recognition and goal setting were also identified as enabling factors for musicians' resilience. A postgraduate flautist expressed her internal thoughts on resilience during both music training and career development:

I chose to be here [the institution]. No one forced me to be here. I told myself that I was going to be here. So, then that, that helps me be resilient. So, I am like, this is the decision that you made? No, no one has made you do this. [...]

I want to be principal flute like, they're resilient because they have got that end goal in sight, and they want to go and do that, like I am resilient, because I want to be able to bring music to as many people as possible and affect people's lives. So, for me, I see that, as I know, I take people more seriously when they are better at their instrument, which is bad, I should not do that. But I do. And so, for me, I need to get as good as I can at the flute. So, I can go and achieve all those things. People will listen to me and respect me. (Transcript 15, p. 13, timepoint 47:16)

4.1.2.2 Enabler to Resilience – Building Resilience through Experiences

In terms of enabling resilience, conservatoire music students reported the process of first experiencing adversity, including challenges and stressors, and then being able to bounce back (n=4). One of the participants mentioned that resilience is 'something people would pick up more so through experience, through life experience to a variety of experiences' (Transcript 2, p. 17, timepoint 52:06). Building resilience through experience could be a perspective for understanding musicians' resilience. An undergraduate violist commented on exposure to experience as an enabler of resilience:

I think I definitely was not a very naturally resilient person when it came to the demands of music, like being, you know, critiqued, and compared, and having to perform in front of your peers. I always struggled with feeling really judged by people. But I think just the more that I have done it, the more I have realised that kind

of what is the worst that can happen? Yeah. I have naturally become more resilient.

(Transcript 7, p. 11, timepoint 40:38)

Following the experience of facing adversity, one participant mentioned that emotion regulation was involved throughout the process of coping by stabilising the individual's mental status and having a persistent impact on resilience in the long term. This study also clarified how coping strategies contribute to the development of resilience:

The coping strategies that I used also helped with resilience. Yeah, I think learning to think more rationally about things. And also realising that everyone actually is just interested in themselves. You think that people are judging you a lot of the time and actually, but then, after that, they are just worried about themselves again? (Transcript 7, p. 11, timepoint 41:10)

Being capable of handling challenges raised by performances appeared to be significant in musicians' careers, and their experiences of going through and bouncing back from the negative impact of music-making played an important role in developing resilience. Closely related to the context of music-making, a postgraduate singer raised the point that resilience might be helpful in elevating artistic ideas in performances:

The creative curiosity and when it's [resilience] like fit, I think ideas flow more easily. The more I get out of my head, the better music I produce. (Transcript 3, p. 11, timepoint 40:59)

4.1.2.3 Enabler to Resilience – Support Network

In addition to the individual factors that enable resilience, conservatoire music students predominantly spoke of support networks in the development of resilience (n=8).

Conservatoire music students suggested that personal support networks, including family, friends, and teachers, positively contributed to resilience (n=6). A postgraduate violinist emphasised the importance of support networks in maintaining resilience:

I have my own sources of resilience, which do not necessarily come from college. But of course, I mean, everybody needs to have a personal safety net, apart from the institution, because, I mean, they are not my parents. So, I need to have my own lines of defense. (Transcript 8, p. 12, timepoint 42:19)

Within the resilience support network, conservatoire music students reported that they would seek different sources of support based on the context of the challenge (n=4). Participants suggested that musicians' challenges are mainly divided into music-related and personal issues, and that musicians would either seek support from their teachers (or professionals) or personal networks (including family and friends).

I mean, they may be from college; for example, my teacher, as I was saying, my teacher is a great source of help at any time. (Transcript 8, p. 12, timepoint 43:09)

As the above quote suggests, particularly for conservatoire music students, their principal teachers are likely to be the first point of contact when encountering challenges and perhaps building resilience. Since both principal teachers and musicians might have gone through similar musical training and likely shared similar interests in career pathways, the

principal teacher's role in supporting the musician's resilience is crucial. A postgraduate singer shared her thoughts on approaching teachers for support in handling challenges:

I would say, like, all team of people that we have, like psychologists or counsellors, or I think we, we kind of default to go and speak to our teacher, first of all, but that's putting so much pressure on them. And they're not, of course, they have gone through the experiences themselves; they can guide us, but they're not actually trained in it.
(Transcript 10, p. 8, timepoint 25:08)

The above quote supports the importance of the principal teacher's role in supporting conservatoire music students as well as their resilience. Although both principal teachers and conservatoire music students may share similar experiences in performance and musical careers, teachers may not always be able to assist conservatoire music students in issues other than professional (music-related) challenges. Therapeutic and psychological support remain important aspects of musicians' resilience. Further details are presented in the following section.

Other than teachers' support, family influences and upbringing also shape musicians' resilience and personal qualities. Conservatoire music students' families play an important role in conservatoire music students' support networks for resilience. For instance, a postgraduate singer mentioned that growing up with musical training and practice, her family has always been driven and taught her to believe in herself, as well as advising her to deal with challenges (Transcript 10, p. 10, timepoint 31:15). Some conservatoire music students mentioned that their life experiences and how they were brought up influenced their development of resilience, aside from personality (n=3). A postgraduate bassoonist spoke about his views on family influence and resilience:

I have learned from them from quite a young age, about the importance of hard work and dedication, and also learning from that as well. So, all through my life, I have really appreciated the importance of hard work and learning from everything that we are doing. Therefore, I think that's really helped me become a resilient person, but also because I have appreciated things that have not quite gone according to the plan.

(Transcript 16, p. 12, timepoint 38:45)

4.1.2.4 Barriers to Resilience

Some conservatoire music students spoke of the factors that discouraged their resilience or their development of resilience (n=5). These barriers were mostly challenges and activities that prevented conservatoire music students from being resilient, such as strong competition (n=3), high personal standards (n=2), and long practice hours (n=2).

Some conservatoire music students identified that a comparison between themselves and others negatively affected their resilience (n=3). An undergraduate cellist spoke of how comparison discouraged her resilience:

If I know that the people in the audience know better than I do, I really get subconscious. Because I think that they will think that it is not worth listening to me or that they regret coming here. So, and being able to not think of these thoughts.

Yeah, also has to do with resilience. (Transcript 11, p. 10, timepoint 37:27)

Another participant added that high personal standards would also facilitate further competition among musicians, making it more difficult for them to be resilient:

Personal standard, I think everyone here just wants to be the best. [...] Everyone just wants to like, be good. Everyone wants to do their best. But to a point where people fall out or like, aren't nice with each other. I really do not like that. So, I think there are different ways of looking at it [resilience]. (Transcript 12, p. 11, timepoint 29:03)

Given that both training at conservatoire and music-making in general require musicians to practice constantly and intensively, one of the participants hinted at the impact of long hours of practice on musicians' resilience:

I think this is especially true in practice. I find this in a lot of piano players and violinists that have this resilience to practice all the time. It's quite admirable that this kind of just drive without stop. (Transcript 13, p. 11, timepoint 33:55)

In summary, there seems to be a perceived consideration regarding the challenges for musicians to be resilient or to develop resilience, where these challenges are either raised by or closely related to music-making.

4.1.3 Roles of Institutions and Support Systems in Musicians' Resilience

In the final part of the study, conservatoire music students were asked about their perceptions of responsibility for supporting their resilience. In particular, it is important to understand whether it is the musician's or institution's responsibility to support resilience. The conservatoire music students shared their opinions based on their experiences and views. Furthermore, conservatoire music students spoke of what they would like to experience at a conservatoire in an ideal world to support and enhance their psychological resilience.

4.1.3.1 Responsibilities of Musician and Institution

Most conservatoire music students expressed that supporting their resilience was a mixture of both individual and institutional responsibilities (n=9). While navigating the responsibility of supporting musicians' resilience, conservatoire music students, particularly for the present study, agreed that both individual and institutional responsibilities are crucial, as they rely on the other.

I think, first of all, it's my responsibility as well, because it's my career, my everything. On the other hand, I think, I do not think college is responsible, necessarily, because we are all sort of grown-ups, even legally. But I think, in a way, morally, they have a responsibility for their students. (Transcript 9, p. 11, timepoint 38:52)

Instead of criticising the responsibility of supporting musicians' resilience as either solely individual or institutional, it appeared to be sensible that musicians at the conservatoire would be aware of the support available and access proactively where necessary (n=3). Although the institution has the responsibility to offer support regarding musicians' resilience, it is the musician's responsibility to make use of those supports (Transcript 4, p. 12, timepoint 38:50). Another postgraduate clarinettist spoke of how it was a mixture of both parties:

This is the college's responsibility. But don't know just the nature of the industry, to an extent, there's only so much the college can kind of help with. If you're not doing enough yourself to be resilient, then there's only so much that can be done. I think

they go hand in hand. [...] you can't really expect the institution to kind of spoon feed you the entire time. (Transcript 1, p. 13, timepoint 47:22)

The above quote points out that there is a need for musicians to actively access support to be resilient, depending on their personal choices to access support (n=2). Personal resources and system support emerged in terms of supporting musicians' resilience (n=3); in particular, challenges differed among musicians. For instance, one participant shared her experiences of injury and resilience:

I always thought of like, resilience is a personal thing. But I actually guess like a bit of both like I need my support systems to be resilient to that as well. [...]

Just like a musician, you can like not get very self-centred, but that every single thing that I did, and especially when I was injured, it was kind of like me against the entire world. (Transcript 5, p. 12, timepoint 43:06)

A number of conservatoire music students mentioned that they had their own responsibilities to be resilient (n=4) and support their resilience (n=2). One participant mentioned that musicians contributed a major proportion of the time to practice and preparation for performance, where these activities are usually individual; it would be sensible that the musician is responsible for resilience in such activities (Transcript 8, p. 11, timepoint 37:40). The perception of supporting resilience as a musician's own responsibility is also related to how the musician develops approaches to develop resilience and effective coping. An undergraduate cellist elaborated on this further:

I think this is my own responsibility. In the end, it's not like I am in school, and the teacher wants me to just pass the year to go into the next year. It is my responsibility to be as best as I can. And I mean, to be the best musician, I can be. And that also means getting or building up resilience and coping. And so, I think the responsibility is for the most part of me. (Transcript 11, p. 11, timepoint 38:56)

Individual differences remain in the evaluation of the balance between individual and institutional support for musicians' resilience. The surrounding environment of musicians is still involved in the development of resilience. A few conservatoire music students mentioned that frequent performance opportunities offered by the institution might contribute to the development of resilience, as musicians are accustomed to playing in front of others (n=3). However, this concern depends on both musicians and the institution, and it depends on musicians' own intentions (to engage in performances) and the institutional resources available. A postgraduate singer explained that exposure to more performance served as an opportunity to develop resilience:

It is up to is up to a different person. I think it's a mix. The more opportunities the college or institution can give to students, the better. But also, the stress of being a student and having to do you know, lessons, and prepare for auditions or prepare for the competitions or whatnot. makes it really difficult to like, take that, and go.
(Transcript 3, p. 11, timepoint 39:10)

The above quote suggests the importance of both the individual and institution in supporting musicians' resilience. To support musicians' resilience with a mixture of

individual and institutional support and resources, a lack of either kind of support would not make the model work. A postgraduate singer added to this point:

I think of both [individual and institutional support]. Yeah, I think we have to have it [personal resources] within ourselves. Because we can't always rely on external factors to keep us driven and motivated and be able to move on and overcome things. But they should definitely help in that, I think. Otherwise, you know, we've kind of left to our own devices, and it will be a lot harder. (Transcript 10, p. 10, timepoint 32:31)

However, some conservatoire music students also mentioned that the competitive environment of a conservatoire could be a challenge in accessing support for resilience, especially that provided by the institution. A postgraduate pianist spoke of his concern regarding the institution's responsibility to support musicians' resilience:

I mean, of course, resilience is a very personal thing. However, I also feel like the conservatoire level they should also be supporting you; however, they can build your resilience. You know, rather than saying, oh, that is your responsibility. [...]
I think there is a need to be a space where people can feel safe to be resilient and vulnerable. You know, I feel like somewhere like the institution; it's really hard to be vulnerable. You know, you once you feel like it feels like you are being eaten by a shark. (Transcript 14, p. 12, timepoint 41:30)

The above quote suggests that an institution's environment also reflects how musicians access support and simultaneously develop their own support network for

resilience. Given that musicians made responsible efforts to support their own resilience and to develop resilience, it leaves the institution to decide how to best support the musicians.

Like on a personal front, you have to be the person to do things. You must make yourself do it. But I also think that we need to be shown how to do that. And we need to be encouraged. I don't think you can be resilient and without a support network. It is important to see those things from people who have been there and have done that. And then there, they will teach there live in that line. Yeah, I think it is a combination of efforts. (Transcript 15, p. 13, timepoint 48:54)

4.1.3.2 Supporting Musicians' resilience

In terms of the ideal support that musicians would like to experience in enhancing resilience, participants spoke of four main areas: (1) open spaces or communities for musicians to discuss resilience, (2) institutions' policies to enable a less competitive environment, (3) workshops on resilience, and (4) personalised mental healthcare.

Conservatoire music students mentioned the importance of an open space within an institution for discussing resilience (n=5). For instance, it would be valuable for musicians to have an accessible group to discuss and share their thoughts and experiences regarding resilience. Depending on preference, the size of an open space may not be institution-wide; however, it would still be helpful to start within the department. A postgraduate clarinettist how the rising attention to resilience within departments would contribute to an open space for musicians to discuss this matter:

Just anything really, maybe if it's faculty- or instrument-specific, would be more I think, as it would be more effective if I was kind of it was all the clarinets or the

woods, talking about it. I think just vocalising it, just making it, making sure always kind of making sure your feelings are heard, I guess. Just having a space to discuss it and hear from other people's experiences as well. (Transcript 1, p. 14, timepoint 48:48)

As conservatoire music students are going through a similar nature of training (in terms of education and environment), they would find it helpful to share their concerns with people who understand or experience common challenges (n=2). Gaining a sense of going through the 'same kind of journey' helps with musicians' feelings that they are not alone, and they are part of the community (Transcript 6, p. 12, timepoint 44:46). It is also important for musicians to feel that the institution is a safe environment to experience challenges in music-making, and there is sufficient support.

Musicians' perceptions of conservatoire as stressful and competitive negatively affect the development of resilience. Some conservatoire music students suggested that institutional policies are one of the determining factors in enabling a less stressful environment and supporting musicians to be resilient (n=3). Institutions can proactively facilitate a constructive environment rather than strengthen stress and criticism:

I think a lot of time music colleges take the approach of making things really stressful for us, and hoping that will naturally become resilient through having to cope with those things, which I think we do, it has worked, but I think there are less stressful ways of developing better resilience that I think should be taught and included. (Transcript 7, p. 12, timepoint 42:48)

As discussed in the previous section, most participants agreed that both musicians and institutions are responsible for supporting resilience. However, institutions' responsibilities might be relevant to a supportive and encouraging environment, and benefit conservatoire music students' development of resilience (n=2). Rather than focusing heavily on judgement and competition, it would be beneficial for musicians to focus on their own music-making with enjoyment and constructive feedback (Transcript 16, p. 13, timepoint 41:50). It is down to the institution's policies and directions on how to facilitate an effective yet psychologically healthy system for musicians' education, where musicians could talk about resilience safely.

In terms of what the institution could offer, one of the examples that the participants mentioned was a workshop on developing resilience (n=3). The workshops provided an open space for musicians, including musicians with different principal instruments, to discuss their concerns and experiences related to resilience. It is important to note that these potential workshops on resilience should be based on music, which involves tackling the specific challenges experienced by musicians and occupation-focused coping strategies. An undergraduate flautist explained the importance of designing suitable workshop content for improving musicians' resilience:

[Music] is an artistic subject. This is not something that is required too much. And there no academic knowledge is not like maths or whatever. But actually, it is an incredibly difficult world to get into. It requires a high level of excellence that I think a lot of non-musicians do not understand. They don't understand maybe the number of hours that they go into becoming a musician, and the resilience that it takes. But most musicians don't understand that so. So, I suppose it just depends on who we are talking to be alright. (Transcript 13, p. 12, timepoint 37:40)

In addition to the possibility of setting up workshops on musicians' resilience, the above quote suggests that the effectiveness and relatedness of workshop contents are crucial considerations. As discussed in Chapter 2, there are existing interventions and workshop protocols for the development of resilience in psychology, sports, and other professional fields. However, it remains unknown what particular content should be included in this type of workshop for musicians. Although the workshop design remained flexible, conservatoire music students suggested that coping strategies should be an essential element in the workshop (n=3). A postgraduate singer spoke about coping strategy training to support resilience:

Some sort of training in it, if that's even possible [...] Or some sort of like workshops or a module in it perhaps earlier on into our career, my particular coping strategies. Because that enables you to become more resilient, I think if you can cope with it. (Transcript 10, p. 10, timepoint 33:13)

Considering the enhancement of resilience, the final part mentioned by conservatoire music students was continuing mental healthcare support (n=6). Conservatoire music students highlighted that mental health care and personal advisors available within the institution are useful supports for resilience (n=4). It is critical that the institution realises and is aware of the importance of mental support and shares its experience in accessing the mental health support offered by the institution:

I have to be honest with it, especially with mental health. They are always promoting, you know, meetings with your personal advisor, and everything if you feel unwell. I

made use of this in my first year. So, that is good. I was sure that this conversation was confident of everything. (Transcript 9, p. 11, timepoint 38:52)

To further develop the benefits of mental health care support for musicians, some participants mentioned that it is necessary for the institution to expand its mental health support team. As discussed earlier in this chapter, mental health status is an important factor in maintaining resilience, and such greater support would be helpful in enhancing musicians' resilience. A postgraduate pianist spoke of mental health care as important support for resilience:

I think that there needs to be more therapists. I know, they have been hard like two more, since I have started. But like, I think there needs to be a bit better team, bigger teams are not better, I think they are great. A bigger team that you know, perhaps, you know, during one's undergraduate years, there's, you know, I am out of his time, maybe even once or twice a year to just kind of be able to experience what it is like to be in a safe space. I feel like that's really, really a big thing. (Transcript 14, p. 14, timepoint 42:32)

Nevertheless, conservatoire music students mentioned the benefits of enhancing resilience, including contributions to career development and overall confidence (n=2). If musicians could consider resilience as a strength, it would have a huge impact on their careers. A postgraduate singer spoke of resilience as a strength:

I think, for me personally, it's kind of one of my strengths, I would say. So, it does kind of help define who I am as a musician. I know that it is something I am good at.

So, I use it to my advantage if something goes wrong; I just have to get on with it.

(Transcript 10, p. 9, timepoint 30:00)

4.2 Discussion

A main objective of this study is to identify the fundamental themes associated with resilience among musicians. It delved into the meaning of resilience for musicians, examined their behaviours and strategies for fostering resilience in music-making, and explored their associated responsibilities. These themes were identified through thematic analysis of the collected data, providing valuable insights into perceptions of resilience among musicians. This study generated qualitative data on musicians' perceptions of psychological resilience (resilience in general), particularly regarding occupational activities and challenges. It has been found that changes in mindset, experience, and support networks are enablers of resilience in musicians, whereas strong competition, high personal standards, and long practice hours are the main barriers.

In terms of the generalising meaning of resilience for musicians, participants' responses summarised that resilience refers to the ability to adapt and handle emotions and is also influenced by coping strategies. The interviews facilitated an in-depth exploration of the characteristics of resilience in musicians, beyond the generalised meaning established in psychology. The individual interview approach also allowed conservatoire music students to share their personal experiences related to resilience, although some might be sensitive to therapy, injury, and psychological challenges.

This study explored the role of institutions and support systems in fostering resilience among musicians. It is worth noting that most of the musicians interviewed emphasised that

the definition of resilience does not significantly differ between musicians and the general population, unless it is considered in the context of music-making. This finding aligns with existing literature that highlights the universal nature of resilience as a psychological construct (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 2001; Rutter, 2007; Ungar, 2011). However, when resilience is examined specifically in the realm of music, the unique challenges and demands faced by musicians come into play. These challenges include performance pressure, competition, career uncertainties, and the need to manage physical and mental health in music-related contexts. Therefore, understanding the roles of institutions and support systems in nurturing resilience is crucial for addressing musicians' specific needs and circumstances. In line with the argument presented by Egeland et al. (1993) regarding the influence of both an individual's personality and the consequences of interacting with their environment, it is crucial to consider musicians' music-making behaviours and their ability to cope with challenges arising from the conservatoire or music-making environment to understand their resilience. However, resilience remains an individual topic among musicians, and the definition for each musician may vary slightly.

Conservatoire music students also spoke of the behaviours and enablers that encouraged their resilience, including the change of mindset and focus, and having a support network. Most conservatoire music students agree that resilience develops internally based on exposure to challenges and experiences. Some conservatoire music students have suggested that being able to bounce back from challenges and stress in music-making would positively contribute to resilience. Interestingly, the participants mentioned the importance of mindsets and how their perspectives affected their resilience. In particular, when experiencing peer competition, musicians' personal standards and perceptions of practice and performance can also have a significant impact.

The interviews revealed several concerns and barriers related to resilience, particularly those experienced by musicians within the conservatoire. Reaffirming Holmes (2017), the findings of the present study show that throughout the journey of developing their professional careers, they encounter various environmental situations and events that pose challenges to them. Conservatoire training can be seen as a condensed experience in musicians' professional careers, where they encounter intense competition, high standards, and rigorous preparation. Findings from the present study suggest that music-making and musicians' surrounding environment should also be taken into account to understand musicians' resilience, particularly when a conservatoire environment appears to be one of the sources of challenges for musicians to be resilient. To facilitate a comprehensive understanding of musicians' resilience, it is necessary to consider the impact of the challenges experienced by musicians, especially those raised by musicians and the conservatoire environment.

Most conservatoire music students agreed that a mix of individual and institutional responsibilities supported their resilience. On one hand, the institution should be responsible for facilitating a supportive and open space; it is up to musicians' choices to access available resources and make use of existing support to maintain their resilience. The balance between musicians' self-awareness of resilience and institutions' policies to enable a less competitive environment is key to how resilience develops among musicians. In particular, for conservatoire music students, resilience should be built through experience and music-making, rather than increasing the impact of comparison and stress in training.

4.3 Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

One of the research questions of this thesis is to explore how conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience in their learning and performing. Alongside the findings reported in Chapter 3 on coping, the findings presented in the current chapter revealed conservatoire music students' perceptions toward resilience, including the generalised meaning of resilience for musicians, understanding resilience in musicians' occupational activities, and the roles of institutions and support systems in musicians' resilience.

The findings revealed several perspectives in terms of the generalised meaning of resilience for musicians, including resilience as the ability to adapt (positively bouncing back from trauma and the capacity to carry on), handling emotions (management of negative emotions, suppression of emotions under pressure, and coping with adversity), and the contribution of coping (adaptive coping contributes to resilience, personal capacity in overcoming adversity, and flexibility). Conservatoire music students in particular suggested that the use of coping strategies contributes to the development of resilience; for instance, effective and successful coping would have a positive impact on their resilience. The relationship between coping and resilience, as suggested by Van der Hallen et al. (2020), was justified in the findings of this part of the interview study, which indicated that the relationship also exists in the context of conservatoire music students and musicians.

As presented in the findings, the meaning of resilience for musicians aligns with its definition in psychology. However, the characteristics of musicians' resilience depend on their understanding of resilience in occupational activities. The findings revealed several enablers to the development of musicians' resilience, including changes in mindset (diversity of focus and use of positive perspective), building resilience through experiences (process of bouncing back from adversity and development of coping strategies), and support networks (personal support network, sources of support, family influences, and upbringing). These

enablers directly inform the research question of how conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience. Barriers to musicians' resilience (strong competition, high personal standards, and long hours of practice) also revealed challenges in the process of developing resilience.

Finally, the findings from the interview study highlighted the importance of both psychological and environmental factors in supporting resilience, revealing the roles of institutions and support systems in musicians' resilience. The roles lead to the discussion of the responsibilities of musicians and institutions in resilience (a mixture of individual and institutional responsibilities, awareness of available support, personal resources and responsibilities, performance opportunities, competitive conservatoire environment), and the significance of supporting their resilience (open space to discuss resilience, institutions' policies, workshops on resilience, and personalised mental healthcare). From a practical perspective, understanding musicians' resilience acknowledges the interactions between conservatoire music students and their music-making environments. This also reveals how resilience and coping develop, relating to the consideration of institutional support for conservatoire music students and rethinking musicians' wellbeing in general.

Based on this study's findings, several areas require further investigation. The meaning of resilience to musicians can vary among individuals as there is no standard definition of the extent of music in defining resilience. It is clear that there are some commonalities and characteristics among musicians in understanding resilience, following which it is possible to establish a specific meaning for resilience based on different types of music-making. In addition, the experiences of resilience mentioned were based on participants' individual perceptions as conservatoire music students, and might not be applicable to other musicians.

Chapter 5 – Survey Study Part I: Musicians’ Coping, Resilience, Self-Compassion and External Support

5.1 Introduction

The findings from Chapters 3 and 4 of the interview study revealed musicians’ perceptions of coping and resilience, suggesting a close connection between these two constructs. While the earlier chapters imply that effective coping strategies contribute to the development of resilience among musicians, it is important to empirically establish this connection.

Conservatoire music students indicated that support for coping and resilience involves both individual efforts and institutional support, underscoring the importance of both internal resources and institutional environments. Moreover, the level of support provided by institutions and musicians’ access to these resources significantly influences their overall coping, with some musicians noting its impact on their health and wellbeing. These findings underscore the need to further investigate the potential links between coping, related psychological constructs, and the music-making environment, particularly within the educational setting experienced by conservatoire music students.

5.1.1 Objectives of This Chapter

The current chapter documents the second study of this thesis, addressing the following questions within the overarching aim:

Research Question 2. What strategies do conservatoire music students use to cope with challenges?

Research Question 3. How do conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience in their learning and performing?

Research Question 4. How do conservatoire music students' coping strategies connect with other individual factors, including resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, as well as environmental factors they encounter during their learning and performing?

The findings from the survey study directly addressed research questions 2, 3, and 4 by quantitatively analysing correlations and differences in conservatoire music students' use of coping strategies, as well as the correlations between coping and psychological resilience among them. The questionnaire also collected data related to individual and environmental factors influencing conservatoire music students' coping, thus addressing the research questions by measuring their coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, wellbeing, and relevant environmental aspects, and investigating significant factors related to their coping and its enhancement.

The first section of this chapter outlines the quantitative measures employed in the survey study, complementing the discussion of coping and resilience presented in Chapters 3 and 4. Subsequently, the results of the first part of the questionnaire, including conservatoire music students' levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion are presented (the present chapter). Following this, questionnaire responses related to relevant environmental aspects affecting coping are discussed, particularly conservatoire music students' perceptions of the conservatoire environment (Chapter 6). Lastly, the questionnaire responses related to health and wellbeing are discussed (Chapter 7).

This chapter serves as a parallel discussion to the interview study, dedicated to comprehending musicians' coping strategies and their relationships with other psychological

constructs and the surrounding environment using quantitative approaches. The chapter concludes with a discussion on the limitations of the survey study.

Previous studies have shown that musicians employ a range of coping strategies in music-making (Araújo et al., 2017), yet further analyses on the connections between these coping strategies have not been undertaken. Additionally, existing literature suggests that coping strategies, resilience, and wellbeing predict each other in the general population (De La Fuente et al., 2017; Mayordomo et al., 2016), as well as indicating a relationship between the constructs of self-compassion and musicians' overall health and wellbeing (Lam, 2018). Based on the existing literature, for this part of the survey study, the interactive features between these psychological constructs in conservatoire music students were hypothesised:

1. The coping strategies adopted by conservatoire music students should be interconnected to one another, especially within the same category of coping (problem-focused and emotion-focused coping). The use of coping strategies should also positively predict overall coping levels.
2. Positive self-compassion constructs are positively associated with the overall level of self-compassion among conservatoire music students.

The following three hypotheses were proposed regarding the connections between the psychological constructs:

3. There are positive connections between coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion among conservatoire music students.
4. There are positive connections between coping strategies and psychological resilience in conservatoire music students, depending on the type of coping (problem-focused or emotion-focused coping).
5. The positive construct of self-compassion is positively associated with the overall level of coping among conservatoire music students.

To test these hypotheses, the performance of conservatoire music students on the listed psychological constructs was initially analysed both individually and within each construct. Subsequent analyses were then conducted to assess correlations between these constructs, either at an overall level or between sub-constructs, in order to understand the parameters of any potential connections among specific elements.

5.2 Method

5.2.1 Respondents

A total of 120 undergraduate and postgraduate music performance students were recruited from seven conservatoires in the United Kingdom: the Royal College of Music, Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Royal Academy of Music, Royal Northern College of Music, and Royal Birmingham Conservatoire (see Table 5.3). The sample consisted of 108 full-time (90%) and 12 part-time students (10%).

Of the 120 conservatoire music students, 31.7% (n=38) were male and 62.5% (n=75) were female. The remaining 1.7% (n=2) of participants would rather not say, and 3.4% (n=4) indicated others regarding their gender. In the present study, the bias toward females was notably pronounced. As reference, research by Tatlow (2023) based on Freedom of Information Act (FOI) requests found no significant gender bias in major conservatoire courses within the UK.

The participants represented nine nationalities across three continents. Europe accounted for 76% of the sample, followed by North and South America (13%) and Asia (8%). The British accounted for 52% of the sample (n=61), followed by the Americans (13%, n=16), Chinese (8%, n=9), Scottish (7%, n=8), Spanish (6%, n=7), Italian (4%, n=5),

Portuguese (4%, n=5), and French (3%, n=4). The full distribution of nationality by country is provided in the Appendix.

Participants were asked about their number of years studying at the time they took part in the survey. Among the sample, 60.8% (n=73) were undergraduate and 35% (n=42) were postgraduate students. The remaining 4.2% (n=5) were either at the level of an artist diploma, doctoral study, or another equivalent level of study. Table 5.1 presents the frequencies of the studies reported per year.

Table 5. 1 Frequencies and percentages per year of study among survey respondents

LEVEL OF STUDY	YEAR	FREQUENCY (%)
UNDERGRADUATE	UG Year 1	30 (25.0%)
	UG Year 2	19 (15.8%)
	UG Year 3	14 (11.7%)
	UG Year 4	10 (8.3%)
POSTGRADUATE	PG Year 1	26 (21.7%)
	PG Year 2	16 (13.3%)
ARTIST DIPLOMA		1 (0.8%)
DOCTORATE		3 (2.5%)
OTHER		1 (0.8%)
TOTAL		120 (100.0%)

Table 5.2 presents the distribution of the main specialisms. Among the 120 conservatoire music students in the sample, 117 provided this information. Strings were the most represented (n=38, 31.7%), followed by voice (n=20, 16.7%).

Table 5.2 Frequencies and percentages per area of main specialism among survey respondents

MAIN SPECIALISM	FREQUENCY (%)
Keyboard	13 (10.8%)
Strings	38 (31.7%)
Woodwind	15 (12.5%)
Brass	11 (9.2%)
Percussion	2 (1.7%)
Voice	20 (16.7%)
Composing	7 (5.8%)
Other	11 (9.2%)
Missing	3 (2.5%)
TOTAL	120 (100.0%)

Table 5.3 presents the frequencies per location of the study. Survey data collection was originally promoted across nine conservatoires within the United Kingdom: the Royal College of Music, Royal Academy of Music, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, Royal Northern College of Music, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, Leeds College of Music, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. The final sample consisted of participants from seven conservatoires. The majority of the conservatoire music students were studying at the Royal College of Music (n=36, 30%), followed by the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance (n=30, 25%).

Table 5. 3 Frequencies and percentages per places of study among survey respondents

PLACES OF STUDY	FREQUENCY (%)
Guildhall School of Music and Drama	6 (5.0%)
Royal Academy of Music	6 (5.0%)
Royal Birmingham Conservatoire	13 (10.8%)
Royal College of Music	36 (30.0%)
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland	24 (20.0%)
Royal Northern College of Music	5 (4.2%)
Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance	30 (25.0%)
TOTAL	120 (100.0%)

The cohort reported western classical music as a major genre of study. Although the survey was conducted across the United Kingdom, 65% of the cohort (n=78) was based on four conservatoires in London.

5.2.2 Materials

The core profile of this study comprised three parts: (1) coping, resilience, and related self-compassion aspects in conservatoire music students, (2) general health and wellbeing, and (3) development of coping and resilience related to the music-making and the learning environment. The survey combined basic demographic information with seven existing scales. Basic demographic information was collected in the first part, followed by questions measuring conservatoire music students' psychological resilience using the 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10) (Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007), coping abilities using selections from the COPE Inventory (Carver et al., 1989), and self-compassion using the Self-Compassion Scale (Raes et al., 2011). General health using the MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36) (Ware & Sherbourne, 1992) and wellbeing using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) (Stewart-Brown et al., 2009) of conservatoire music students were assessed in the middle part of the questionnaire. In the final part of the questionnaire, items measuring conservatoire music students' interactions with the environment and support selections were obtained from the Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure (DREEM) (Shury et al., 2017; Roff et al., 1997). For optional open-ended items at the end of the questionnaire, participants were invited to share their contact information for interest and participation in further studies. The questionnaire is presented in the Appendix.

5.2.2.1 The 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10)

The 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10) is a brief version of the full 25-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-25), whereas the other brief version is a two-item scale (CD-RISC-2). The CD-RISC is a self-reporting questionnaire designed by Connor and Davidson to measure resilience. This scale assesses various factors related to

resilience including personal competence, adaptability, and positive acceptance of change.

Campbell-Sills et al. (2006) contributed to the understanding of resilience in psychology and provided valuable insights into the development and validation of the CD-RISC as a resilience measurement tool.

Campbell-Sills and Stein (2007) validated a shorter version of the CD-RISC, consisting of 10 items. The CD-RISC-10 demonstrated good internal consistency, test-retest reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, and hinted at its significant association with mental wellbeing. The scale helps to understand how conservatoire music students cope with stress and the demands of their careers and further explores the relationship between resilience and various aspects, including their level of self-compassion, general health and wellbeing, and career development.

The subscales of the measurement derived five factors in the 10-item CD-RISC scale, including aspects of persistence or tenacity (the strongest factor among them) followed by self-efficacy. Other minor factors include emotional and cognitive control under pressure, the ability to bounce back, and a sense of control or meaning (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

For the resilience assessment, individuals indicated the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement based on their own experiences. Individuals responded on a Likert-type scale ranging from 0 (not true at all) to 4 (true nearly all the time). All 10 items were added to calculate the total score, which ranged from 0 to 40. A higher total score indicates a higher level of resilience, reflecting greater personal competence, adaptability, and positive coping abilities. Considering the context of this study, the CD-RISC-10 provides a snapshot of musicians' resilience levels during their time of conservatoire training.

5.2.2.2 The COPE Inventory

The COPE inventory was developed by Carver et al. (1989) to measure approaches used by individuals to cope with stress and adversity. Presented in a self-report questionnaire, the COPE inventory consists of 60 items with three overarching coping styles: problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidant coping. Measures of the COPE inventory would offer a systematic approach to understand how conservatoire music students cope with using different strategies.

By selecting appropriate subscale measures, the COPE inventory considers the understanding of coping strategies and their relevance to the psychological and social context of conservatoire music students. The selected subscales used in this study were (1) positive reinterpretation and growth, (2) planning, (3) active coping, (4) use of instrumental social support, (5) focus on and venting of emotions, and (6) suppression of competing activities. The selection of COPE inventory subscales for the context of conservatoire music students was based on the discussion of Araújo et al. (2017), who examined various aspects of conservatoire music students' physical health, psychological wellbeing, and lifestyle factors. The choice of subscales utilised in Araújo et al. (2017) was driven by an investigation into the coping strategies employed by conservatoire music students to navigate the challenges and pressures encountered in their academic and musical pursuits.

For the coping assessment, individuals indicated the degree of agreement with or frequency of the coping strategy used. The participants responded on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (I did not do this at all) to 4 (I did this a lot). The scores for each COPE inventory subscale were calculated by summing the responses to items within the subscale. For the selection of the subscales included in this study, scores ranged from 0 to 96. A higher total score indicated greater utilisation of the coping strategies associated with that particular subscale; for instance, reflecting greater positive reinterpretation and growth, planning, active

coping, use of instrumental social support, focus on and venting of emotions, and suppression of competing activities. Considering the context of this study, the COPE inventory subscales provide a snapshot of musicians' endorsement of coping strategies in handling the demands and challenges raised by music-making.

5.2.2.3 The Self-Compassion Scale (12-Item Short Form)

The Self-Compassion Scale (SCS), developed by Neff (2003), is a psychometric tool that measures an individual's level of self-compassion. The original version of the SCS contains 26 items measuring six components of the construct of self-compassion, including self-kindness, self-judgement, common humanity, isolation, mindfulness, and over-identification. Based on the significant correlation power found in the 26-item SCS, Raes et al. (2011) developed and validated a short form of the Self-Compassion Scale (SCS) to measure self-compassion in individuals. The Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form (SCS-SF) is a 12-item measure, containing the essential elements of subscale measurement as in the SCS. According to Raes et al. (2011), the SCS-SF showed convincing factorial validity based on the results of factor analysis.

As this study considers conservatoire music students' coping with the extent of their health and wellbeing, the inclusion of measuring their self-compassion is closely related to the construct of psychological wellbeing. The Self-Compassion Scale – Short Form consists of six positively worded items (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) and six negatively worded items (self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification). The participants responded on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (almost never) to 5 (almost always). Computing the total mean (and reverse scores of the negatively worded items) of the subscale item responses would present an overall score for an individual's self-compassion level. The overall score ranged from 1 to 5. The scores for each subscale were determined by calculating

the mean of the responses to items within the subscale. Higher scores indicate higher levels of self-compassion and vice versa. Considering the health and wellbeing context of this study, the inclusion of measuring self-compassion is crucial. Based on the positive constructs of self-compassion (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness), self-compassion could be a resource to support conservatoire music students' coping and resilience. As discussed in chapters 1 and 2, self-criticism is a significant issue for musicians. Therefore, incorporation of self-compassion can foster psychological well-being, self-care, and self-acceptance.

5.2.2.4 The MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36) and The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)

Including the measurement of health and wellbeing in investigations of coping and resilience is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of conservatoire music students' adaptive processes. By assessing health and wellbeing, the present study was able to capture the holistic nature of coping, resilience, and self-compassion in conservatoire music students, thereby informing intervention development. It is important to consider health and wellbeing in the context of the present research to gain valuable insights into conservatoire music students' coping responses and develop strategies to enhance their overall wellbeing in the face of challenges. The MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36) and Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS) are often combined to assess general health and wellbeing.

Ware and Sherbourne (1992) introduced and outlined the conceptual framework and item selection process of the MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36). SF-36 was created as a multidimensional instrument to provide a holistic assessment of individuals' overall health status. The complete SF-36 consists of 36 questions that encompass various domains, including physical functioning, role limitations related to physical health, bodily

pain, perceptions of general health, vitality, social functioning, role limitations due to emotional problems, and mental health.

Two items in the SF-36 were used in the current study: (1) general health items and (2) one-year comparison items. The general health item is a single question that asks conservatoire music students to rate their health on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). Additionally, four items (items 33 to 36 in the SF-36) for evaluating general health were also included in the survey. These four items on general health ask the respondents to indicate how true or false each statement is on a scale from 1 (definitely false/reverse scoring for negatively worded items) to 5 (definitely true/reverse scoring for negatively worded items). The scores for this item were then used to assess conservatoire music students’ perceptions of general health. The average score for the five items mentioned above generates an overall score for general health.

On the other hand, the one-year comparison item was a question for conservatoire music students to evaluate any changes in their health over the past year. The inclusion of this item allows for the assessment of perceived improvement or decline in conservatoire music students’ health over time. The individuals responded to a choice from five categories ranging from 1 (much worse than one year ago) to 5 (much better now than one year ago). Higher values (4 and 5) indicate a perceived improvement in health, lower values (1 and 2) indicate a perceived decline in health, and a neutral value (3) indicates no change.

In addition to measuring conservatoire music students’ general health, the questionnaire measured their wellbeing. Measuring health and wellbeing together is important as the two topics are interconnected and influence each other (see Chapter 2 for further discussion). By assessing both the health and wellbeing aspects, a more comprehensive understanding of conservatoire music students’ overall states can be obtained. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) was used in this study. The

WEMWBS was developed and validated by Tennant et al. (2007) as a tool in research and clinical practice to measure the mental wellbeing of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Later, Stewart-Brown et al. (2009) further utilised the internal construct validity of the WEMWBS. Findings from both Tennant et al. (2007) and Stewart-Brown et al. (2009) support the WEMWBS as an appropriate scale to measure mental wellbeing in population surveys in terms of its reliability and validity. As a self-report instrument, the WEMWBS is a relevant tool for evaluating and quantifying the wellbeing of conservatoire music students.

The version of the scale adopted in the present study is the 7-item short form of the WEMWBS, a condensed version of the original 14-item scale. Considering the length of the questionnaire used in the present study, the short form provided a rapid assessment of conservatoire music students' wellbeing while still capturing its key dimensions. The 7-item short form of the WEMWBS maintains the same response options as the original scale, with each item rated on a Likert scale ranging from one (none of the time) to five (all of the time). The scores of the seven items were added together to calculate the total score, which fell within the range of 7 to 35. Higher scores reflect higher levels of mental wellbeing.

5.2.2.5 The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM)

The second part of the survey questionnaire focused on support for the development of conservatoire music students. This part includes selected subscales from The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) as Section A, and questions on conservatoire music students' career planning as Section B.

The DREEM aims to serve as an alternative measurement of conservatoire music students' career planning, especially the enablers and barriers in a conservatoire environment, including (1) lifestyle, (2) support, and (3) environment. Developed by Roff et al. (1997) as an assessment tool to evaluate the educational environment in medical schools, the DREEM

contains several subscales, including (1) students’ perception of learning, (2) students’ perceptions of teachers, (3) students’ academic self-perceptions, (4) students’ perception of atmosphere, and (5) students’ social self-perceptions. Despite the distinct contextual variations between medical education and musical learning, both fields share a commonality in the significance of the learning environment on student experiences, health, and wellbeing.

Based on the parameters and demands of conservatoire music students’ learning environment, two subscales from the DREEM were used in the survey questionnaire: (1) students’ academic self-perceptions and (2) students’ social self-perceptions. Students’ academic self-perceptions evaluate how conservatoire music students perceive their own academic abilities, confidence, and achievements in a conservatoire learning environment. It also assessed conservatoire music students’ beliefs about their academic performance and competence. For students’ social self-perceptions, it captures how conservatoire music students perceive their social interactions, relationships, and integration within conservatoires. Students’ academic self-perceptions reflect their beliefs and attitudes about their own academic abilities and performance in conservatoires. These perceptions can influence students’ motivation, confidence, and overall academic engagement. Evaluating conservatoire music students’ academic self-perceptions can help conservatoires tailored instructional approaches and provide support to enhance students’ academic experiences and achievements in music. On the other hand, students’ social self-perceptions evaluate their beliefs and attitudes about their social interactions, relationships, and sense of belonging in a conservatoire environment. Positive social self-perceptions are associated with conservatoire music students’ connectedness to their peers and professors, which fosters support and a sense of community within the conservatoires.

The two subscales above contain 15 items in total, and the respondents rate their agreement or disagreement with each statement on a Likert-type scale ranging from 0

(strongly disagree) to 4 (strongly agree). The scores of the 15 items were added together to calculate a total score, which fell within the range of 0 to 60. Higher scores indicate a more positive perception of the educational environment, particularly regarding students' academic and social self-perceptions, while lower scores may indicate areas for improvement.

5.2.2.6 Brief Evaluation on Career Planning

Section B, in evaluating support for conservatoire music students' development, focuses on career planning and the sources of support for conservatoire music students to seek advice, particularly based on the issues identified in Chapters 3 and 4 from the interview study. This section contained five questions in total, including one multiple-choice question and four ranking questions.

This section begins with a multiple-choice question asking the music student to describe their career pathway as a performer. Choosing more than one answer is allowed, as musicians often embrace portfolio careers (Bartleet et al., 2019; Bennett, 2008; Westerlund & Karttunen, 2024; Westerlund & López-Íñiguez, 2024). The choices given were (1) solo or concert performers, (2) playing in a small ensemble or chamber group as a collaborative musician, (3) playing in a large ensemble as an orchestral musician, and (4) others based on the respondent's description. The purpose of this question is to understand the respondents' career portfolios to be considered as one of the variables to evaluate the relationship between conservatoire music students' career planning and their need for support and guidance in this area. As mentioned in previous chapters, career planning and uncertainties are among the major challenges faced by conservatoire music students. This question also refers to the discussion in a report published by the Department of Education (Shury et al., 2017), in which the findings highlighted the importance of effective career planning in guiding graduates towards fulfilling careers and positive outcomes.

The career portfolio question is followed by a ranking question to understand conservatoire music students' primary motivation for studying music as a subject in a conservatoire, and three ranking questions to understand the sources of support that conservatoire music students seek advice on their health and wellbeing, careers, and learning and studies. By asking about conservatoire music students' primary motivation for studying music, the responses would identify why students choose to pursue music education in relation to the conservatoire's programme and curriculum development. Conservatoire music students were asked to rank statements in the order of importance from 1 (most likely as the primary motivation) to 12 (most unlikely as the primary motivation). Adapted from the measuring instrument used in Shury et al. (2017), the statements used for ranking are (1) To improve the ability to get a job in the field, (2) Out of academic interest or curiosity, (3) To pursue a specific career, (4) Encouragement from family, friends, or school, (5) Desire to be a student, (6) Friends or peers were going, (7) Did not know what else to do, (8) Enjoyment or interest in the subject, (9) A subject strong in at school or college, (10) Thought would lead to good employment opportunities, (11) Pre-requisite for a chosen career, and (12) To keep options open.

Understanding conservatoire music students' primary motivations can help evaluate the alignment between students' motivations and the educational support provided. In light of this consideration and to follow the question on conservatoire music students' primary motivations, there were three additional ranking questions to ask conservatoire music students about their preferred sources of support. The questions were based on different aspects or challenges they may experience throughout their conservatoire education, including health, careers, and learning. As discussed in Chapter 2, the above aspects are some of the major challenges for conservatoire music students, and it would be sensible to ask the participants to rethink and express their prioritised sources of support based on these

challenges. First, conservatoire music students were asked to rank the options regarding how likely they would be to seek advice on their health and wellbeing. Respondents ranked the items from 1 (the most likely source) to 8 (the most unlikely source) according to their importance. The items included for ranking were (1) educational institution(s), (2) employer (s), (3) friends or fellow players, (4) NHS (or private physician), (5) principal study teacher, (6) professional body (for example, Musicians' Union), (7) specialist clinic for musicians, and (8) other (respondents should specify).

To follow, conservatoire music students are asked to rank the options regarding how likely they will be to seek (1) career advice and support and (2) advice on learning and studies accordingly. Respondents ranked the items from 1 (the most likely source) to 6 (the most unlikely source) according to their importance. The items included for ranking were: (1) College Careers Services, (2) Family members, (3) Peers, (4) Personal tutors, supervisors, lecturers, instrumental or vocal teachers, (5) previous or current employer if any, and (6) Professional in the field of interest.

5.2.3 Data Preparation and Analyses

Only full datasets regarding the variables of interest for the study were used: status of study, gender, nationality, year of study, main specialism, place of study, resilience (CD-RISC-10), coping (COPE selected subscales), self-compassion (SCS-SF), general health (SF-36), wellbeing (WEMWBS), educational environment (DREEM selected subscales), career planning, primary motivation, and sources of advice. The optional question at the end of the questionnaire regarding participants' contact information for taking part in further studies led to missing data, as not all conservatoire music students chose to provide such information. The variable of participants' contact information was not included in the data analysis. No univariate outliers were excluded during data preparation and analyses as they did not impact any assumptions or significantly affected the results.

Guided by the research questions of the present study, analyses were performed separately for the total music student sample for undergraduate and postgraduate students. Descriptive analyses were performed for all variables of interest: status of study, gender, nationality, year of study, main specialism, place of study, scores for resilience (CD-RISC-10), coping (COPE selected subscales), self-compassion (SCS-SF), general health (SF-36), wellbeing (WEMWBS), educational environment (DREEM selected subscales), career planning, primary motivation, and sources of advice. Pearson correlation was used to assess the relationships between pairs of continuous variables and to examine the interdependence of those variables. Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the internal reliability of each scale (including the CD-RISC-10, COPE selected subscales, SCS-SF, SF-36, WEMWBS, and DREEM selected subscales). For group comparisons, t-tests and analysis of variance (ANOVA) were used.

Regarding the relationships between the scales from a positive psychology perspective, particularly related to research questions two and three on how conservatoire

music students cope with challenges arising from performance practice, and the connections between psychological constructs investigated in the present study, psychological resilience was assumed to be an indication of conservatoire music students’ general health and wellbeing. The scales, particularly the CD-RISC-10, COPE, SCS-SF, SF-36, and WEMWBS, were collated into the survey questionnaire to evaluate conservatoire music students’ health in a wider context. In order to understand how conservatoire music students’ level of resilience compared to the public population, instructions from the Connor-Davidson Scale User Handbook were used in the data analysis process. As all previous research using this scale is included in the handbook, it serves as an ideal tool for comparing resilience levels between general students and young adults, as well as conservatoire music students. The Handbook also provides factor analysis of the scale, allowing for a comprehensive examination of resilience.

Cross-tabulation analysis and chi-square tests were performed to examine the relationship between the level of health and wellbeing and other categorical variables, as well as their statistical independence. With the predictors gender, year of study and main specialism, logistic regression analyses were used to assess the predictive capacity of each variable for being justified as “resilient”, adaptive in coping and “self-compassionate”.

ANCOVAs were performed to compare the resilience, coping, and self-compassion scores between undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students while controlling for the effects of confounders (gender and year of study, as relevant). Independent-sample t-tests using summary values were performed to compare resilience scores with the results reported for general students and young adults listed in the Connor-Davidson Scale User Handbook.

Jamovi v.2.4.1 (2023) was used for analyses.

5.2.4 Research Ethics

This study was conducted according to the research ethics guidelines of the Conservatoires UK Research Ethics Committee (2020). Ethical considerations were relevant to the study design and presentation of findings. This study was approved by the Conservatoires UK Research Ethics Committee. All the respondents were required to complete and submit their informed consent to participate in this study. Their participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished.

Given the subject matter, it is possible that completing the questionnaire may be sensitive to some participants or lead to distress because the questions include descriptions of negative scenarios and feelings. Several strategies have been used to minimise any negative implications. Initially, participation in the study was completely voluntary, and providing contact information for interest in participating in further study was also optional. The content and purpose of this academic project were stated clearly at the beginning of the questionnaire, and it was stated explicitly that participants could choose not to participate in this study for any reason, including if they were uncomfortable with the subject matter. At the end of the questionnaire, there were links to online sources of support, including the NHS (<https://www.nhs.uk>) and Samaritans (<https://www.samaritans.org>), in the event that participation led to distress. Contact details for both the researcher and directing supervisor were provided to all participants.

At the beginning of the survey, participants were required to read through a participant information sheet (see Appendix) that outlined the research project and terms of consent. The participants were fully informed of the voluntary nature of their participation, the right to withdraw at any time, and the policy of confidentiality and anonymity. All participants were 18 years or above.

5.3 Results

This section contains several areas of investigation. First, a profile of coping approaches is presented comprising positive reinterpretation and growth, planning, active coping, use of instrumental social support, focus on and venting of emotions, and suppression of competing activities in a sample of conservatoire music students (Research Question 2). The connections between conservatoire music students’ coping and their levels of psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing are then investigated (Research Questions 3 and 4). This was followed by an investigation into the relationship between conservatoire music students’ coping profiles (including coping approaches, psychological resilience, and self-compassion) and demographic variables. The impact of surrounding factors on conservatoire music students’ coping was explored by considering their learning and music-making environments (Research Question 4). Finally, conservatoire music students’ health and wellbeing were explored in relation to coping, resilience, self-compassion, and educational environment. The results relating to the surrounding factors are discussed in Chapter 6, and the results relating to health and wellbeing are discussed in Chapter 7.

5.3.1 RQ 2 – Coping profile

The first initiative of the present study was to understand how conservatoire music students cope with challenges arising from performance and practice (Research Question 2). The measurement of conservatoire music students’ coping in the present study comprised six subscales from the COPE Inventory, with a total score ranging from 0 to 96. Based on the responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 65.7 ($SD = 11.9$), with a minimum of 33 and maximum of 93. Table 5.4 presents the descriptive data for the COPE strategies (pre-selected subscales), including the means, standard deviations, medians, and score ranges. Table 5.5 shows the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and reliability statistics of the COPE subscales used

in the present study. Following Nunally’s (1978) criteria, the alpha of this scale indicated acceptable internal consistency.

Table 5. 4 Means, standard deviations, medians and score ranges for the 6 COPE Inventory sub-scales

COPE TOTAL SCORE	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
	65.7	11.9	65	33	93
COPE SUB-SCALES	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
Positive reinterpretation and growth	12.1	2.82	13	5	16
Planning	12.0	3.06	12	4	16
Active coping	11.5	3.09	12	4	16
Use of instrumental social support	10.6	3.52	11	4	16
Focus on and venting of emotions	10.1	3.34	10	4	16
Suppression of competing activities	9.45	2.62	9	4	15

Table 5. 5 Cronbach’s α and item reliability for the 6 COPE Inventory sub-scales

Item Reliability Statistics

COPE SUB-SCALES	If item dropped Cronbach’s α
Positive reinterpretation and growth	0.661
Planning	0.639
Active coping	0.604
Use of instrumental social support	0.687
Focus on and venting of emotions	0.758
Suppression of competing activities	0.662

Note. Scale reliability statistics on COPE Scale (6 items) - Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.711$

Among the six COPE subscales measured in conservatoire music students, positive reinterpretation and growth had the highest score, with a mean of $M = 12.1$ ($SD = 2.82$), a median of 13, and scores ranging from 5 to 16. Planning was reported as the second-highest subscale, with a mean of $M = 12$ ($SD = 3.06$).

Alongside the presentation of conservatoire music students’ coping profiles, one of the aims of exploring how conservatoire music students cope with challenges arising from performance and practice is to understand the correlation between their coping strategies. Furthermore, reports of conservatoire music students’ coping profiles should be explored in terms of relating coping strategies to demographic variables (gender, year of study, and main specialism), health, and wellbeing (see Chapter 7). These trends will be discussed in the following sections.

5.3.1.1 Demographic Comparison

5.3.1.1.1 *Gender*

Despite the participants who regarded themselves as agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), female conservatoire music students reported higher total coping scores ($M = 66.8$, $SD = 12.1$) than male conservatoire music students ($M = 64.9$, $SD = 11.3$). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in mean scores between female and male conservatoire music students. However, this difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.81$, $p = 0.42$). As a result, the analysis and results presented below do not consider any differences in gender and instead focus on examining conservatoire music students as a collective group.

5.3.1.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of coping performance across different levels of study, Figure 5.1 presents the total coping scores across undergraduate and postgraduate year groups. In addition, Table 5.6 summarises the means of the total COPE score (six subscales) in different year groups divided into undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students. Undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students reported similar levels of total coping scores, with no statistically significant difference following an independent-samples t-test ($t = 0.18$, $p = 0.86$). Aside from the only artist diploma respondent who reported the highest total score of coping ($M = 87$), first-year undergraduate students reported a higher total score of coping ($M = 68.5$, $SD = 12.2$), followed by fourth-year undergraduate students ($M = 65$, $SD = 10.8$). Among the postgraduate year groups, second-year postgraduate students reported a slightly higher total coping score ($M = 66.9$, $SD = 16.5$) than first-year postgraduate students ($M = 65.1$, $SD = 10.1$). Please refer to Figure 1 and Table 1 in the Appendix for Chapter 5 for the means of the total COPE score (six subscales) and COPE subscales in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students.

Figure 5. 1 COPE Inventory total score of coping across year groups

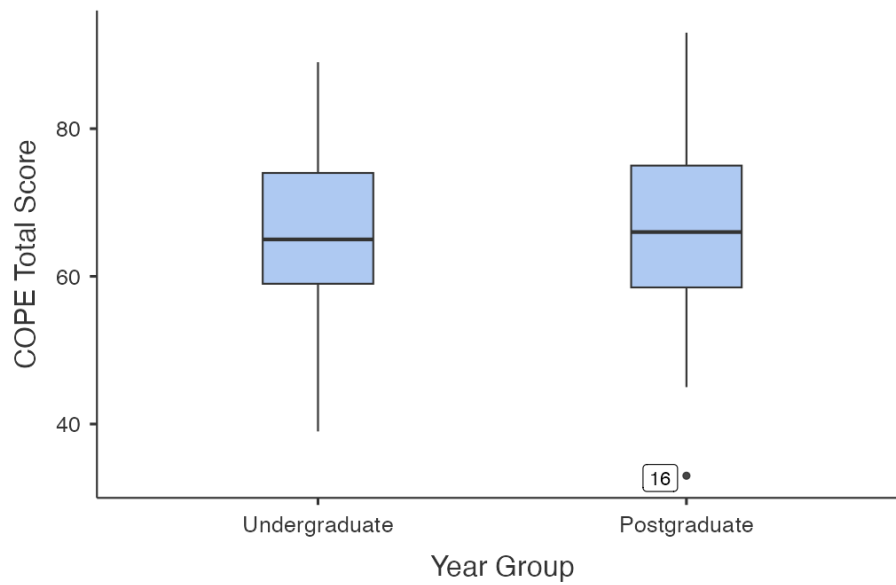


Table 5. 6 COPE Inventory total scores across year groups

	Year Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
COPE Total Score	Undergraduate	73	65.5	65.0	11.1	39.0	89.0
	Postgraduate	47	65.9	66.0	13.0	33.0	93.0

5.3.1.1.3 *Main Specialism*

In terms of coping performance across different main specialisms, Figure 5.2 presents the total score of coping across different main specialisms. In addition, Table 5.7 summarises the means of the total COPE score (six subscales) and COPE subscales in the different main specialism groups. String students reported higher total coping scores ($M = 69.6, SD = 11.8$), followed by keyboard students ($M = 67.2, SD = 12.5$). In terms of score diversity, the total COPE scores in voice students reported the largest range of 55, with a minimum of 33 and maximum of 88.

Figure 5.2 COPE Inventory total score of coping across main specialisms

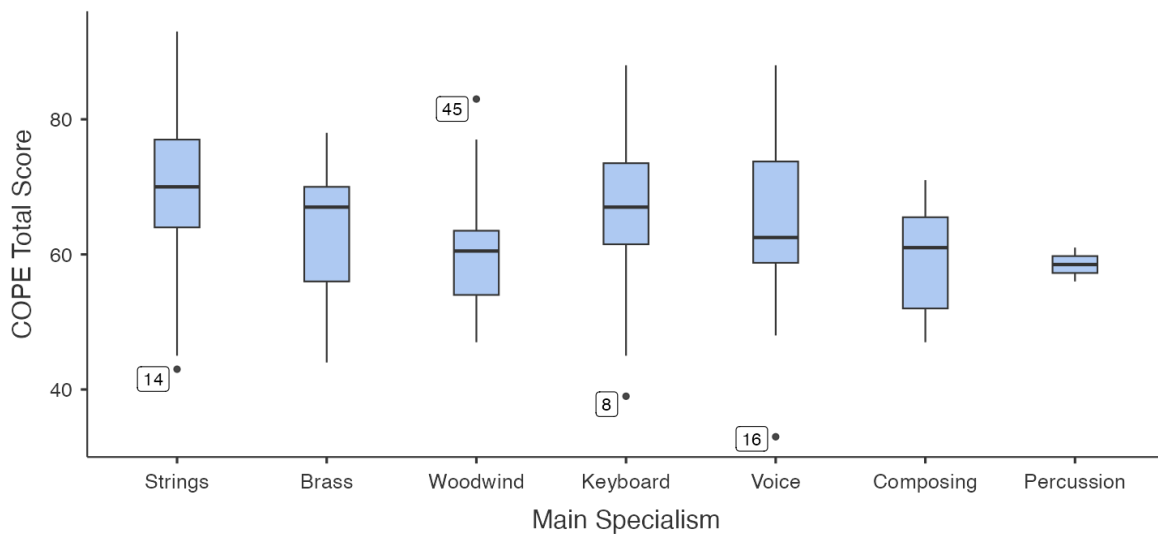


Table 5. 7 COPE total score and sub-scale scores across main specialisms

Main Specialism	COPE Total Score		Positive reinterpretation		Planning		Active coping		Use of instrumental support		Focus on & venting of emotions		Suppression of competing activities	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Strings (n=38)	69.6	11.8	12.5	2.54	12.5	3.30	12.0	2.95	11.5	3.47	11.2	3.63	9.85	2.77
Brass (n=11)	63.5	10.0	12.4	2.46	11.3	3.23	11.0	3.00	10.1	2.81	9.27	3.13	9.55	2.84
Woodwind (n=15)	60.9	10.5	12.8	2.08	11.0	2.31	10.6	3.65	10.3	3.09	8.00	3.03	8.19	2.40
Keyboard (n=13)	67.2	12.5	12.2	3.17	12.3	3.40	12.7	3.14	9.95	3.73	9.79	2.55	10.2	2.72
Voice (n=20)	64.4	12.5	11.3	3.30	12.0	2.79	11.2	3.02	10.6	3.84	10.3	3.07	9.08	2.21
Composing (n=7)	59.1	9.34	11.3	2.29	11.4	3.26	10.1	2.04	9.00	4.08	8.71	2.81	8.57	2.37
Percussion (n=2)	58.5	3.54	6.50	0.707	10.5	2.12	9.00	1.41	8.00	0.00	13.5	3.54	11.0	2.83

5.3.1.2 Hypothesis 1 – Correlations Between Coping Strategies

Pearson correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between conservatoire music students' use of coping strategies and the COPE subscales included in the present study. The COPE subscales were compared based on their mean scores. The detailed results of these Pearson correlations across the COPE subscales are summarised in Table 5.8. The majority of the Pearson correlations were positive and significant, and the coefficients of the correlations were either moderate or large. The results in this section also respond to Research Questions 2 and 4: the connections among the coping strategies used by conservatoire music students.

Several significant positive correlations were found among the subscales of the COPE Inventory measurement of conservatoire music students' coping. In light of these particular findings, further linear regression analyses were conducted based on the statistically significant positive correlations found; therefore, the model fit measures (r-squared values) are also reported following the correlation coefficients in this section. From the perspective of coping and on a subscale basis, a very large and positive significant correlation was found between planning and active coping ($r = 0.716$, $r^2 = 0.513$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which suggested that conservatoire music students with a higher use of planning tended to show higher scores in active coping. Similar results were found for positive reinterpretation, growth, and active coping. There was a positive correlation between positive reinterpretation and growth and active coping ($r = 0.554$, $r^2 = 0.307$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which was highly statistically significant, indicating that conservatoire music students with more frequent use of positive interpretations tended to show higher scores in active coping. Nevertheless, moderate and significant positive correlations were found between positive reinterpretation and growth and planning ($r = 0.488$, $r^2 = 0.238$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), as well as between active coping and suppression of competing activities ($r = 0.488$, $r^2 = 0.238$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$),

which indicated that conservatoire music students with a higher use of positive reinterpretation and growth, and active coping tended to show higher scores in planning and suppression of competing activities.

Table 5. 8 Correlations between selected subscales in COPE

		Positive reinterpretation	Planning	Active coping	Use of instrumental support	Focus on & venting of emotions	Suppression of competing activities
Positive reinterpretation	Pearson’s r	—					
	p-value	—					
Planning	Pearson’s r	0.488 ***	—				
	p-value	<.001	—				
Active coping	Pearson’s r	0.554 ***	0.716 ***	—			
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—			
Use of instrumental support	Pearson’s r	0.302 ***	0.184 *	0.272 **	—		
	p-value	<.001	0.044	0.003	—		
Focus on & venting of emotions	Pearson’s r	-0.077	0.037	0.075	0.360 ***	—	
	p-value	0.402	0.692	0.414	<.001	—	
Suppression of competing activities	Pearson’s r	0.347 ***	0.400 ***	0.488 ***	0.223 *	0.158	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	0.014	0.084	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $df = 118$

5.3.1.3 Hypothesis 1 – Connections Between Overall Coping, Problem-Focused and Emotion-Focused Coping

Exploring the connections between problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping is crucial for gaining a thorough understanding of how conservatoire music students navigate stressors. Evaluating the connections between these two types of coping strategies can help researchers gain a better understanding of conservatoire music students' adaptability and flexibility when using different coping methods. Moreover, such investigations can inform interventions that aim to enhance conservatoire music students' ability to effectively switch between coping strategies. Following the report on conservatoire music students' levels of coping, regression analyses were conducted to determine whether problem-focused coping subscales (positive reinterpretation, planning, active coping, use of instrumental support, and suppression of competing activities) and emotion-focused coping subscales (focus and venting of emotions) predicted conservatoire music students' overall level of coping. The subscales of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping comprise part of the overall level of coping, which serves as a general indicator of adaptive functioning. However, investigating the relationships between these subscales and the overall level of coping offers holistic comprehension of the coping strategies employed by conservatoire music students.

First, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in the mean score between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategy categories. This difference was statistically significant ($t = 2.50, p = 0.01$).

To follow, the results of the linear regression analysis are presented in Tables 5.9 and 5.10 respectively. In the first analysis, presented in Table 5.9, the relationship between conservatoire music students' overall level of coping and problem-focused coping subscales (positive reinterpretation, planning, active coping, use of instrumental support, and suppression of competing activities) was examined. The model's goodness of fit was

evaluated with an R-squared value of 0.936, indicating that approximately 93.6% of the variance in conservatoire music students' overall level of coping can be explained by the predictors included in the model.

Table 5.9 concludes the coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and p-values for each independent variable regarding conservatoire music students' overall coping level and problem-focused coping subscales. The instrumental support use score exhibited a statistically significant positive relationship with conservatoire music students' overall coping level ($\beta = 1.378$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that for every unit increase in instrumental support use, the overall coping level is expected to increase by 1.378 units, holding all other variables constant. Similarly, the scores on other problem-focused coping subscales also had a statistically significant positive impact on the overall level of coping; details are presented in the table below.

Table 5.10 concludes the coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and p-values for each independent variable regarding conservatoire music students' overall level of coping and the emotion-focused coping subscale. The scores for the use of focus and venting of emotions exhibited a statistically significant positive relationship with conservatoire music students' overall coping level ($\beta = 1.54$, $p < 0.001$).

These findings support the initial hypothesis that both problem- and emotion-focused coping subscales are positively associated with the overall level of coping in conservatoire music students. However, it is essential to note that this analysis assumes linear relationships and may not capture all potential factors influencing the overall coping level. When considering coping, resilience, health, and wellbeing together, further research and exploration of other variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics at play.

Table 5. 9 Model coefficients regarding conservatoire music student's overall level of coping and problem-focused coping sub-scales

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	7.658	1.5148	5.06	< .001
Positive reinterpretation	0.674	0.1241	5.43	< .001
Planning	1.011	0.1340	7.55	< .001
Active coping	1.047	0.1450	7.22	< .001
Use of instrumental support	1.378	0.0851	16.20	< .001
Suppression of competing activities	1.177	0.1245	9.45	< .001

Note. Model fit measures – $R = 0.967$; $R^2 = 0.936$; $F = 332$; $df1 = 5$; $df2 = 114$; $p < 0.001$

Table 5. 10 Model coefficients regarding conservatoire music student's overall level of coping and the emotion-focused coping sub-scale

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	50.11	3.125	16.03	< .001
Focus on & venting of emotions	1.54	0.294	5.24	< .001

Note. Model fit measures – $R = 0.435$; $R^2 = 0.189$; $F = 27.5$; $df1 = 1$; $df2 = 118$; $p < 0.001$

5.3.2 Resilience

The second aim of the present study was to understand the connections between the coping strategies used by conservatoire music students in relation to psychological resilience. The measurement of conservatoire music students' resilience in the present study used the 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10), with a total score ranging from 0 to 40. Based on the responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 25.3 ($SD = 6.04$), with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 40. Table 5.11 presents the descriptive data for the conservatoire music students' performance in resilience (CD-RISC-10), including the means, standard deviations, medians, and score ranges. Table 5.12 shows the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and reliability statistics of the CD-RISC-10 scale used in the present study. Following Nunally's (1978) criteria, the alpha of this scale indicated good internal consistency.

Table 5. 11 Means, standard deviations, medians and score ranges for the 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10)

CD-RISC-10 TOTAL SCORE	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
	25.3	6.04	25	10	40
CD-RISC-10 QUESTIONS	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
1. I am able to adapt when changes occur	2.87	0.685	3	2	4
2. I can deal with whatever comes my way	2.62	0.78	3	0	4
3. I try to see the humorous side of things when I am faced with problems	2.48	1.02	3	0	4
4. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger	2.36	0.915	2	0	4
5. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury or other hardships	2.79	0.897	3	0	4
6. I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles	2.92	0.862	3	0	4
7. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly	2.37	0.961	2	0	4
8. I am not easily discouraged by failure	2.11	1.14	2	0	4
9. I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges and difficulties	2.55	1.03	3	0	4
10. I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger	2.27	1.12	2	0	4

Table 5. 12 Cronbach’s α and item reliability for the CD-RISC-10

Item Reliability Statistics

CD-RISC-10 ITEMS	If item dropped
	Cronbach’s α
1. I am able to adapt when changes occur	0.830
2. I can deal with whatever comes my way	0.823
3. I try to see the humorous side of things	0.837
4. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger	0.825
5. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury or hardships	0.828
6. I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there’re obstacle	0.821
7. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly	0.825
8. I am not easily discouraged by failure	0.808
9. I think of myself as a strong person	0.809
10. I am able to handle unpleasant or painful things	0.803

Note. Scale reliability statistics on 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale - Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.836$

Among the 10 items included in the CD-RISC-10 measurement, the ‘I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles’ item had the highest score, with a mean of $M = 2.92$ ($SD = 0.862$). To follow, the ‘I am able to adapt when changes occur’ item was reported as the second highest subscale, with a mean of $M = 2.87$ ($SD = 0.865$).

Furthermore, the report of conservatoire music students’ resilience profiles should be explored in terms of relating resilience to demographic variables (gender, year of study, and main specialism), health, and wellbeing (see Chapter 7). These trends will be discussed in the following sections.

5.3.2.1 Demographic Comparison

5.3.2.1.1 *Gender*

Despite the participants who regarded themselves as agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), male conservatoire music students reported a slightly higher total score of resilience ($M = 25.7, SD = 6.52$) than female conservatoire music students ($M = 25.1, SD = 5.72$). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in mean scores between female and male conservatoire music students. However, this difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.50, p = 0.62$). As a result, the analysis and results presented below do not consider any differences in gender and instead focus on examining conservatoire music students as a collective group.

5.3.2.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of conservatoire music students' resilience across different levels of study, Figure 5.3 presents the total resilience scores across undergraduate and postgraduate year groups. In addition, Table 5.13 summarises the means of the total CD-RISC-10 scores in different year groups, divided into undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students.

Undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students reported similar levels of resilience, with no statistically significant difference following the results of an independent-samples t-test ($t = 0.62, p = 0.54$). Aside from the only artist diploma respondent who reported the highest total score of coping ($M = 37$), first-year undergraduate students reported a higher total score of resilience ($M = 27.9, SD = 4.77$), followed by second-year undergraduate students ($M = 25.5, SD = 6.07$). Among the postgraduate year groups, first-year postgraduate students reported a higher total score of resilience ($M = 25.9, SD = 6.13$) than second-year postgraduate students ($M = 22.8, SD = 5.66$). Please refer to Figure 2 and

Table 2 in the Appendix for Chapter 5 for the means of the total CD-RISC-10 scores and scores of the CD-RISC-10 items in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students.

Figure 5. 3 CD-RISC-10 total score across year groups

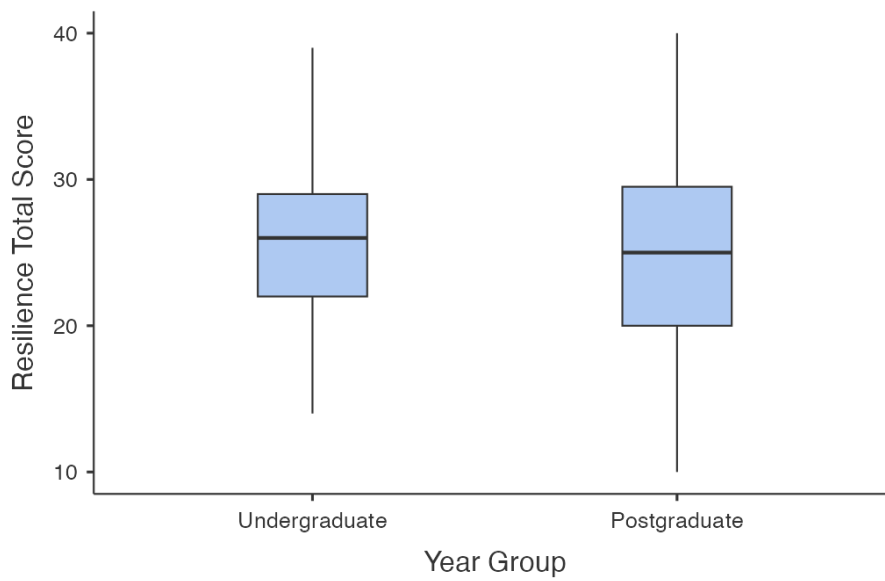


Table 5. 13 CD-RISC-10 total scores across year groups

	Year Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Resilience Total Score	Undergraduate	73	25.6	26	5.71	14	39
	Postgraduate	47	24.9	25	6.58	10	40

5.3.2.1.3 *Main Specialism*

In terms of conservatoire music students’ resilience across different main specialisms, Figure 5.4 presents the total score of resilience across the different main specialisms. In addition, Table 5.14 summarises the means of the total CD-RISC-10 scores and scores of the CD-RISC-10 items in different main specialism groups. Brass students reported a higher total score for resilience ($M = 27.1, SD = 7.56$), followed by woodwind students ($M = 26.7, SD = 5.59$). In terms of score diversity, the total CD-RISC-10 scores for keyboard students reported the largest range of 27, with a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 37.

Figure 5. 4 Total score of CD-RISC-10 across main specialisms

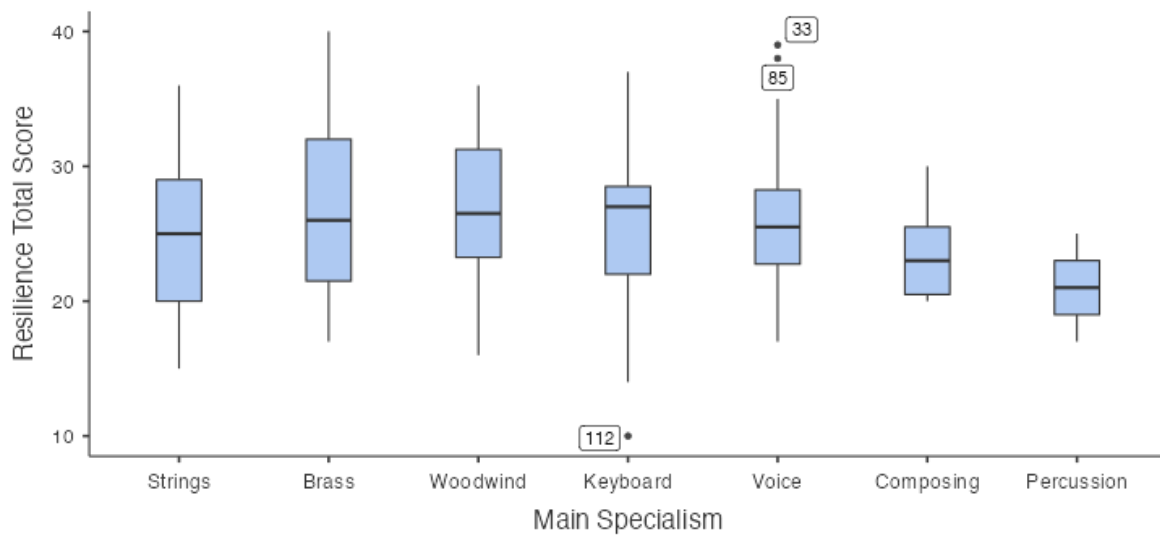


Table 5. 14 CD-RISC-10 total score and item scores across main specialisms

Main Specialism	Total	1. I am able to adapt when changes occur		2. I can deal with whatever comes my way		3. I try to see the humorous side of things		4. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger		5. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury or other		6. I believe I can achieve my goals		7. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly		8. I am not easily discouraged by failure		9. I think of myself as a strong person		10. I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings	
		MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Strings (n=38)	24.5 5.96	2.80	0.679	2.51	0.746	2.39	1.16	2.29	0.873	2.68	0.960	2.85	0.910	2.17	0.919	2.07	1.23	2.54	0.977	2.15	1.13
Brass (n=11)	27.1 7.56	3.09	0.831	3.00	0.894	2.55	1.21	2.09	1.04	3.09	0.701	3.18	0.751	2.82	1.08	2.27	1.49	2.64	1.29	2.36	1.50
Woodwind (n=15)	26.7 5.59	2.94	0.680	2.75	0.577	2.63	0.806	2.44	1.21	2.94	1.12	3.19	0.750	2.50	0.730	2.00	0.816	2.88	0.885	2.44	1.15
Keyboard (n=13)	25.3 6.85	2.74	0.562	2.53	0.772	2.53	1.02	2.74	0.933	2.53	0.905	2.84	0.958	2.47	1.02	2.00	1.15	2.58	1.22	2.32	0.946
Voice (n=20)	26.0 5.74	2.92	0.776	2.63	0.970	2.50	0.885	2.29	0.806	3.04	0.690	2.88	0.947	2.42	1.06	2.50	0.933	2.46	1.06	2.42	1.18
Composing (n=7)	23.6 3.69	2.86	0.690	2.71	0.488	2.29	1.11	2.29	0.488	2.57	0.787	2.71	0.488	2.00	0.577	1.57	0.976	2.29	0.488	2.29	0.756
Percussion (n=2)	21.0 5.66	3.00	0.00	2.00	0.00	2.50	0.707	2.00	0.00	2.50	0.707	3.00	0.00	2.50	2.12	1.00	1.41	1.50	0.707	1.00	0.00

5.3.3 Self-Compassion

The third aim of the present study was to understand the connections between the coping strategies used by conservatoire music students in relation to self-compassion. The measurement of conservatoire music students’ self-compassion in the present study used the Self-Compassion Scale (12-Item Short Form), with a total score ranging from 1 to 5. Based on the responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 2.69 ($SD = 0.70$), with a minimum of 1.33 and a maximum of 4.25. Table 5.15 presents descriptive data for the conservatoire music students’ performance in self-compassion (SCS-12), including the means, standard deviations, medians, and score ranges. Table 5.16 shows the Cronbach’s alpha coefficient and reliability statistics of the SCS-12 scale used in the present study. Following Nunally’s (1978) criteria, the alpha of this scale indicated good internal consistency.

Table 5. 15 Means, standard deviations, medians and score ranges for the Self-Compassion Scale (12-Item)

SCS-12 TOTAL SCORE	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
	2.69	0.70	2.67	1.33	4.25
SCS-12 ITEMS	MEAN	SD	MEDIAN	MIN	MAX
1. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don’t like	2.75	1.12	3	1	5
2. When I’m going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need	2.52	1.14	2	1	5
3. I’m disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies	2.22	1.24	2	1	5
4. I’m intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don’t like	2.73	1.25	3	1	5
5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition	2.97	1.22	3	1	5

6. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people	2.48	1.13	2	1	5
7. When I’m feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am	2.79	1.43	3	1	5
8. When I fail at something that’s important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure	2.37	1.32	2	1	5
9. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation	3.17	1.06	3	1	5
10. When something upsets me, I try to keep my emotions in balance	3.35	1.14	4	1	5
11. When I fail at something important to me, I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy	2.52	1.29	2	1	5
12. When I’m feeling down, I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that’s wrong	2.38	1.28	2	1	5

Means, standard deviations, medians and score ranges by subscales in the SCS-12

	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
Over-Identification	2.45	2.00	1.191	1.00	5.00
Mindfulness	3.26	3.50	0.903	1.00	5.00
Isolation	2.58	2.50	1.199	1.00	5.00
Common Humanity	2.72	3.00	0.997	1.00	5.00
Self-Judgement	2.47	2.50	1.149	1.00	5.00
Self-Kindness	2.63	2.50	0.959	1.00	5.00

Table 5. 16 Cronbach’s α and item reliability for the SCS-12

Item Reliability Statistics

SCS-12 ITEMS		If item dropped
		Cronbach’s α
Self-kindness	Q1	0.806
	Q2	0.793
Self-judgement	Q3_Reverse ^a	0.789
	Q4_Reverse ^a	0.795
Common humanity	Q5	0.807
	Q6	0.803
Isolation	Q7_Reverse ^a	0.800
	Q8_Reverse ^a	0.779
Mindfulness	Q9	0.803
	Q10	0.810
Over-identification.	Q11_Reverse ^a	0.774
	Q12_Reverse ^a	0.781

^a reverse scaled item

Note. Scale reliability statistics on 12-Item Self-Compassion Scale - Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.809$

The SCS-12 consists of items measuring components of self-compassion, including self-kindness (questions 1 and 2), self-judgement (questions 3 and 4), common humanity (questions 5 and 6), isolation (questions 7 and 8), mindfulness (questions 9 and 10), and over-identification (questions 11 and 12). Where necessary, the items related to negative constructs in self-compassion, including self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification in SCS-12, were reverse-scored during the data analysis process. Among the 12 items included in the SCS-12 measurement, one item in the mindfulness category, the ‘when something upsets me, I try to keep my emotions in balance’ item had the highest score, with a mean of $M = 3.35$ ($SD = 1.14$). Particularly among the negative construct items, one of the items in isolation category, the ‘when I’m feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am’ item had the highest score, with a mean of $M = 2.79$ ($SD = 1.43$).

Furthermore, reports of conservatoire music students' self-compassion profiles should be explored in terms of relating resilience to demographic variables (gender, year of study, and main specialism), health, and wellbeing (see Chapter 7). These trends will be discussed in the following sections.

5.3.3.1 Demographic Comparison

5.3.3.1.1 *Gender*

Despite the participants who regarded themselves as agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), male conservatoire music students reported a slightly higher total score of resilience ($M = 2.77$, $SD = 0.66$) than female conservatoire music students ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 0.71$). An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in mean scores between female and male conservatoire music students. However, this difference was not statistically significant ($t = 1.01$, $p = 0.31$). As a result, the analysis and results presented below do not consider any differences in gender and instead focus on examining conservatoire music students as a collective group.

5.3.3.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of conservatoire music students' resilience across different levels of study, Figure 5.5 presents the total self-compassion scores across undergraduate and postgraduate year groups. Table 5.17 summarises the means of the total SCS-12 score and scores of the SCS-12 items in different year groups, divided into undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students. Undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students reported similar levels of self-compassion, with no statistically significant difference following the results of an independent-samples t-test ($t = 0.46$, $p = 0.65$). Aside from the only artist diploma respondent who reported the highest total score of coping ($M = 4.25$), among undergraduate year groups, first-year ($M = 2.85$, $SD = 0.64$) and second-year ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.70$) undergraduate students similarly reported a higher total score of self-compassion. Among the postgraduate year groups, second-year postgraduate students reported a higher total score for self-compassion ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 0.57$) than first-year postgraduate students ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.75$). Please refer to Figure 3 and Table 3 in the Appendix for Chapter 5 for the means of the total self-compassion scores and scores of the SCS-12 items in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students.

Figure 5. 5 Total score of SCS-12 across year of study categories

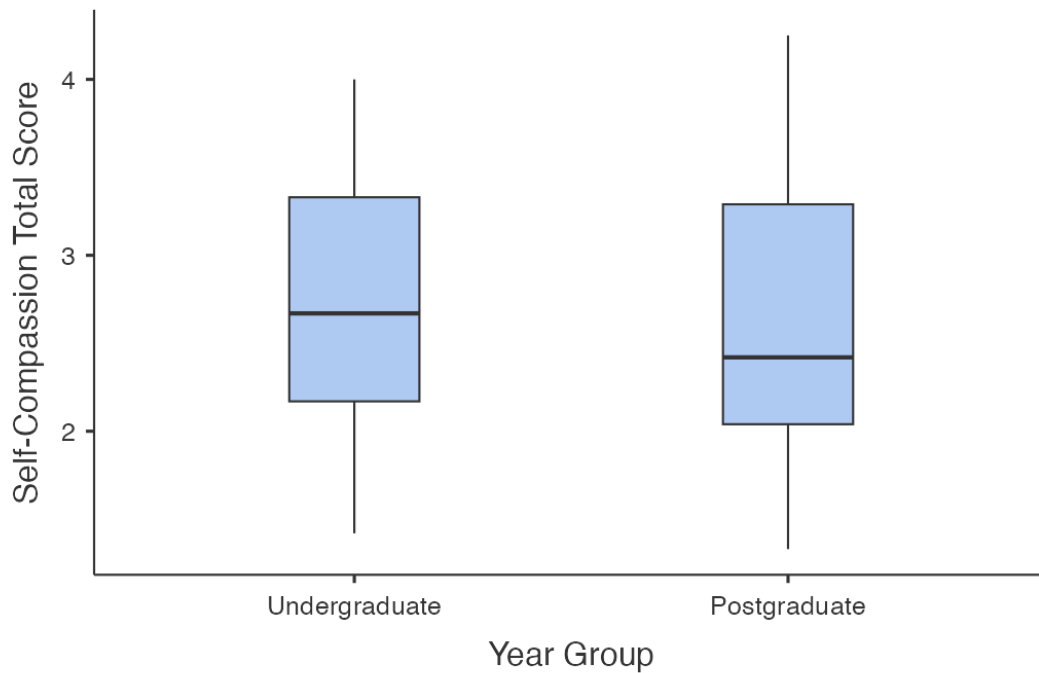


Table 5. 17 SCS-12 total score and category scores across year groups

	Year Group	N	Mean	SD
Self-Compassion Total Score	Undergraduate	73	2.71	0.672
	Postgraduate	47	2.65	0.734
Self-Kindness	Undergraduate	73	2.64	0.940
	Postgraduate	47	2.63	0.997
Self-Judgement	Undergraduate	73	2.51	1.126
	Postgraduate	47	2.41	1.195
Common Humanity	Undergraduate	73	2.78	1.041
	Postgraduate	47	2.63	0.929
Isolation	Undergraduate	73	2.66	1.216
	Postgraduate	47	2.45	1.171
Mindfulness	Undergraduate	73	3.26	0.921
	Postgraduate	47	3.27	0.884
Over-Identification	Undergraduate	73	2.40	1.172
	Postgraduate	47	2.51	1.231

5.3.3.1.3 *Main Specialism*

In terms of conservatoire music students’ levels of self-compassion across different main specialisms, Figure 5.6 presents the total score of self-compassion across the different main specialisms. In addition, Table 5.18 summarises the means of the total SCS-12 score and the scores of the SCS-12 categories in different main specialism groups. Composing students reported a higher total score for self-compassion ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.57$), followed by keyboard students ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.76$). At the same time, the total SCS-12 scores in keyboard students reported the largest range of 2.75 with a minimum of 1.5 and a maximum of 4.25.

Figure 5.6 Total score of SCS-12 across main specialisms

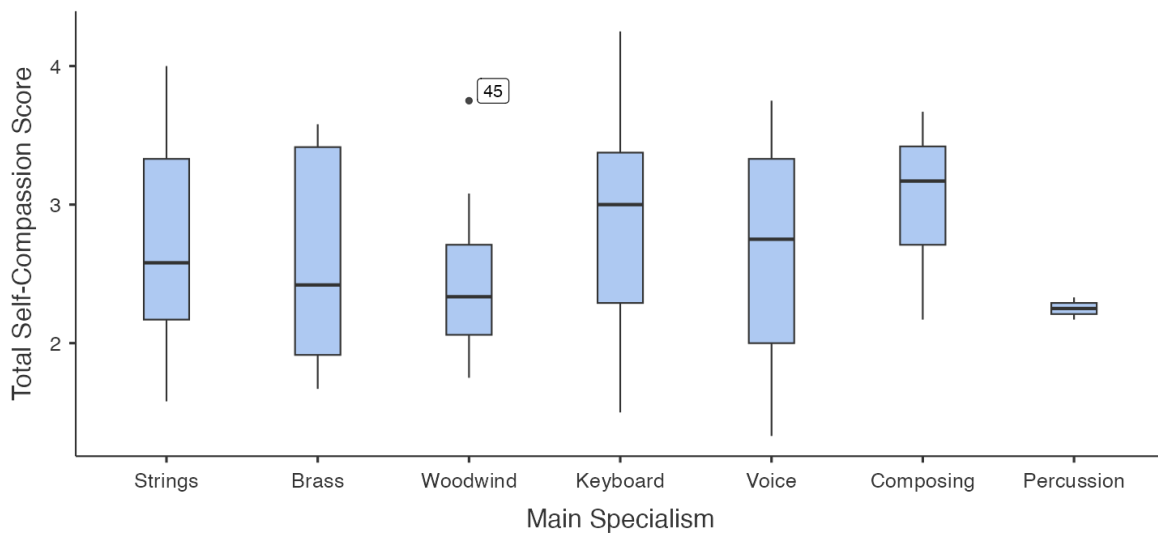


Table 5. 18 SCS-12 total score and category scores across main specialisms

Main Specialism	Self-Compassion Total Score		Self-Kindness		Self-Judgement		Common Humanity		Isolation		Mindfulness		Over-Identification	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Strings (n=38)	2.69	0.694	2.61	0.991	2.43	1.24	2.72	0.915	2.66	1.17	3.21	0.981	2.51	1.24
Brass (n=11)	2.63	0.769	2.64	0.951	2.50	1.02	2.82	1.06	2.50	1.28	3.00	0.806	2.32	1.27
Woodwind (n=15)	2.45	0.528	2.47	0.957	2.00	0.816	2.72	1.24	1.97	0.957	3.63	0.957	1.94	0.892
Keyboard (n=13)	2.87	0.757	2.97	0.905	2.47	0.979	2.79	0.822	2.84	1.25	3.39	1.04	2.76	1.10
Voice (n=20)	2.65	0.749	2.58	1.04	2.75	1.34	2.52	1.02	2.48	1.20	3.17	0.717	2.38	1.32
Composing (n=7)	3.04	0.573	2.79	0.393	3.07	1.06	3.21	1.19	3.07	1.34	3.21	0.488	2.86	1.07
Percussion (n=2)	2.25	0.113	1.25	0.354	1.50	0.707	2.25	1.77	3.25	1.77	3.00	1.41	2.25	1.77

5.3.3.2 Hypothesis 2 – Positive Constructs within Musicians' Self-Compassion

Following the report on conservatoire music students' levels of self-compassion, further regression analyses were conducted to determine whether the positive constructs (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) within self-compassion would predict the overall level of self-compassion. Self-compassion can be measured through various subscales that assess different aspects, including self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Analysing the relationships between these subscales can offer a complete understanding of how these dimensions interact and influence the overall level of self-compassion in conservatoire music students. Understanding the relationships between the subscales can also lead to an effective design of tailored interventions for conservatoire music students. By identifying the specific components of self-compassion that are strongly connected to overall self-compassion, interventions can be developed to enhance those particular elements.

First, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in the mean scores between positive and negative constructs in self-compassion. The difference was statistically significant ($t = 2.67, p < 0.01$).

To follow, the results of the linear regression analysis are shown in Table 5.19. In this analysis, the relationship between conservatoire music students' overall self-compassion score and positive constructs of self-compassion (including self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) was examined. The model's goodness of fit was evaluated, with an R-squared value of 0.572, indicating that approximately 57.2% of the variance in conservatoire music students' overall self-compassion scores can be explained by the predictors included in the model.

Table 5.19 presents the coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and p-values of each independent variable. The self-kindness score exhibited a statistically significant positive relationship with conservatoire music students' overall self-compassion level ($\beta = 0.316, p <$

0.001), suggesting that for every unit increase in self-kindness, overall self-compassion level is expected to increase by 0.316 units, holding all other variables constant. Similarly, mindfulness and common humanity also had a statistically significant positive impact on overall self-compassion level, with coefficients of $\beta = 0.275$ ($p < 0.001$) and $\beta = 0.148$ ($p = 0.004$), respectively.

These findings support the initial hypothesis that the positive constructs of self-compassion are positively associated with the overall level of self-compassion among conservatoire music students. However, it is essential to note that this analysis assumes linear relationships and may not capture all potential factors influencing the overall self-compassion level. When considering coping, resilience, health, and wellbeing together (see Chapter 7), further research and exploration of other variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics at play.

Table 5. 19 Model coefficients regarding conservatoire music student’s overall self-compassion level and positive constructs of self-compassion

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	0.556	0.1820	3.05	0.003
Self-Kindness	0.316	0.0497	6.35	< .001
Common Humanity	0.148	0.0504	2.94	0.004
Mindfulness	0.275	0.0505	5.43	< .001

Note. Model fit measures – $R = 0.756$; $R^2 = 0.572$; $F = 51.6$; $df1 = 3$; $df2 = 116$; $p < 0.001$

5.3.3.3 Comparison Between Musicians and General Populations

To obtain a comprehensive understanding of conservatoire music students' levels of self-compassion, analyses were conducted to compare conservatoire music students' levels of self-compassion with other populations, including undergraduate students, community adults, meditators, and populations with symptoms of mental disorders (Williams et al., 2014). The data collected from conservatoire music students in the present study were compared to data from other populations, as summarised by Neff et al. (2017). Comparisons of means between conservatoire music students and other populations are summarised in Table 5.20.

Conservatoire music students' overall level of self-compassion was only 5% higher than that of the clinical population ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.62$, $n = 390$); however, the clinical population represented people with mental disorders, and the difference was not statistically significant ($t = 1.95$, $p = 0.05$). Comparing between meditators and conservatoire music students, meditators' overall level of self-compassion ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 0.61$, $n = 215$) was significantly higher than conservatoire music students ($M = 2.69$, $SD = 0.70$, $n = 120$) by 26.5%, considering the usual meditation practice of meditators ($t = 13.23$, $p < 0.0001$). Similarly, undergraduate students ($M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.67$, $n = 222$) also scored higher on the overall level of self-compassion than the sample of conservatoire music students in the present study ($t = 5.44$, $p < 0.0001$).

However, focusing on the scoring of the negative constructs of self-compassion (self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification), conservatoire music students' scores on those subscales ($M = 2.5$, $SD = 1.18$, $n = 120$) were lower than those of undergraduate students ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 0.85$, $n = 222$), the community ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.99$, $n = 1394$), and clinical populations ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 0.80$, $n = 390$). The differences between the conservatoire music students and the undergraduate student population ($t = 4.24$, $p < 0.0001$), the community ($t =$

6.16, $p < 0.0001$), and the clinical population ($t = 12.41$, $p < 0.0001$) were all considered statistically significant.

Table 5. 20 Overall level and subscales of self-compassion across populations

	Student (n = 222)		Community (n = 1394)		Meditator (n = 215)		Clinical (n = 390)		Conservatoire music students (n = 120)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Self-kindness	3.07	0.77	2.92	0.88	3.61	0.56	2.50	0.82	2.63	0.96
Common humanity	3.20	0.80	3.09	0.92	3.83	0.79	2.90	0.95	2.72	1.00
Mindfulness	3.29	0.78	3.23	0.86	3.95	0.68	2.94	0.81	3.26	0.90
Sub-total	3.19	0.78	3.08	0.89	3.80	0.68	2.78	0.86	2.87	0.95
Self-judgement	3.00	0.81	3.11	0.96	2.64	0.78	3.64	0.78	2.47	1.15
Isolation	2.87	0.84	3.16	1.01	2.37	0.82	3.67	0.83	2.58	1.20
Over-identification	3.05	0.90	3.01	1.01	2.49	0.75	3.69	0.79	2.45	1.19
Sub-total	2.97	0.85	3.09	0.99	2.50	0.78	3.67	0.80	2.50	1.18
Overall level of self-compassion	3.11	0.67	3.00	0.76	3.66	0.61	2.56	0.62	2.69	0.70

5.3.4 RQs 3 and 4 – Connections Between Coping, Resilience and Self-Compassion

Following the above results on conservatoire music students’ levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion, Pearson correlations and independent sample t-tests were conducted to investigate the connections between these aspects of conservatoire music students’ coping. As mentioned in Chapter 2, coping and resilience interact with each other. To justify whether this relationship persisted, correlations between the level of coping (six COPE subscales) and level of resilience were conducted. The purpose of this section is to address specifically Research Question 4: the connections between coping strategies, psychological resilience, and self-compassion.

5.3.4.1 Hypothesis 4 – Types of Coping and Psychological Resilience

As discussed in Chapter 2, coping in general involves different coping strategies, such as problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidant coping. Particularly in the COPE Inventory, subscales in the measurement mainly represented two types of coping strategies: problem- and emotion-focused coping. As such, after examining coping in general and resilience together, further Pearson correlations were conducted to investigate the relationship between the two types of coping and resilience.

Following the guidelines in the COPE Inventory (Carver, 1997), and following the selection of COPE subscales in the present study, subscales of problem-focused coping included positive reinterpretation, planning, active coping, use of instrumental support, and suppression of competing activities. Simultaneously, emotion-focused coping includes the focus and venting of emotions. The correlation matrix of problem-focused coping and resilience is summarised in Table 5.21. Regarding the correlation between conservatoire music students’ resilience and the emotion-focused coping subscale (focus and venting of emotions), there was no significant relationship between these two variables in the present

study. Hence, a correlation matrix of emotion-focused coping and resilience was not presented.

There were moderate and positive correlation between conservatoire music students' resilience, positive reinterpretation ($r = 0.474$, $r^2 = 0.225$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), planning ($r = 0.381$, $r^2 = 0.145$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), and active coping ($r = 0.425$, $r^2 = 0.181$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$) respectively, which were statistically significant, indicating that conservatoire music students on which a higher overall level of resilience tended to show higher levels of positive reinterpretation, planning and active coping in their coping. Correlations between conservatoire music students' resilience, use of instrumental support, and suppression of competing activities were either weak or insignificant.

Table 5. 21 Pearson correlation between the mean scores of conservatoire music students’ psychological resilience and problem-focused coping subscales

		Resilience Total Score	Positive Reinterpretation	Planning	Active Coping	Use of Instrumental Support	Suppression of Competing Activities
Resilience Total Score	Pearson’s r	—					
	p-value	—					
Positive Reinterpretation	Pearson’s r	0.474 ***	—				
	p-value	<.001	—				
Planning	Pearson’s r	0.381 ***	0.488 ***	—			
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—			
Active Coping	Pearson’s r	0.425 ***	0.554 ***	0.716 ***	—		
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	—		
Use of Instrumental Support	Pearson’s r	0.135	0.302 ***	0.184 *	0.272 **	—	
	p-value	0.141	<.001	0.044	0.003	—	
Suppression of Competing Activities	Pearson’s r	0.286 **	0.347 ***	0.400 ***	0.488 ***	0.223 *	—
	p-value	0.002	<.001	<.001	<.001	0.014	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001. df = 118

Further regression analyses were conducted to determine whether problem-focused coping subscales could predict overall resilience. The results of the linear regression analysis are shown in Table 5.22. In this analysis, the relationship between music student's overall score of resilience and problem-focused coping sub-scales (including positive reinterpretation, planning, active coping, use of instrumental support, and suppression of competing activities) was examined. The model's goodness of fit was evaluated, with an R-squared value of 0.272, indicating that approximately 27.2% of the variance in music student's overall score of resilience can be explained by the predictors included in the model.

Table 5.25 concludes the coefficients, standard errors, t-values, and p-values for each independent variable. The score on the positive reinterpretation coping subscale exhibited a statistically significant positive relationship with conservatoire music students' overall resilience level ($\beta = 0.7151$, $p = 0.001$), suggesting that for every unit increase in the positive reinterpretation subscale, the overall resilience level is expected to increase by 0.7151 units, holding all other variables constant. However, the scores of the other problem-focused coping subscales had no statistically significant impact on the overall resilience level.

Further regression analysis was conducted to determine whether the emotion-focused coping subscale (focus on and venting of emotions) predicted overall resilience. However, the results and model fit of the linear regression analysis were not statistically significant ($r = 0.188$, $r^2 = 0.0354$, $n = 120$), suggesting that the focus on and venting emotions coping subscale scores had no statistically significant impact on the overall resilience level.

These findings support the initial hypothesis that not all problem-focused and emotion-focused coping subscales are positively associated with overall resilience in conservatoire music students, except for the impact of positive reinterpretation. It is essential to note that this analysis assumes linear relationships and may not capture all potential factors influencing the overall resilience level. When considering coping, resilience, health, and

wellbeing together (see Chapter 7), further research and exploration of other variables may provide a more comprehensive understanding of their dynamics at play.

Table 5. 22 Model coefficients regarding conservatoire music student's overall resilience level and problem-focused coping sub-scales

Predictor	Estimate	SE	t	p
Intercept	10.3751	2.599	3.992	< .001
Positive Reinterpretation	0.7151	0.213	3.359	0.001
Planning	0.1705	0.230	0.742	0.460
Active Coping	0.3044	0.249	1.223	0.224
Use of Instrumental Support	-0.0673	0.146	-0.461	0.645
Suppression of Competing Activities	0.1593	0.214	0.746	0.457

Note. Model fit measures – $R = 0.521$; $R^2 = 0.272$; $F = 8.51$; $df1 = 5$; $df2 = 114$; $p < 0.001$

5.3.4.2 Hypothesis 5 – Coping and Positive Constructs in Self-Compassion

A Pearson correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between conservatoire music students' level of coping (mean of the overall level of coping in general included six COPE subscales in calculation), and self-compassion (mean of the positive constructs in calculation). Following the results on the correlation between coping and self-compassion, it would be sensible to further investigate whether coping relates to the positive constructs in self-compassion, including self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. The correlation matrix is summarised in Table 5.23.

As discussed in the previous section, there was a moderate positive correlation between conservatoire music students' levels of coping and self-compassion ($r = 0.382$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which was statistically significant, indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of coping tended to show higher levels of self-compassion in general. Further investigation revealed that conservatoire music students' coping was positively correlated with self-kindness in the SCS-12 measurement ($r = 0.440$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of coping tended to show higher levels of self-kindness in self-compassion. The correlations between coping and common humanity and between coping and mindfulness were either weak or statistically insignificant.

Table 5. 23 Pearson correlation between the mean scores of conservatoire music students’ overall levels of coping and positive constructs in self-compassion

		Coping Total Score	Self-Kindness	Common Humanity	Mindfulness
Coping Total Score	Pearson’s r	—			
	p-value	—			
Self-Kindness	Pearson’s r	0.440	—		
	p-value	< .001	—		
Common Humanity	Pearson’s r	0.269	0.463	—	
	p-value	0.003	< .001	—	
Mindfulness	Pearson’s r	0.238	0.214	0.376	—
	p-value	0.009	0.019	< .001	—

Note. df = 118

Further regression analyses were conducted to determine whether the positive constructs of self-compassion would predict the overall level of coping. In this analysis, the relationship between conservatoire music students’ overall coping scores and positive constructs of self-compassion (including self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) was examined. The goodness of fit of the model was evaluated with an R-squared value of 0.216, indicating that approximately 21.6% of the variance in conservatoire music students’ overall coping scores could be explained by the predictors included in the model. The self-kindness construct score exhibited a statistically significant positive relationship with conservatoire music students’ overall coping level ($\beta = 4.867$, $p < 0.001$), holding all other variables constant. However, the scores on the other positive constructs had no statistically significant impact on the overall coping level. These findings support the initial hypothesis that not all positive constructs of self-compassion are positively associated with the overall level of coping among conservatoire music students, except for the potential impact of self-kindness.

5.4 Discussion

The first part of the present study aimed to investigate how musicians cope with a sample of conservatoire music students facing challenges arising from performance and practice (Research Question 2). As a guiding principle, the investigation of conservatoire music students' coping strategies followed the validation of COPE subscales in conservatoire music students, as presented by Araújo et al. (2017). In addition to understanding how conservatoire music students cope and how they use coping strategies, this part of the survey study explored the connections between conservatoire music students' coping and its relevant psychological constructs, including psychological resilience and self-compassion (Research Questions 3 and 4). To the best of our knowledge, this study represents the first holistic investigation of coping, resilience, and self-compassion simultaneously among musicians. This section discusses the results of the study, its limitations, and directions for further research.

5.4.1 Evaluation of Musicians' Coping Profile

In summary, the present study provides evidence of a diverse coping profile for musicians, particularly conservatoire music students, given the sample of this study across problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies. The results for the conservatoire music students in this study are generally in line with previous research in the field of music performance and education.

Based on the mean values of the COPE subscales, the most frequently used coping strategies in the sample were positive reinterpretation and growth, followed by planning, active coping, and use of instrumental social support. These findings are in line with the

coping strategies used by undergraduate conservatoire music students found in Araújo et al. (2017) and categorised as problem-focused coping strategies. These results are also in line with previous research on other samples, particularly university students (Kallasmaa & Pulver, 2000; Litman & Lunsford, 2009). Although there is evidence for sex or gender differences in coping (Helgeson, 2011; Kelly et al., 2008; Wilson et al., 2005), gender is not a determining factor in the scope of this study. In terms of the difference in means, there was only a slight difference between male and female conservatoire music students, excluding participants of other genders.

In terms of overall coping scores across different years of study, it is worth noting that the hypothesis positing that first-year undergraduate students contend with novel challenges upon commencing their academic pursuits and adapting to an unfamiliar learning environment might lead them to anticipate a concomitant decrease in their coping abilities. Nevertheless, the results obtained in this study contradict this assumption. It is also worth noting that final-year undergraduate students reported similar overall levels of coping with first-year undergraduate students. The coping levels in the second and third years were comparatively lower than those in the other year groups. This contradicts the expectation that coping should be developed and improved over the course of the study. For final-year undergraduate students, the challenges they face, such as prospects after graduation, appear to be associated with a higher level of coping. However, although this may be a potential cause, the quantitative data from this survey study were insufficient to substantiate the rationale behind this trend. Coping capacities across different groups of students could serve as an important factor in future research.

Regarding the overall coping scores across different main specialism categories, string and keyboard students tended to report higher means of coping. There were no significant differences between orchestral and non-orchestral instrument groups shown in the

findings, suggesting that participants' main specialisms would not be a substantial factor in the scope of this study.

One of the pioneering approaches used in this study was the investigation of correlations between conservatoire music students' coping strategies using the COPE subscales as reference points. Instead of looking at coping as a single topic, the evaluation of conservatoire music students' coping strategies into particular strategies and how they connect to each other. The selection of coping subscales included in this study was mainly problem-focused coping strategies, and only one was an emotion-focused coping strategy due to the validation and consideration of COPE subscales used in previous research. Among problem-focused coping strategies, a very large and positive significant correlation was found between active coping, planning, and positive reinterpretation and growth, respectively. These strategies are recognised as proactive approaches adopted by conservatoire music students individually, as the details of planning might vary among different conservatoire music students, and the effectiveness of active coping also depends on their engagement within the process of coping. In addition to the use of internal resources, including coping skills possessed by conservatoire music students, it is possible that the process of active coping might involve accessing available external resources, as mentioned in the findings of the interview study of this research project. Similarly, based on the assumption that active coping remains popular among conservatoire music students, it is crucial to consider how the individual positively reframes the challenges and demands, which also occurs within the music student individually. These findings suggest the importance of active coping, planning, positive reinterpretation, and growth in conservatoire music students' coping strategies.

On the other hand, regarding the connections between focus on and venting of emotions (emotion-focused coping subscale) and other coping strategies, there was only one statistically significant correlation found between focus on and venting of emotions and use

of instrumental support. Although the level of correlation was moderate, it is still stimulating to suggest that emotion-focused coping strategies also connect problem-focused coping strategies, where the approach of coping with adversity or certain challenges in conservatoire music students could involve beyond a single type of coping.

Looking at conservatoire music students' overall coping, problem-focused, and emotion-focused coping in general, all the variables in both aspects of coping predict the overall level of coping to a certain degree; nevertheless, the model fit measures regarding overall coping and problem-focused coping were very promising, where over 90% of the variance in overall level of coping in this sample could be explained by the problem-focused sub-scales as predictors.

5.4.2 Evaluation of Musicians' Resilience

The measurement of conservatoire music students' resilience adopted the 10-Items Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10) rather than the complete 25-items version considering the overall length of the survey used in this study. The complete 25-items CD-RISC considers five aspects of psychological resilience: personal competence, trust in one's instincts, positive acceptance of change, control, and spirituality (Connor & Davidson, 2003). The 10-items version of the CD-RISC used in this study retains the function of reflecting conservatoire music students' abilities to bounce back from adversity; however, it would not be possible to analyse the factors included in the construct of CD-RISC individually.

According to the population quartile scores for the CD-RISC-10 (Campbell-Sills et al., 2009), the mean score of the 25th % = 29; 50th % = 32, and 75th % = 36, conservatoire music students in the present study reported an overall mean score ($M = 25.3$, $SD = 6.04$) which was below the 25th % quadrants when compared to the general population. At the time of conducting this research project, research on musicians' resilience continued to grow, and

it would be a useful starting point to use this study’s findings to explore whether similar levels of resilience appear in different types of musicians, such as professionals, amateurs, orchestral, and solo musicians.

Since the 10-item CD-RISC lacked data from clinical or highly traumatised individuals, considering that its psychometric properties are limited in this context, it would not be possible to compare conservatoire music students’ resilience to those who have experienced trauma. The findings on conservatoire music students’ overall level of resilience remain valuable considering as a general overview of population in the field of music, given that they experience moderate levels of stress.

Regarding conservatoire music students’ levels of resilience across different year groups, similar to the report on overall coping scores, first-year undergraduate students and first-year postgraduate students reported higher levels of resilience among their year groups. Within the sample of undergraduate conservatoire music students, overall resilience levels tended to drop throughout the course of their study, with final-year undergraduate students reporting the lowest mean level of resilience. It would be very helpful for future research to validate the trend found in the present study, perhaps considering what kinds of factors influence musicians’ resilience empirically, and the impact of potential support for the developing stage of musicians.

Regarding the overall resilience scores across the different main specialism categories, brass and woodwind students tended to report higher means of coping. There were no significant differences between orchestral and non-orchestral instrument groups shown in the findings. For future research, particularly in supporting musicians’ resilience, the characteristics of different instrumental groups could provide helpful benchmarks and considerations. For instance, the music-making activities that orchestral musicians engage in

can be different from those of solo or chamber musicians, and the factors that influence their resilience might be different.

5.4.3 Evaluation of Musicians’ Self-Compassion

This study revealed conservatoire music students’ levels of self-compassion while measuring their coping and resilience in the same survey. The findings demonstrated that conservatoire music students’ level of self-compassion was near the average. In terms of evaluating the positive and negative constructs within conservatoire music students’ self-compassion, conservatoire music students generally scored higher on the positive constructs than on the negative constructs. Among the positive constructs, mindfulness reported the highest mean score, suggesting that conservatoire music students tended to perform better in balancing their emotions. The findings were in line with previous findings in measuring conservatoire music students’ self-compassion (Lam, 2018), which also reported that mindfulness was the most significant construct in their self-compassion.

Within the context of self-compassion, mindfulness as one of its constructs represents the aspects of coping with negative emotions and, more importantly, how individuals respond with positive attitudes. To understand the mindfulness aspect of self-compassion in musicians or conservatoire music students, musicians’ sensitivity to different challenges raised by music-making and their awareness of recognising their own emotions would be appropriate approaches for future research. The complication of mindfulness within self-compassion is also closely related to the positive reinterpretation and growth approach in coping, when considering the prime function of managing one’s emotions in first place.

Regarding conservatoire music students’ levels of self-compassion across different year groups, similar to the report on overall coping and resilience scores, first-year and second-year undergraduate students reported higher levels of resilience, whereas postgraduate

students reported lower levels of resilience in general. Similar to the trend found in the report of musicians’ resilience, among undergraduate conservatoire music students, there was a tendency of overall self-compassion level dropping throughout the course of their study, starting from their third year in particular. It would be very helpful for future research to understand what conservatoire music students are going through during their later years of undergraduate study, as well as the particularly lower levels of self-compassion in postgraduate students. The perspective of standards of performance in relation to level of study could substantially contribute to understanding self-compassion across different levels of conservatoire music students or career stages of musicians in a broader view.

The correlations between all constructs and the overall level of self-compassion in general were significantly positive, which indicates that as the ratings of constructs increased, the overall level of self-compassion increased. Focusing on the positive constructs of conservatoire music students’ self-compassion, all positive constructs (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness) predicted the overall level of self-compassion. The correlations between positive constructs were positive and significant, which indicates that as the rating of a positive construct increases, the ratings of other positive constructs also increase.

A comprehensive understanding was gained through a comparison between conservatoire music students’ level of self-compassion and other populations, with reference to findings from existing research (Neff et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2014). Although conservatoire music students’ overall level of self-compassion in this study sample was lower than that of general undergraduate students, community, and meditators, their scores on negative constructs (self-judgement, isolation, and over-identification) were one of the lowest in comparison. This trend translates to the fact that the development of conservatoire music

students' self-compassion could focus primarily on those positive constructs, rather than the critical need to improve the management of negative constructs in self-compassion.

5.4.4 Evaluation of Coping-Related Individual Factors in Musicians

Pearson’s correlation and regression analyses were conducted to understand the connections between coping, resilience, and self-compassion among the conservatoire music students. Significant positive correlations were found between levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion; in particular, there was a strong connection between resilience and self-compassion. Conservatoire music students’ resilience was significantly and positively correlated with the positive constructs of self-compassion (self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness). From the perspective of predictive factors, conservatoire music students with higher levels of coping tended to have higher levels of resilience and self-compassion.

Focusing on the connections between coping and resilience, as discussed in the previous chapter, they contribute to the development of each other and hint at an interactive relationship. Based on the finding that coping and resilience were initially connected, further correlation analyses revealed that problem-focused coping strategies were significantly correlated with resilience in conservatoire music students. In particular, looking at positive reinterpretation, growth, planning, and active coping, the findings of the present study suggest that these coping strategies have a significant and positive impact on resilience. In particular, positive reinterpretation and growth predicted a conservatoire music student’s level of resilience. Although the impact of emotion-focused coping was found to be insignificant as a problem-focused coping variable, future research should not ignore the potential influence of emotion-focused coping strategies, as suggested by the interview findings of this research project.

Building upon the connection between coping and self-compassion found, further correlation analyses revealed that not only all positive constructs in self-compassion positively correlated with coping and self-kindness among self-compassion’s positive constructs, but particularly predicted conservatoire music students’ overall level of coping.

The consideration of self-compassion compliments the evaluation of emotion-focused aspects in conservatoire music students’ coping, although this topic might not always be addressed in detail in research exploring a holistic coping profile of musicians or conservatoire music students. As mentioned in previous research (Dews & Williams, 1989; Dobson, 2010; Lam, 2018), self-compassion could be a coping approach in conservatoire music students, especially adapting to the challenges related to uncertainties and competitiveness by stimulating their awareness of self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness.

5.4.5 Practical Considerations and Limitations

5.4.5.1 Considerations on Internal Consistency

Further discussion of the issue regarding internal consistency is essential in addition to the interpretation of the findings. The overall metrics for the scales used were found to be strong for psychological resilience (The 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale) and self-compassion (The 12-Item Self-Compassion Scale) and reasonably satisfactory for coping (subscales from the COPE Inventory). Nevertheless, as previously noted, certain alpha coefficients were acceptable at the subscale level. Despite this, it would be useful to retain these subscales in this study, considering that prior studies employing the same measure have documented instances of low internal reliability at the subscale level (Araújo et al., 2017; Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007; Neff, 2003; Raes et al., 2011).

Internal consistency is likely due to the choice of a limited number of items for each scale. For instance, the CDRC-10 and SCS-12 represent a substantial reduction from their initial versions, which included 25 and 26 items, respectively. The decision to use the reductive versions was made to accommodate the scale’s inclusion in a multidimensional survey, while minimising participant burden. It is worth noting that the content validity of

these reductive versions of scales used in the present study was prioritised to ensure the multifaceted nature of each dimension or sub-scale in that psychological construct.

5.4.5.2 Comparison with Other Populations

Particularly in self-compassion, the comparison between conservatoire music students and other populations, including undergraduate students, the community, meditators, and clinical patients, was used as an approach to understand musicians’ self-compassion based on the context of the general public. The comparison with other populations was also based on the not yet well-established research on musicians’ self-compassion, as there is little research existed in the field focusing on this psychological construct of musicians. For instance, in analysing findings on self-compassion, it was possible to compare conservatoire music students’ results with those of over 200 undergraduate students and more than 1300 people in the community setting. Nevertheless, a comparison between conservatoire music students and undergraduate students would reveal any shared commonalities or differences, given that these populations fall into similar age ranges and educational contexts. The specific combination of factors that play the most significant role in promoting resilience and self-compassion among musicians is still a topic that requires further exploration. This research serves as an initial milestone in the exploration of the idea that in terms of coping, resilience and self-compassion can be viewed as relatively cohesive and interconnected topics based on the context of health and wellbeing.

5.4.5.3 Limitations

This study adopted a self-report assessment approach which could lead to methodological constraints. Most survey study designs use self-report measurements and rely on participants’ perceptions of the topics and their own understanding of coping, resilience, and self-

compassion. When examining these psychological aspects in musicians, the recollection of sensitive experiences and the potential for depressive symptoms may arise. Therefore, based on the consideration of anonymity and safeguarding participants’ rights and wellbeing, the bias caused by the self-report approach should be alleviated. The main focus of this study is to facilitate a holistic and pioneering investigation of musicians’ coping with closely related psychological constructs, while the design of this study seeks to accommodate methodological variability (particularly different versions of scales) where possible.

Secondly, as is common in health and wellbeing research, the sampling approach of this study was non-random, and participants had the choice to opt-in. The self-selection bias caused by non-randomised recruitment of participants hinted at the impairment of comparing the findings of this study with other general populations and a reduction in generalisability. Further research would require a sample of musicians with similar characteristics to verify or reproduce the findings of this study. For example, if future research aims to expand the investigation to include other types of musicians, it is important to consider a representative sample and make appropriate demographic adjustments.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter pertains to the second phase of a doctoral research project exploring the relationships between coping strategies employed by conservatoire music students, psychological resilience, and self-compassion. This chapter also details the quantitative measures used in the survey study and presents the results of the questionnaire responses based on the conservatoire music students' levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion. The survey study answered research questions on the strategies used by conservatoire music students to cope with challenges, how they develop psychological resilience in learning and performing, and how coping strategies used by them connect with other individual factors, including resilience and self-compassion. The results were based on the analysis of quantitative data on conservatoire music students' use of coping strategies and the correlation between coping and psychological resilience. In addition, the results revealed significant factors related to coping and their enhancement among conservatoire music students.

In response to the research questions, several hypotheses were tested during the data-analysis process. Both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies were commonly used by conservatoire music students, and positive reinterpretation and growth, planning, active coping, and use of instrumental social support were some of the most common coping strategies reported by the participants. In terms of the investigation of how coping strategies adopted by conservatoire music students interconnected to one another, among problem-focused coping strategies, a very large and positive significant correlation was found between active coping, planning, and positive reinterpretation and growth. In terms of how problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies connect, there was a statistically significant correlation between focus on and venting of emotions and the use of instrumental support. The use of coping strategies also positively predicted overall coping levels.

Positive constructs in self-compassion were positively correlated, and positively predicted the overall level of self-compassion among conservatoire music students. The results also showed that conservatoire music students' scores on negative constructs of self-compassion were among the lowest when compared to other populations, such as general undergraduate students, community, meditators, and clinical samples.

Nevertheless, encouraging results were found regarding the connections between the psychological constructs related to coping. In general, coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion were positively connected among conservatoire music students. Among the positive connections between coping strategies and psychological resilience among conservatoire music students, problem-focused coping strategies were significantly correlated with the overall level of resilience. In addition, the variables of positive reinterpretation and growth in coping predicted resilience in conservatoire music students. Finally, the positive constructs of self-compassion were positively correlated with the overall level of coping among conservatoire music students; self-kindness was the positive construct within self-compassion, which predicted their overall level of coping.

This section presented in this chapter reveals the relationship between coping, resilience, and self-compassion in conservatoire music students. The following chapters subsequently discuss how these factors connect, in addition to external and environmental factors, health, and wellbeing.

Chapter 6 – Survey Study Part II: External Support in Musicians’ Coping, Resilience and Self-Compassion

6.1 Introduction

After examining conservatoire music students’ coping strategies and individual factors including psychological resilience and self-compassion in Chapter 5, this chapter investigates the impact of conservatoire music students’ surrounding environment and support systems on their coping mechanisms. As outlined in preceding chapters, musicians emphasised the importance of both individual and institutional efforts in supporting their coping and resilience. Therefore, it is crucial to outline the findings related to the environmental influences on conservatoire music students’ coping and associated factors. Specifically, this chapter explores how conservatoire music students perceive their educational environment and available support resources in relation to various aspects such as career development, learning, and academic studies.

6.1.1 Objectives of This Chapter

The current chapter documents the second part of the second study (survey study) of this thesis, carried out in response to the following question:

Research Question 4. How do conservatoire music students’ coping strategies connect with other individual factors, including resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, as well as environmental factors they encounter during their learning and performing?

The findings from the second part of the survey study directly addressed question 4, which measured significant factors related to conservatoire music students’ coping and their enhancement. The following section presents the results of the second part of the questionnaire responses, including conservatoire music students’ perceptions of their educational (conservatoire) environment, career pathways, primary motivation for studying music, and sources of support to seek advice on their health and wellbeing, careers, learning, and studies. These factors are considered practical aspects of conservatoire music students’ coping and measure their individual experiences from a real-life perspective. This chapter serves as an additional discussion to the previous chapter which focuses on individual factors in musicians’ coping. The following sections present the importance of the environment in musicians’ coping strategies using quantitative approaches. The limitations of this part of the study are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Based on the existing literature, for this part of the present study, interactive features between the conservatoire environment and how conservatoire music students perceive their surrounding environment were hypothesised:

1. Conservatoire music students’ academic and social self-perceptions should be connected to each other, and both positively predict the overall perception of the educational environment.
2. Coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion are positively associated with conservatoire music students’ perception of the educational environment.

The above hypotheses connect to the research questions by addressing the connection between conservatoire music students’ coping strategies, individual factors (including resilience and self-compassion), and environmental factors encountered during their learning and performing. The first hypothesis suggests that conservatoire music students’ academic

and social self-perceptions are interconnected and collectively contribute to their overall perception of the educational environment. This implies that how conservatoire music students view themselves academically and socially influences their overall perception of the educational environment. The second hypothesis explores the relationship between coping, resilience, self-compassion, and conservatoire music students’ perception of the educational environment. It posits that higher levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion are associated with a more positive perception of the educational environment among conservatoire music students. Both hypotheses contribute to understanding how the individual and environmental factors connect with conservatoire music students’ coping strategies, providing insights into the broader context of their learning and performing experiences.

To test these hypotheses, conservatoire music students’ performance in the measurement of self-perceptions of the education environment was first analysed individually and within the construct itself. Further analyses are then reported that determine whether there are correlations between the environmental factors and the individual psychological constructs discussed in the previous chapter (coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion), either at an overall level or between sub-constructs, to understand the parameters of particular elements in any potential connections.

6.2 Results

From the analysis of the survey data, there were mainly two streams toward conservatoire music students’ coping: (1) individual factors related to coping and (2) environmental factors in conservatoire music students’ coping. The two overarching streams of the survey study were derived from the nature of the scales used, including the measurement of conservatoire

music students’ individual levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion, as discussed in the previous chapter, and the measurement of conservatoire music students’ surrounding factors in the educational environment, as well as their access to supporting resources, which are discussed in this chapter. The aim of this part of the study was to understand the impact of surrounding factors on conservatoire music students’ coping, resilience, and self-compassion, as well as their access to supporting resources in terms of considering these topics (Research Question 4).

6.2.1 Perceptions Toward Education Environment

The first initiative for the second part of the present study was to understand the factors that optimise conservatoire music students’ use and enhance adaptive coping strategies. In light of this, in addition to examining conservatoire music students’ individual factors related to coping, including resilience and self-compassion, an investigation of conservatoire music students’ educational environment was also introduced in the second part of the survey.

The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) is a scale used in healthcare and medical education institutions to evaluate educational environments (Roff et al., 1997). Existing research suggests that the exploration of using DREEM in other fields of education beyond medicine and healthcare would be valuable given that the scale is not culture- or context-specific (Vaughan et al., 2014). The full version of the DREEM comprises five subscales: Perceptions of Learning, Perceptions of Teachers, Academic Self-perceptions, Perceptions of the Atmosphere, and Social Self-perceptions. Considering the context of the present study, measurements of conservatoire music students’ academic and social self-perceptions were selected to understand conservatoire music students’ perceptions of themselves in relation to their educational experiences and social interactions within the educational environment.

The measurement of conservatoire music students' educational environment in the present study comprised two subscales (students' academic self-perceptions and students' social self-perceptions) from the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) as a result of a total score ranging from 0 to 60. Based on the responses ($N = 120$), the mean score was 38.1 ($SD = 6.62$), with a minimum of 12 and maximum of 51. Table 6.1 presents the descriptive data for the DREEM scale (pre-selected subscales), including the means, standard deviations, medians, and score ranges. In addition, Table 6.2 shows the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and reliability statistics of the DREEM subscales used in the present study. Following Nunally's (1978) criteria, the alpha value of this scale indicated acceptable internal consistency.

Table 6. 1 Means, standard deviations, medians and score ranges for the two selected DREEM sub-scales

	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
DREEM Total Score	38.1	39.0	6.62	12	51
DREEM SUB-SCALES					
Academic Self-Perceptions	21.0	22.0	4.20	6	29
Social Self-Perceptions	17.0	18.0	3.76	6	25

Table 6. 2 Cronbach’s α and item reliability for the 2 DREEM sub-scales

DREEM SUB-SCALES	If item dropped
	Cronbach’s α
DREEM Total Score	0.550
Academic Self-Perceptions	0.821
Social Self-Perceptions	0.870

Note. Scale reliability statistics on DREEM Scale (2 subscales) – Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.853$

Between the two DREEM subscales measured in conservatoire music students, academic self-perception had a higher score, with a mean of $M = 21$ ($SD = 4.2$), a median of 22, and scores ranging from 6 to 29. Conservatoire music students’ social self-perception scores were lower, with a mean score of 17 ($SD = 3.76$). According to the referencing guide for DREEM sub-scales’ scores (Roff et al., 1997), there were four levels of interpretation for students’ academic self-perceptions (0-8: ‘feelings of total failure’; 9-16: ‘many negative aspects’; 17-24: ‘feeling more on the positive side’; 25-32: ‘confident’) and social self-perceptions (0-7: ‘miserable’; 8-14: ‘not a nice place’; 15-21: ‘not too bad’; 22-28: ‘very good socially’) respectively. The mean score of conservatoire music students’ academic self-perceptions was at the ‘feeling more on the positive side’ level, which is a tier lower than the

highest level of being ‘confident.’ For conservatoire music students’ academic self-perceptions, the mean score was at the ‘not too bad’ level, which is also a tier lower than the highest level of being ‘very good socially’.

Alongside the presentation of conservatoire music students’ academic and social self-perception profiles, this chapter also explores these perceptions using different demographic variables (gender, year of study, and main specialism), subsequently relating conservatoire music students’ educational environments to their coping, resilience, and self-compassion. These trends will be discussed in the following sections.

6.2.1.1 Demographic Comparison

6.2.1.1.1 *Gender*

Despite the participants who regarded themselves as either agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), male conservatoire music students ($M = 38.4$, $SD = 5.66$) and female conservatoire music students ($M = 38.1$, $SD = 6.96$) reported similar levels of DREEM selected measures. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in mean scores between male and female conservatoire music students. However, this difference was not statistically significant ($t = 0.23$, $p = 0.82$). As a result, the analysis and results presented below do not consider any differences in gender and instead focus on examining conservatoire music students as a collective group.

6.2.1.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of conservatoire music students’ perceptions of the educational environment across different levels of study, Figure 6.1 presents the DREEM total score across undergraduate and

postgraduate year groups. In addition, Table 6.3 summarises the means of the total DREEM score (two subscales) in different year groups divided into undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students. Undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students reported similar levels of self-compassion, with no statistically significant difference following the results of an independent-samples t-test ($t = 1.21, p = 0.23$). Aside from the only artist diploma respondent who reported the highest total score on DREEM ($M = 46$), first-year undergraduate students reported a higher total coping score ($M = 39.4, SD = 7.25$), followed by second-year undergraduate students ($M = 38.9, SD = 5.28$). Among the postgraduate year groups, first-year postgraduate students reported a higher total coping score ($M = 39.6, SD = 5.68$) than did second-year postgraduate students ($M = 37.8, SD = 5.27$). Please refer to Figure 1 and Table 1 in the Appendix for Chapter 6 for the means of the total DREEM score (two subscales) and DREEM subscales in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students.

Figure 6. 1 Total DREEM score across year groups

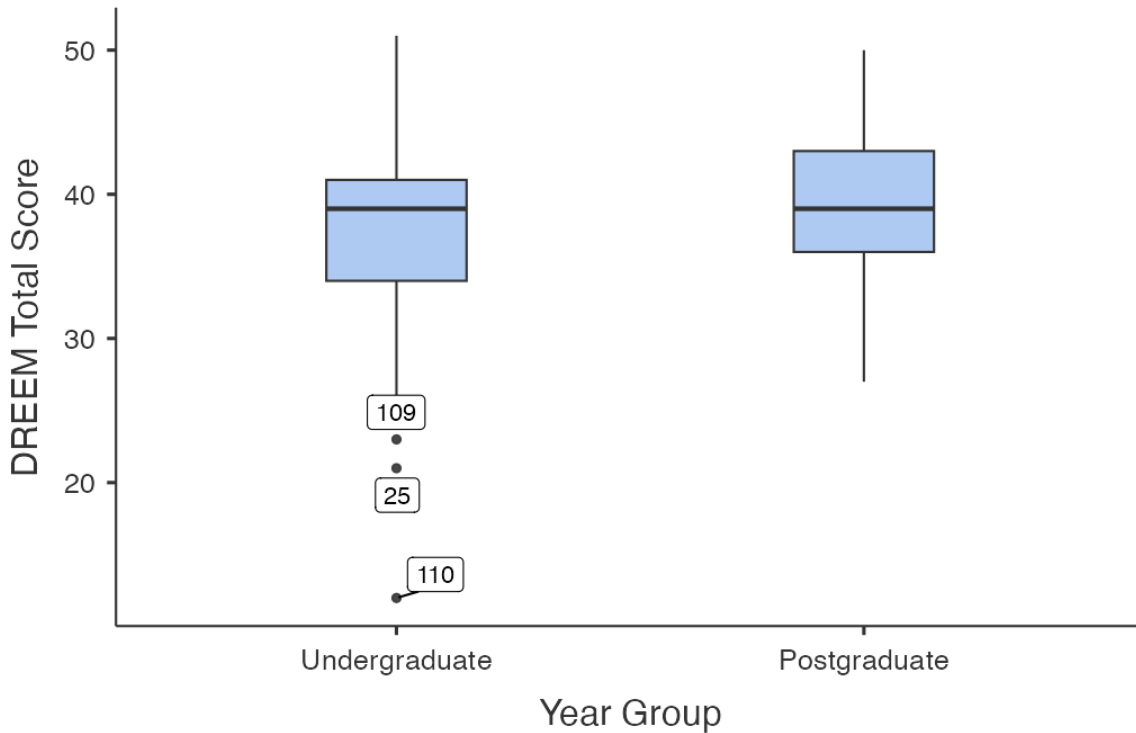


Table 6. 3 DREEM total scores across year groups

	Year Group	N	Mean	Median	SD	Minimum	Maximum
DREEM Total Score	Undergraduate	73	37.5	39	7.18	12	51
	Postgraduate	47	39.0	39	5.61	27	50

6.2.1.1.3 Main Specialism

In terms of conservatoire music students’ perceptions of the educational environment across different main specialisms, Figure 6.2 presents the total DREEM score across different main specialisms. In addition, Table 6.4 summarises the means of the total DREEM score (two subscales) and DREEM subscales in the different main specialism groups. Aside from the

two percussion students who reported high DREEM scores ($M = 41, SD = 5.66$), brass students generally reported higher total coping scores ($M = 40.4, SD = 4.15$), followed by vocal students ($M = 39.3, SD = 6.08$). In terms of score diversity, the total DREEM scores for keyboard students reported the largest range of 38, with a minimum of 12 and maximum of 50.

Figure 6. 2 Total score of DREEM across main specialisms

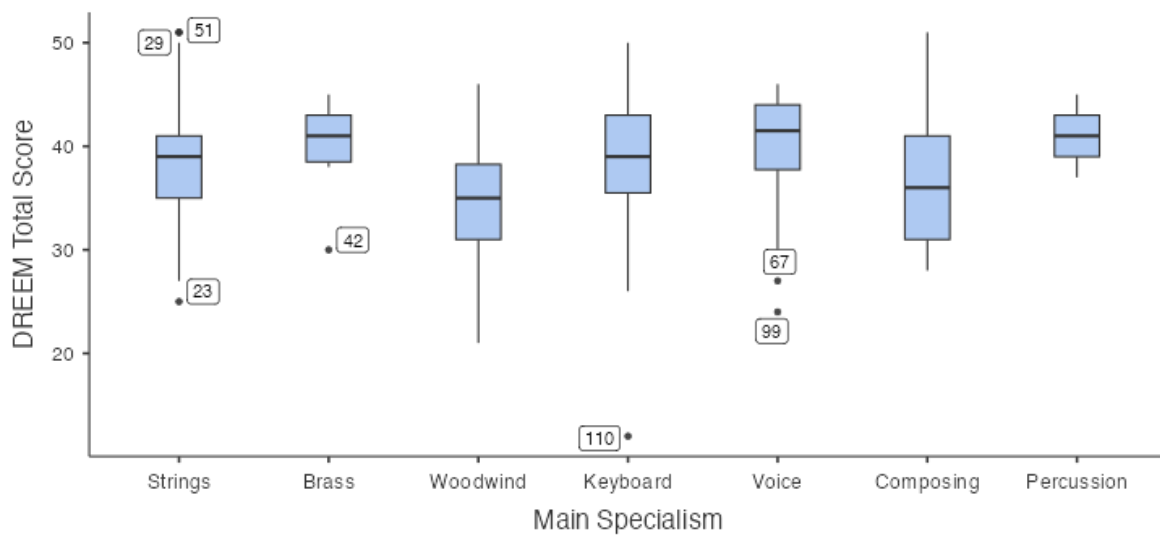


Table 6. 4 DREEM total score and sub-scale scores across main specialisms

Main Specialism	DREEM Total Score		Academic Self-Perceptions		Social Self-Perceptions	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
Strings (n=38)	38.2	5.93	20.7	3.68	17.5	3.34
Brass (n=11)	40.4	4.15	22.9	3.86	17.5	3.30
Woodwind (n=15)	34.6	6.53	19.4	4.77	15.2	4.12
Keyboard (n=13)	37.9	8.86	21.9	5.65	16.0	4.35
Voice (n=20)	39.3	6.08	21.5	3.35	17.8	3.31
Composing (n=7)	37.0	8.00	20.0	4.08	17.0	5.00
Percussion (n=2)	41.0	5.66	20.0	4.24	21.0	1.41

6.2.1.2 Hypothesis 1 – Connections Between Academic and Social Self-perceptions

Examining the links between academic and social self-perceptions and their influence on overall DREEM levels offers detailed insight into the factors affecting the music student experience. In addition, investigating the associations between academic and social self-perceptions can help uncover potential obstacles or enablers to a supportive learning atmosphere.

First, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of differences in the mean scores of academic and social self-perceptions. This difference was statistically significant ($t = 7.77, p < 0.01$).

To follow, Pearson correlations were conducted to examine the relationship between conservatoire music students’ academic self-perceptions and social self-perceptions according to the DREEM subscales included in the present study. The two DREEM subscales were compared on the basis of their mean scores. The detailed results of these Pearson correlations across the DREEM subscales are summarised in Table 6.5. The majority of the Pearson

correlations were positive and significant, especially between the DREEM total score, academic self-perceptions, and social self-perceptions, where the coefficients of correlations were large. In addition, there was a positive, statistically significant correlation between academic and social self-perception.

Table 6. 5 Correlations between DREEM total scores and selected subscales

		DREEM Total Score	Academic Self-Perceptions	Social Self-Perceptions
DREEM Total Score	Pearson’s r	—		
	df	—		
	p-value	—		
Academic Self-Perceptions	Pearson’s r	0.851 ***	—	
	df	118	—	
	p-value	< .001	—	
Social Self-Perceptions	Pearson’s r	0.810 ***	0.381 ***	—
	df	118	118	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

6.2.1.3 RQ 4 / Hypothesis 2 – Connections Between Educational Perceptions and Individual Factors in Coping

A Pearson correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between conservatoire music students’ educational perceptions (combined total score of the two subscales, and academic self-perceptions and social self-perceptions respectively), level of coping (mean of the overall level of coping in general included six COPE subscales in calculation), level of resilience, and level of self-compassion (mean of the overall level of self-compassion included both positive and negative constructs in calculation) of 120 respondents (see Table 6.6).

Table 6. 6 Correlations between DREEM scores and individual coping-related factors

		DREEM Total Score	Academic Self- Perceptions	Social Self- Perceptions	Coping Total Score	Resilience Total Score	Self-Compassion Total Score
DREEM Total Score	Pearson’s r	—					
	p-value	—					
Academic Self- Perceptions	Pearson’s r	0.851 ***	—				
	p-value	< .001	—				
Social Self- Perceptions	Pearson’s r	0.810 ***	0.381 ***	—			
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—			
Coping Total Score	Pearson’s r	0.373 ***	0.360 ***	0.254 **	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	0.005	—		
Resilience Total Score	Pearson’s r	0.532 ***	0.515 ***	0.362 ***	0.373 ***	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
Self- Compassion Total Score	Pearson’s r	0.375 ***	0.350 ***	0.270 **	0.382 ***	0.577 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	0.003	< .001	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $df=118$

Several significant positive correlations were found among educational perception, coping, resilience, and self-compassion. In light of these findings, further linear regression analyses were conducted based on the statistically significant positive correlations. Therefore, the model fit measures (r-squared values) are also reported following the correlation coefficients in this section. There was a strong positive correlation between conservatoire music students’ DREEM levels and resilience ($r = 0.532$, $r^2 = 0.283$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which was statistically significant, indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of educational perceptions tended to show higher levels of resilience in general. Furthermore, regarding the connection between conservatoire music students’ self-

perceptions in DREEM and resilience, academic self-perceptions were strongly and positively correlated with the level of resilience ($r = 0.515$, $r^2 = 0.265$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$).

Conservatoire music students' perceptions of the educational environment (DREEM-selected subscales) were moderately and positively correlated with coping ($r = 0.373$, $r^2 = 0.139$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$) and self-compassion ($r = 0.375$, $r^2 = 0.140$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$).

6.2.2 RQ 4 – Career Pathways, Motivation and Sources of Support

As an extension of understanding individual and environmental factors in conservatoire music students’ coping, this section contains five areas relating to conservatoire music students’ career planning and their sources of support through the lens of surrounding factors in coping. First, a brief evaluation of conservatoire music students’ career planning is presented, including their career pathways as performers and their primary motivation for pursuing music as the main subject. To follow, the sources from which conservatoire music students would seek advice on (1) health and wellbeing, (2) careers, and (3) learning and studies are presented. These factors are discussed in relation to their learning and music-making environment as well as the role of their environment in developing coping strategies, resilience, and self-compassion.

6.2.2.1 Career Pathways

Participants were asked to describe their career pathway as a performer; alternatively, they could describe their portfolio careers with multiple choices. Four options were provided: (1) solo or concert performer, (2) playing in a small ensemble or chamber group as a collaborative musician, (3) playing in a large ensemble as an orchestral musician, or (4) others based on the respondent’s description. Table 6.7 presents the frequencies per career pathway category reported as first choice.

Among the sample, 38.3% (n=46) of participants indicated ‘solo or concert performer’ as their first choice or major career, followed by 27.5% (n=33) of participants indicated ‘playing in small ensemble / chamber or collaborative musician’ as their first choice. In addition, 15% (n=18) of the participants indicated that playing in large ensembles or orchestral musicians was their first choice. For participants who reported ‘other’ as their preferred career pathway, the responses included various roles and career paths related to

music and education. These include composers, teachers, solo or band musicians, music teachers, and researchers. Some individuals also mentioned pursuing portfolio careers and combining roles in research, teaching, and performance, while others expressed interest in music composition, singer or song writing, and producing their own work. These responses reflect a wide range of career possibilities for conservatoire music students, from music education to orchestral performance.

Table 6. 7 Frequencies and percentages per career pathway category as first choice

Career Pathway	Counts	% of Total
Solo	46	38.3 %
Collaborative	33	27.5 %
Orchestral	18	15.0 %
Composer	4	3.3 %
Music Researcher	2	1.7 %
Don't know, combination of all the above and teaching	1	0.8 %
physician (ENT surgeon) and freelance horn playing	1	0.8 %
teacher	1	0.8 %
Solo or band	1	0.8 %
Non-music pathway after graduation	1	0.8 %
Music Teacher	1	0.8 %
Portfolio Career	1	0.8 %
Research, outreach Worksop leading, orchestral musician	1	0.8 %
Research/coordination	1	0.8 %
Some combination of research, teaching, and performance	1	0.8 %
Composer, singer/songwriter	1	0.8 %
Researcher/teacher	1	0.8 %
Education	1	0.8 %
Producing my own work	1	0.8 %
As long as I'm on the stage I'm happy	1	0.8 %
Music teaching for SEND	1	0.8 %
No limitations. Do it all. All styles.	1	0.8 %

6.2.2.2 Motivation

Subsequently, the participants were asked to describe their primary motivation for studying music as a subject in a conservatoire by ranking options in order of importance. There were 12 options given: (1) to improve the ability to get a job in the field; (2) out of academic interest or curiosity; (3) to pursue a specific career; (4) encouragement from family, friends, or school; (5) desire to be a student; (6) friends or peers were going; (7) did not know what else to do; (8) enjoyment or interest in the subject; (9) a subject strong at school or college; (10) thought would lead to good employment opportunities; (11) pre-requisite for a chosen career; and (12) to keep options open. The options were adapted from Shury et al. ’s (2017) measurement of graduates’ career planning and outcomes in a report endorsed by the United Kingdom’s Department of Education. Considering the similarity in the nature of the options ‘out of academic interest or curiosity’ and ‘enjoyment or interest in the subject’, these two options were consolidated into one category to simplify the report of findings and avoid potential redundancy in participants’ choices. Table 6.8 presents the frequencies of each primary motivation category as the first choice.

Among the sample, 28.3% (n=34) of participants ranked ‘to improve ability to get a job in the field’ as their first choice in terms of primary motivation for studying music as a subject at a conservatoire, followed by 27.5% (n=33) of participants ranked ‘out of academic interest or curiosity / enjoyment or interest in the subject’ as their primary motivation. Nevertheless, 25.8% (n=31) of the participants ranked ‘to pursue a specific career’ as their first choice.

Table 6. 8 Frequencies and percentages per primary motivation category as first choice

Motivation	Counts	% of Total
To improve ability to get a job in the field	34	28.3 %
Out of academic interest or curiosity / enjoyment or interest in the subject	33	27.5 %
To pursue a specific career	31	25.8 %
Encouragement from family, friends or school	6	5.0 %
To keep options open	4	3.3 %
Pre-requisite for a chosen career	3	2.5 %
A subject strong in at school or college	3	2.5 %
Did not know what else to do	2	1.7 %
Thought would lead to good employment opportunities	2	1.7 %
Desire to be a student	2	1.7 %

6.2.2.3 Sources of Support on Health and Wellbeing

To explore conservatoire music students’ sources of support on various aspects related to coping, participants were asked to rank their preferences within a list of sources from which they were likely to seek advice on their health and wellbeing in order of importance. There were eight options given: (1) educational institution(s), (2) employer(s), (3) friends or fellow players, (4) NHS (or private physician), (5) principal study teacher, (6) professional body (for example, the Musicians’ Union), (7) specialist clinic for musicians, and (8) other. Similarly, the options in this question were adapted from Shury et al. ’s (2017) measurement of graduates’ career planning and outcomes in a report endorsed by the Department of Education in the United Kingdom. Table 6.9 presents the frequencies per source of support to seek advice on health and wellbeing as the first choice reported. As no participant ranked ‘employer(s)’ as their first choice, the data for that category are not reported in this section’s findings.

Among the sample, 36.7% (n=44) of participants ranked ‘friends or fellow players’ as their first choice in terms of sources of seeking advice on health and wellbeing, followed by 27.5% (n=33) of participants ranked ‘NHS (or private physician)’ as their first choice.

Nevertheless, 10.8% (n=13) of participants ranked ‘educational institution(s)’, and 10% (n=12) ranked ‘principal study teacher’ as their first choice.

Table 6. 9 Frequencies and percentages per source of support to seek advice on health and wellbeing as first choice

Source - Health and Wellbeing	Counts	% of Total
Friends or fellow players	44	36.7 %
NHS (or private physician)	33	27.5 %
Educational institution(s)	13	10.8 %
Principal study teacher	12	10.0 %
Other	9	7.5 %
Specialist clinic for musicians	8	6.7 %
Professional body (e.g., Musicians’ Union)	1	0.8 %

6.2.2.4 Sources of Support on Careers

Second, participants were asked to rank their preferences within a list of sources from which they were likely to seek careers’ advice and support, in order of importance. There were six options given: (1) College Careers Services, (2) family members, (3) peers, (4) personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental, or vocal teacher, (5) previous or current employer if any, and (6) professional in the field of interest. Table 6.10 presents the frequencies per source of support to seek careers’ advice and support as the first choice reported. Since no participant ranked ‘previous or current employer, if any, as their first choice, the data for that category are not reported in this section’s findings.

Among the sample, 52.5% (n=63) of participants ranked ‘personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher’ as their first choice in terms of sources of seeking

career advice and support, followed by ‘professional in field of interest’ (15.8%, n=19) and ‘family members’ (15%, n=18).

Table 6. 10 Frequencies and percentages per source of support to seek careers advice and support as first choice

Source - Careers Advice	Counts	% of Total
Personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher	63	52.5 %
Professional in field of interest	19	15.8 %
Family members	18	15.0 %
Peers	11	9.2 %
College Careers Services	9	7.5 %

6.2.2.5 Sources of Support on Learning and Studies

Third, participants were asked to rank their preferences within a list of sources from which they were likely to seek advice on learning and studies, in order of importance. The options were the same as those included in the previous question on sources of career advice and support. Table 6.11 presents the frequencies per source of support to seek advice on learning and studies as the first choice reported. Similarly, since no participant ranked ‘previous or current employer, if any, as their first choice, the data for that category were not reported in this section’s findings.

Among the sample, 64.2% (n=77) of participants ranked ‘personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher’ as their first choice in terms of sources of seeking advice on learning and studies, followed by ‘peers’ (11.7%, n=14) and ‘College Careers Services’ (10%, n=12).

Table 6. 11 Frequencies and percentages per source of support to seek advice on learning and studies as first choice

Source - Learning	Counts	% of Total
Personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher	77	64.2 %
Peers	14	11.7 %
College Careers Services	12	10.0 %
Professional in field of interest	10	8.3 %
Family members	7	5.8 %

6.2.3 Environmental Factors in Undergraduate and Postgraduate Musicians

Based on the above findings regarding conservatoire music students’ recognition of career pathways, motivation, and sources of support for various aspects related to coping, further analyses were conducted to explore the distribution of significant factors across different year groups.

Regarding participants’ career pathways, since the majority of participants reported either ‘solo or concert performer’, ‘playing in small ensemble / chamber or collaborative musician’, or ‘playing large ensemble / orchestral musician’ as their first choice in career pathway, distribution of these three categories across different year groups was analysed and presented in Table 6.12.

Among the sample, the distribution within ‘playing large ensembles / orchestral musicians was fairly even across undergraduate and postgraduate students, showing no particular tendency. However, in the ‘playing in small ensemble/chamber or collaborative musician’ category, first-year undergraduate (8.3%, n=10) and postgraduate students (11.7%, n=14) made up the majority of the responses, suggesting that these year groups tend to pursue a collaborative musician career as their first choice. Similar tendencies were found within the ‘solo or concert performer’ responses, where the majority were first-year (8.3%, n=10) and

second-year (9.2%, n=11) undergraduate students. The findings suggested that undergraduate students, especially first-year students, possessed strong intentions to pursue either a solo performer or a collaborative musician career in music performance, compared to other undergraduate year groups.

Table 6. 12 Frequencies and percentages per career pathway (selected) as first choice across year groups

Career Pathway	Year of Study	Counts	% of Total
Playing in small ensemble / chamber or collaborative musician	UG1	10	8.3 %
	UG2	4	3.3 %
	UG3	4	3.3 %
	UG4	1	0.8 %
	PG1	8	6.7 %
	PG2	6	5.0 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	0	0.0 %
Playing large ensemble / orchestral musician	UG1	4	3.3 %
	UG2	3	2.5 %
	UG3	1	0.8 %
	UG4	2	1.7 %
	PG1	4	3.3 %
	PG2	2	1.7 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	2	1.7 %
Solo or concert performer	UG1	10	8.3 %
	UG2	11	9.2 %
	UG3	8	6.7 %
	UG4	5	4.2 %
	PG1	5	4.2 %
	PG2	6	5.0 %
	Artist diploma	1	0.8 %
	Doctorate	0	0.0 %

Regarding participants’ primary motivation for studying music as a subject at a conservatoire, since the majority of participants reported either ‘to improve ability to get a

job in the field', 'to pursue a specific career', or 'out of academic interest or curiosity / enjoyment or interest in the subject' as their first choice in primary motivation, distribution of these three categories across different year groups was analysed and presented in Table 6.13.

Among the sample, within the distribution of 'to improve ability to get a job in the field' category, first-year postgraduate students (11.6%, n=14) showed to make up the majority of responses, alongside second-year postgraduate students (5%, n=6) and first-year undergraduate students (5%, n=6). It is reasonable that postgraduate students reported the pursuit of improving their ability to get a job in the field as their first choice in terms of motivation for studying music in a conservatoire, since the context of postgraduate studies contributes to career advancement, leading to better job opportunities and skill development. In addition, regarding the distribution of 'to pursue a specific career', majority of the responses was made up of first-year undergraduate students (10%, n=12), suggesting that they already possessed strong intension of pursuing a specific career (based on the context of this present study, elaboratively a career in music or performance) at the beginning of their undergraduate studies. Similarly, within the distribution of 'out of academic interest or curiosity/enjoyment or interest in the subject', first-year undergraduate students (8.3%, n=10) made up the majority of responses for this category. It is worth to consider that postgraduate students (10%, n=12) also reported academic interest or enjoyment in the subject as their primary motivation.

Aside from gaining insights into the distribution within different motivation options, it is worth noting that the motivation for studying at the undergraduate or postgraduate levels can vary among individuals, which could also be a combination of factors. As such, although the report of findings outlined the participant's first choice in describing their primary motivation, one should not only consider the sole impact of ranking, but also ignore the potential influence of other factors.

Table 6. 13 Frequencies and percentages per primary motivation (selected) as first choice across year groups

Motivation	Year of Study	Counts	% of Total
To improve ability to get a job in the field	UG1	6	5.0 %
	UG2	3	2.5 %
	UG3	2	1.7 %
	UG4	3	2.5 %
	PG1	14	11.6%
	PG2	6	5.0 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	0	0.0 %
To pursue a specific career	UG1	12	10.0 %
	UG2	5	4.2 %
	UG3	5	4.2 %
	UG4	3	2.5 %
	PG1	3	2.5 %
	PG2	1	0.8 %
	Artist diploma	1	0.8 %
	Doctorate	1	0.8 %
Out of academic interest or curiosity / enjoyment or interest in the subject	UG1	10	8.3 %
	UG2	4	3.3 %
	UG3	5	4.2 %
	UG4	1	0.8 %
	PG1	8	6.7 %
	PG2	4	3.3 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	1	0.8 %

Regarding participants' sources to seek advice on their health and wellbeing, since the majority of participants reported either 'friends or fellow players', 'NHS (or private physician)', 'educational institution(s)', or 'principal study teacher' as their first choice in sources of advice, distribution of these four categories across different year groups was analysed and presented in Table 6.14.

Among the sample, within the distribution of 'NHS (or private physician)' as sources of advice on health and wellbeing, first-year postgraduate students (8.3%, n=10) and second-year undergraduate students (7.5%, n=9) made up the majority of responses in this category. However, no particular tendencies were found in terms of which year groups tended to consult the NHS or private physicians on their health and wellbeing. In addition, no particular tendency was found for the distribution of 'educational institution(s)'.

However, within the distribution of 'friends or fellow players', first-year undergraduate students (10%, n=12) go for their peers in terms of seeking advice on health and wellbeing, when compared to other undergraduate year groups as well as postgraduate students within the same category. This is an interesting point that first-year undergraduate students consult their friends or fellow players regarding advice on health and well-being, rather than going to the NHS or health professional bodies in the first place. Also, 'friends or fellow players' was also the most common option for first among these four selected sources in seeking advice on health and wellbeing. Similar trends were suggested in the 'principal study teacher' category, where the majority of respondents were first-year undergraduate students (5%, n=6). Initially, the results in this section revealed that 'friends or fellow players' and principal study teachers were the primary sources first-year undergraduate students would use to seek health advice. Further investigation regarding the rationale behind this tendency would be beneficial for both students and institutions to understand the most

effective approach to guide newly admitted students for professional health and wellbeing resources.

Table 6. 14 Frequencies and percentages per sources to seek advice on health and wellbeing (selected) as first choice across year groups

Source - Health and Wellbeing	Year of Study	Counts	% of Total
NHS (or private physician)	UG1	5	4.2 %
	UG2	9	7.5 %
	UG3	3	2.5 %
	UG4	1	0.8 %
	PG1	10	8.3 %
	PG2	4	3.3 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	1	0.8 %
Friends or fellow players	UG1	12	10.0 %
	UG2	5	4.2 %
	UG3	8	6.7 %
	UG4	3	2.5 %
	PG1	8	6.7 %
	PG2	6	5.0 %
	Artist diploma	1	0.8 %
	Doctorate	1	0.8 %
Principal study teacher	UG1	6	5.0 %
	UG2	2	1.7 %
	UG3	0	0.0 %
	UG4	2	1.7 %
	PG1	0	0.0 %
	PG2	2	1.7 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	0	0.0 %
Educational institution(s)	UG1	3	2.5 %
	UG2	2	1.7 %
	UG3	1	0.8 %
	UG4	1	0.8 %
	PG1	4	3.3 %
	PG2	2	1.7 %
	Artist diploma	0	0.0 %
	Doctorate	0	0.0 %

6.3 Discussion

The second part of the survey aimed to investigate the influence of surrounding or environmental factors on musicians’ development of coping, resilience, and self-compassion. In addition, by understanding what sources of support would conservatoire music students go for their health and wellbeing, careers, and learning and studies, this part of the study informed what factors might optimise conservatoire music students’ adaptive coping when encountering adversity and challenges of these aspects (Research Question 4). As a guiding principle, the investigation of conservatoire music students’ educational environment followed the validation of DREEM subscales in medical training students, as presented in Roff et al. (1997). Based on the context of how conservatoire music students perceive their educational environment and their perceptions of academic and social aspects, this second part of the survey study also explored the connections between conservatoire music students’ perceptions of the educational environment, coping, resilience, and self-compassion. This study represents the first to connect both individual and environmental factors in the discussion of musicians’ coping, resilience, and self-compassion simultaneously with musicians. This section discusses the results of the study, its limitations, and directions for further research.

6.3.1 Evaluation on Musicians’ Educational Environment

Considering that the sample for this study consisted of conservatoire music students, the present study provides evidence of their self-perceptions regarding academic and social aspects of the educational environment, specifically regarding the conservatoire environment.

Based on the mean values of the DREEM subscales in the sample of this study, conservatoire music students scored higher on the items of academic self-perceptions than on social self-perceptions. In the context of the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure

(DREEM), although they are equally important in assessing students' experiences in the educational environment, higher scores in academic self-perceptions suggest that conservatoire music students were more positive in their academic abilities and higher satisfaction within the educational context. This is also closely related to the conservatoire music students' sense of achievement and academic processes. Meanwhile, the lower scores in social self-perceptions suggest that conservatoire music students' educational environment might not be as positive and supportive as they expected from a social perspective. The lower scores on social self-perceptions indicated concerns and challenges regarding conservatoire music students' social interaction within the educational environment, including peer support, relationships with academic staff, and the impression of the overall social atmosphere within the conservatoire.

In terms of overall DREEM scores (comprising two sub-scales) across different years of study, first-year undergraduate students and first-year postgraduate students reported higher means of DREEM in general when compared to the other year groups of students. It is worth noting that the fourth-year (final-year) undergraduate students reported a particularly lower mean than other year groups. Considering that final-year undergraduate students might anticipate the transition from their studies to their professional careers, the underlying stressors and uncertainties could result in lower scores in their perceptions of the educational environment. The anxiety associated with the transition from student to professional could also affect how conservatoire music students perceive their current educational environments. Additionally, somewhat connected to the bias in study design, final-year undergraduate students may reflect on their entire academic journey, and their retrospective perspective can influence their self-perceptions of the educational environment, potentially highlighting the areas of challenge. To explicitly capture the phenomenon of changes in self-perceptions over the course of the study, future research could qualitatively examine the impact of student

experience. This qualitative exploration could help to elucidate and support the explanation of variations observed across different year groups.

Regarding the overall DREEM scores across the different main specialism categories, brass and vocal students in the majority tended to report higher means. There were no significant differences between orchestral and non-orchestral instrument groups within the sample. Further research could explore how different cultures within the instrumental department might affect conservatoire music students’ self-perceptions of their educational environments.

Considering the connections between the DREEM total score, academic self-perceptions, and social self-perceptions of conservatoire music students, the correlations between these items were positive and significant. Both academic and social self-perceptions not only significantly predicted the overall DREEM score but also exhibited positive correlations with each other. This trend indicates that the academic and social self-perceptions of conservatoire music students mutually influence each other in an interactive relationship.

Connecting conservatoire music students’ self-perceptions of the educational environment and the individual variables presented in the previous chapter (including coping, resilience, and self-compassion), significant findings revealed correlations between these aspects. One of the foremost findings was the strong positive correlation between conservatoire music students’ levels of DREEM and resilience, particularly academic self-perceptions, which were strongly and positively correlated with conservatoire music students’ resilience. This finding suggests that the prediction of conservatoire music students’ resilience relies on their positive self-perceptions of academic activities and apparently depends on their sense of success in their own studies. Coping and self-compassion were also positively correlated with conservatoire music students’ self-perceptions of the educational

environment. These findings establish a foundational basis that individual factors in coping (use of coping strategies, resilience, and self-compassion) are significantly related to conservatoire music students' educational environment, whereas musicians' coping is also influenced by their environment. Looking at conservatoire music students' overall DREEM scores, both academic and social self-perceptions predicted the individual variables summarised in the previous chapter to a certain degree.

6.3.2 Evaluation on Musicians' Career Pathways and Motivation

The measurement of conservatoire music students' career portfolios and primary motivations to study music was a considerable addition to the psychological and environmental variables to depict the practical characteristics of the sample in this study. Adapting from measurements used in Shury et al. (2017) on graduates' career planning and outcomes commissioned by the UK Department of Education, questions in this section were intended to evaluate career intentions and motivations among different year groups, particularly final-year undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students.

First, the choices for measuring conservatoire music students' career portfolios were adapted according to the major types of music performance activities. Among the sample, over 65% of participants indicated either 'solo or concert performer' or 'playing in small ensemble / chamber or collaborative musician' as their first choice or major career. It is worth noting that some participants reported portfolio careers as their direction of career development, combining roles in research, teaching, performance, music composition, singer or song writing, and performance. During the course of data analysis, among the responses that reported 'solo or concert performers, the majority of the participants in this category were first- and second-year undergraduate students, and postgraduate students did not seem to report solo performers as their priority in career development. However, among the

responses that reported playing in small ensemble/chamber or collaborative musicians, first-year undergraduate (8.3%, n=10) and postgraduate students (11.7%, n=14) made up the majority of the responses in this category. The findings suggest that although a career in solo or concert performance remains a preferred career pathway for conservatoire music students, such career development intention is represented by first-year undergraduate students. While the competition in the field of solo or concert performances is discussed in Chapter 2, it is a sensible finding that, besides being a solo performer, a considerable portion of both undergraduate and postgraduate conservatoire music students reported a collaborative musical career as their first choice in career development. Comparatively, collaborative musicians seem to possess more opportunities to perform with other musicians in different settings, including small ensembles and chamber performances. As mentioned in MacNamara et al. (2006), coping with the changing environment and demands in careers could be a major challenge for musicians. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that only a small number of conservatoire music students reported playing in large ensemble/orchestral musicians. The most likely explanation for this trend could be related to intensive competition in orchestral auditions and scarcity of orchestral job openings. In order to justify the rationale and details, further research examining conservatoire music students' career intentions and their influential factors would be valuable.

To complement the findings related to conservatoire music students' career pathways, the investigation of their primary motivation for studying music also sheds light on the trend in their career development. Most participants indicated either 'to improve their ability to get a job in the field', 'to pursue a specific career', or 'out of academic interest or curiosity/enjoyment or interest in the subject' as their first choice in primary motivation, with these options being closely linked to career development. Notably, first-year undergraduate students were the predominant group among those who reported 'to pursue a specific career',

indicating a clear intention in their career goals at the onset of their studies. Conversely, participants who identified 'to improve their ability to get a job in the field' as their primary motivation were predominantly postgraduate students, particularly first-year postgraduate students. This finding aligns with the goals of postgraduate studies, in which students aim to enhance their practical skills and competitiveness within the industry. However, the impact of 'out of academic interest or curiosity/enjoyment or interest in the subject' as the primary motivation could not be fully illuminated, as it is possible that a music student's motivation for study encompasses several aspects.

In summary, it is noteworthy to underscore the close relationship between career pathways and motivation for studying conservatoire music students. While evaluating musicians' psychological qualities and perceptions of their environment is crucial, understanding their career portfolios and motivations provides an additional perspective regarding personal development.

6.3.3 Evaluation on Musicians' Sources of Support

As discussed in Chapter 2 regarding the importance of external factors in musicians' health and wellbeing, existing literature suggests that the resources and support provided to musicians could largely influence their capacities for coping and resilience (Schneider & Chesky, 2011; Cameron et al., 2007; Pierce et al., 1996). Support for musicians' development exceeded the scope of coping and resilience but directly contributed to their health and wellbeing, careers, learning, and studies. The present study analysed the main sources of support perceived by conservatoire music students regarding the above aspects, and further research could focus on facilitating a better connection between available resources and musicians' demands in their personal development.

When it comes to seeking advice on health and wellbeing, it is surprising that the majority of conservatoire music students reported 'friends or fellow players' as their first-choice source, rather than turning to the 'NHS (or private physician)' or their 'educational institution(s)'. Research and institutions at this point should be aware that instead of going to health professionals or clinics, most conservatoire music students tend to approach their peers for advice, regardless of whether their friends or fellow players were being trained to refer to health and wellbeing concerns. A plausible explanation could be that musicians perceive their peers as a legitimate source of support given that they are involved in similar professional activities and may encounter comparable health issues.

For students within their respective institutions, it is important to highlight how musicians can become aware of the available health and wellbeing support on their campuses. This awareness is crucial for them to receive professional advice from the trained individuals. The initial point of contact for seeking advice on health and wellbeing is of utmost importance as it significantly influences whether musicians receive the most appropriate support. In addition, among the sample, participants who reported 'friends or fellow players' as their first-choice source were mainly first-year undergraduate and first-year postgraduate students, who are new to their learning environment. The findings suggest that the importance of spotlighting support for new students, especially concerning their health and wellbeing, lies in informing them about the available resources and support in case of need.

On the other hand, 'personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher' was also found as the first choice for music student to seek support on their learning and studies. This is a sensible finding since conservatoire music students would prefer to approach the teaching faculties directly, and teachers could clearly provide appropriate assistance regarding their academic studies. However, similar trends were found in terms of

conservatoire music students’ sources of support to seek career advice instead of going for career services available at institutions. Over half of the sample also ranked ‘personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher’ as their first choice in terms of sources of career advice and support. This finding could possibly be explained by the learning culture of conservatoire (Papageorgi et al., 2010b), where it values one-to-one teacher-student relationships, and musicians would first consult their principal teachers or personal tutors for professional career advice. Personal tutors and teaching faculties at conservatoires are frequently professionals in their respective industries, possessing the expertise to connect students with external opportunities or to offer practical advice based on their own experiences. However, future research could delve into how career services might enhance their effectiveness in supporting the career development of musicians. This could involve integrating insights from teaching faculties and active performers to create a more comprehensive and practical package for music student career support.

6.3.4 Practical Considerations and Limitations

6.3.4.1 Considerations of Internal Consistency

In addition to interpreting the findings, it is crucial to engage in further discussions on internal consistency. The metrics for the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) were found to be strong and satisfactory for alpha coefficients at the subscale level. In addressing the issue of inclusion and selection of DREEM subscales for measurement, the decision to include Academic Self-Perception (ASP) and Social Self-Perception (SSP) in the present study was guided by the scope of the research questions. This study specifically concentrates on the academic activities and interactions of conservatoire music students with their environment, as opposed to their perceptions of the curriculum or teachers. Nevertheless, the content validity of these DREEM subscales demonstrated promise in capturing the intended construct of interest (Roff et al., 1997).

6.3.4.2 Adaptations of Measurement

Regarding the measurement of conservatoire music students' career planning and sources of support, the questions were adapted from a government report instrument used to evaluate graduate planning and outcomes (Shury et al., 2017) to fit the sample of conservatoire music students in the present study to ensure the effectiveness of the instrument. The adaptation of instruments is essential to understanding conservatoire music students' surrounding environment, taking into account their occupational characteristics and specific contextual factors (for instance, music-making, one-to-one instrumental tuition, and artistic performances) that may influence their responses. The relevance of the questionnaire content must be suitable for the context of musicians, requiring modifications to address choices relevant to the experiences, practices, and perspectives of conservatoire music students.

6.3.4.3 Limitations

Similar to the first part of the present survey study, the second part also adopted a self-report assessment approach which could lead to methodological constraints. The conservatoire music students who participated in this study responded to the questionnaire by referencing their own perceptions of the educational environment. Particularly concerning the ranking of sources of support for seeking advice on health and wellbeing, careers, learning, and studies, even though participants were required to rank their primary source of support, it is important not to dismiss the possibility that conservatoire music students may find a combination of sources to be significant. However, the emphasis on ranking the first choice in this part of the survey was rooted in the clarity it provided to conservatoire music students’ preferences. The hierarchy of preferences designed through ranking allows for in-depth analysis, in addition to the identification of influential factors and exploration of patterns within different year groups.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter pertains to the second phase of a doctoral research project, exploring the relationships between individual factors (coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion) and external factors (perceptions toward the educational environment) related to coping among conservatoire music students. This chapter also details the quantitative measures used in the survey study and presents the results of the questionnaire responses based on conservatoire music students’ academic and social self-perceptions toward the educational environment. The survey study answered the research question of how coping strategies alongside their related factors (resilience and self-compassion) are connected with environmental factors in conservatoire music students. The results were based on the analysis of quantitative data on the levels of coping strategies, resilience, self-compassion, perceptions

toward the educational environment, and the correlation between these individual and environmental factors.

To answer the research question, hypotheses were tested during the data analysis process. The academic and social self-perceptions of conservatoire music students were found to be connected to each other, and both self-perceptions positively predicted the overall perception of the educational environment. Considering that coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion are associated with conservatoire music students’ perceptions toward the educational environment, the results validated that academic self-perceptions were strongly and positively correlated with conservatoire music students’ resilience. These findings expand the understanding of musicians’ development of coping, resilience, and self-compassion, as results suggest that these factors could be considered beyond individual factors, where the impact of their surroundings is proven to be important as well.

Nevertheless, considering the support available within musicians’ surroundings, the results on their sources of support revealed that the appropriate alignment of support and musicians’ demands plays a crucial role in enhancing their coping capacities and potentially has a positive impact on resilience.

The results from the survey study presented in this chapter revealed the relationship between individual factors (coping, resilience, and self-compassion) and external factors (perceptions toward the educational environment) in conservatoire music students. The next chapter discusses how these individual and external factors are related to coping with health and wellbeing.

Chapter 7 – Survey Study Part III: Musicians’ Coping, Health and Wellbeing

7.1 Introduction

Following the investigation of conservatoire music students’ coping strategies and individual factors including psychological resilience and self-compassion in Chapter 5, and examining their surrounding environment and support systems in Chapter 6, this chapter focuses on the findings concerning musicians’ health and wellbeing in relation to their coping strategies, environment, and support systems. As highlighted in earlier chapters, conservatoire music students have underscored the connection between coping, resilience, and their overall health and wellbeing. Therefore, it is crucial to present the findings pertaining to conservatoire music students’ health and wellbeing separately, elaborating their relationship with coping strategies and other relevant factors such as the educational environment and available support resources.

7.1.1 Objectives of This Chapter

The current chapter documents aspects related to the health and wellbeing of conservatoire music students within the context of the second study (survey study) conducted in this thesis, addressing the following question as part of the overarching research question:

Research Question 4. How do conservatoire music students’ coping strategies connect with other individual factors, including resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, as well as environmental factors they encounter during their learning and performing?

The findings from these sections of the survey study directly addressed research question 4, which evaluated conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing in relation to coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, and the educational environment. The following section presents the results of the health and wellbeing aspects of the questionnaire responses, including conservatoire music students' overall health and wellbeing, and their relationships with individual and environmental factors in coping, as discussed in previous chapters. This chapter serves as a concluding discussion of the survey study, focusing on musicians' coping and its interaction with health and wellbeing. Subsequent sections present the significance of musicians' health and wellbeing in coping, employing quantitative approaches. The limitations of this part of the study are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Drawing from the existing literature, this part of the present study hypothesised interactive relationships among health, wellbeing, psychological factors, and environmental variables in conservatoire music students, specifically:

1. There are positive connections between coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing among conservatoire music students.
2. Conservatoire music students' academic and social self-perceptions are connected to their health and wellbeing.

To test these hypotheses, the performance of conservatoire music students in health and wellbeing evaluations was initially examined both individually and within the construct itself. Subsequent analyses were conducted to determine correlations between individual psychological constructs (coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion) and environmental factors (perceptions of the educational environment) discussed in preceding chapters, in relation to health and wellbeing. These analyses aimed to understand potential connections either at an overarching level or among sub-constructs, thereby clarifying the specific elements that may underlie such connections.

7.2 Results

From the analysis of the survey data, there were mainly two streams toward conservatoire music students' coping: (1) individual factors related to coping and (2) environmental factors in conservatoire music students' coping. The two overarching streams of the survey study were derived from the nature of the scales used, including the measurement of conservatoire music students' individual levels of coping, resilience, and self-compassion, as discussed in Chapter 5, and the measurement of conservatoire music students' surrounding factors in the educational environment, as well as their access to supporting resources, as discussed in Chapter 6. The aim of this part of the study was to understand the impact of health and wellbeing on conservatoire music students' coping, resilience, and self-compassion, as well as their access to supporting resources in terms of considering these topics (Research Question 4).

7.2.1 Health and Wellbeing

The first part of the survey measured conservatoire music students' individual factors related to coping, resilience, and self-compassion. Before moving onto the second part of the survey, which looked at conservatoire music students' surrounding factors, including the educational environment and career portfolio, their health and wellbeing were also measured as mediating factors for the individual and environmental factors. Conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing were also analysed in relation to their coping, levels of resilience, and self-compassion.

7.2.1.1 General Health (SF-36)

The measurement of conservatoire music students' general health in the present study used the MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36), which is divided into two parts: (1) general health items and (2) longitudinal health status comparison. Among the general health items, the section started by asking the music student to rate their health in general on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from poor (to be recorded as 0) to excellent (to be recorded as 100), followed by four items asking the music student to indicate how true or false each statement was for them. The total score for general health was generated by averaging the five items. Based on the responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 60.3 ($SD = 21.3$) and the median was 60, which indicates that, on average, conservatoire music students reported good health in between the level of good and very good (Brazier et al., 1992; Jenkinson et al., 1999).

7.2.1.1.1 Demographic Comparison

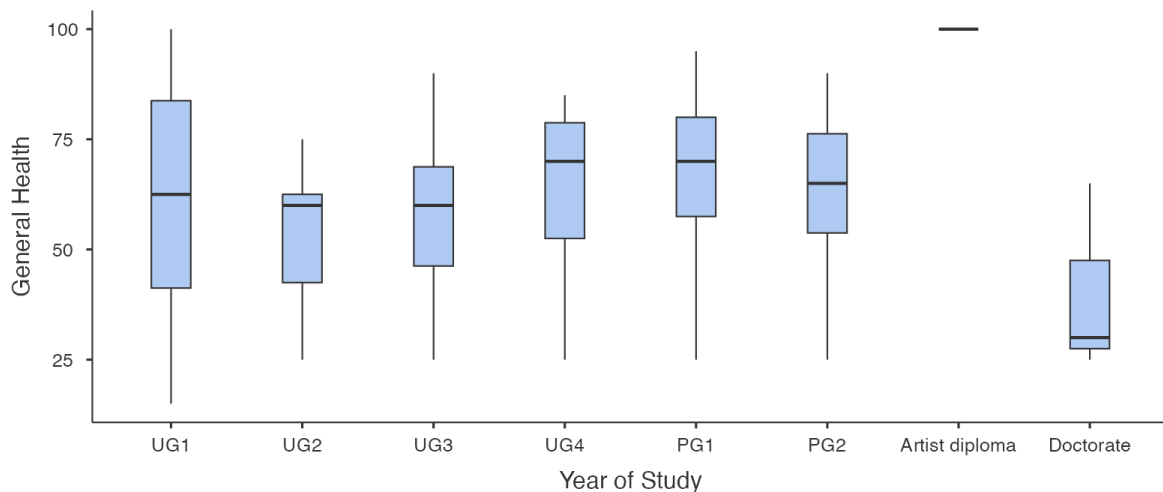
7.2.1.1.1.1 Gender

Although the participants who regarded themselves as either agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), male conservatoire music students ($M = 61.9$, $SD = 18.7$, $\tilde{x} = 60$) and female conservatoire music students ($M = 59.6$, $SD = 22.9$, $\tilde{x} = 60$) reported similar scores for general health. Considering that the participant groups in gender exceeded those of males and females, no independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in the mean score.

7.2.1.1.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of conservatoire music students' general health across different levels of study, Figure 7.1 summarises the means of SF-36 scores in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students. Among the undergraduate year groups, fourth-year undergraduate students ($M = 62.5$, $SD = 22.5$) reported a higher score for general health. Among the postgraduate year groups, first-year postgraduate students reported a higher score for general health ($M = 66.1$, $SD = 18.1$) than did second-year postgraduate students ($M = 61.6$, $SD = 18.6$).

Figure 7.1 SF-36 score across year of study categories

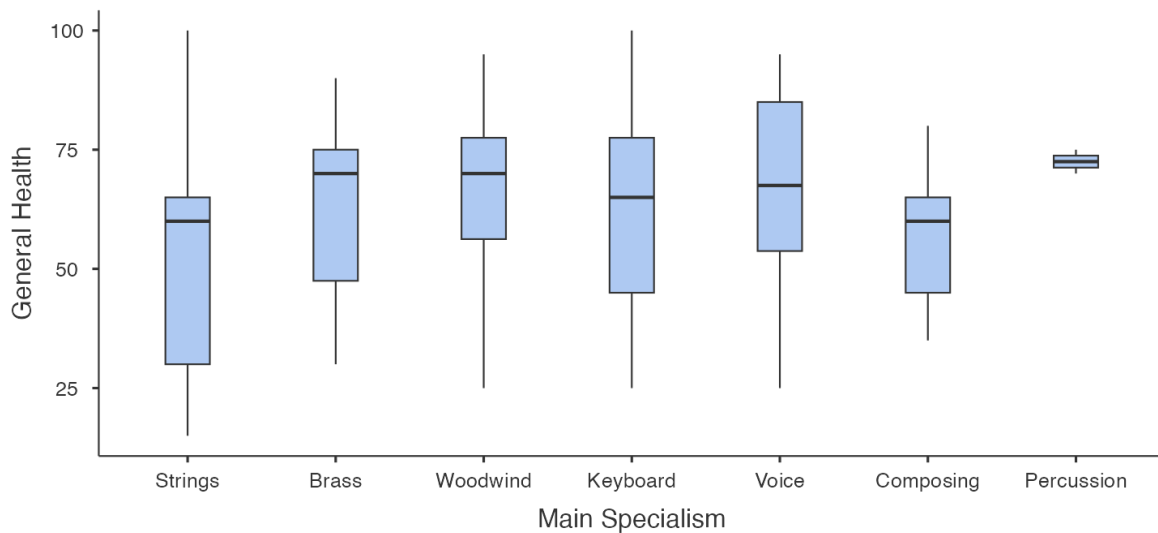


Note. UG1 ($M = 59.7$, $SD = 26.6$); UG2 ($M = 53.9$, $SD = 15.2$); UG3 ($M = 57.1$, $SD = 20.5$); UG4 ($M = 62.5$, $SD = 22.5$); PG1 ($M = 66.1$, $SD = 18.1$); PG2 ($M = 61.6$, $SD = 18.6$); Artist diploma ($M = 100$, $SD = N/A$); Doctorate ($M = 40.0$, $SD = 21.8$)

7.2.1.1.1.3 Main Specialism

In terms of conservatoire music students' general health across different main specialisms, Figure 7.2 summarises the means of the SF-36 scores in the different main specialism groups. Excluding the highest mean score of percussion students ($N = 2$), for the majority of sample, vocal students reported a higher score of general health ($M = 66$, $SD = 21.9$), followed by woodwind students ($M = 64.4$, $SD = 21.7$).

Figure 7.2 SF-36 score across main specialisms



Note. Strings ($M = 53.9$, $SD = 22.5$); Brass ($M = 62.3$, $SD = 19.0$); Woodwind ($M = 64.4$, $SD = 21.7$); Keyboard ($M = 62.1$, $SD = 20.2$); Voice ($M = 66.0$, $SD = 21.9$); Composing ($M = 56.4$, $SD = 16.0$); Percussion ($M = 72.5$, $SD = 3.54$)

7.2.1.1.2 Longitudinal Health Status Comparison

Additionally, there was an item regarding the longitudinal health status comparison, where conservatoire music students rated their health in general now compared to one year ago. The item was presented on a 5-point Likert scale from much worse than one year ago (to be recorded as 0) to much better now than one year ago (to be recorded as 100). Based on the

responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 57.7 ($SD = 26.9$) and the median was 50, which indicates that on average, conservatoire music students reported that their health in general is about the same now than one year ago. Female conservatoire music students ($M = 60.3$, $SD = 28.5$, $\tilde{x} = 50$) reported higher score on this item than male conservatoire music students ($M = 52.6$, $SD = 23.8$, $\tilde{x} = 50$). However, in terms of median, male and female conservatoire music students reported similar levels that their health in general was about the same as it was one year ago.

7.2.1.2 Wellbeing (SWEMWBS)

Conservatoire music students' wellbeing was measured using the Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS), with a total score ranging from 7 to 35. Based on the responses ($N=120$), the mean score was 22.4 ($SD = 4.01$), with a minimum of 14 and a maximum of 35.

7.2.1.2.1 Demographic Comparison

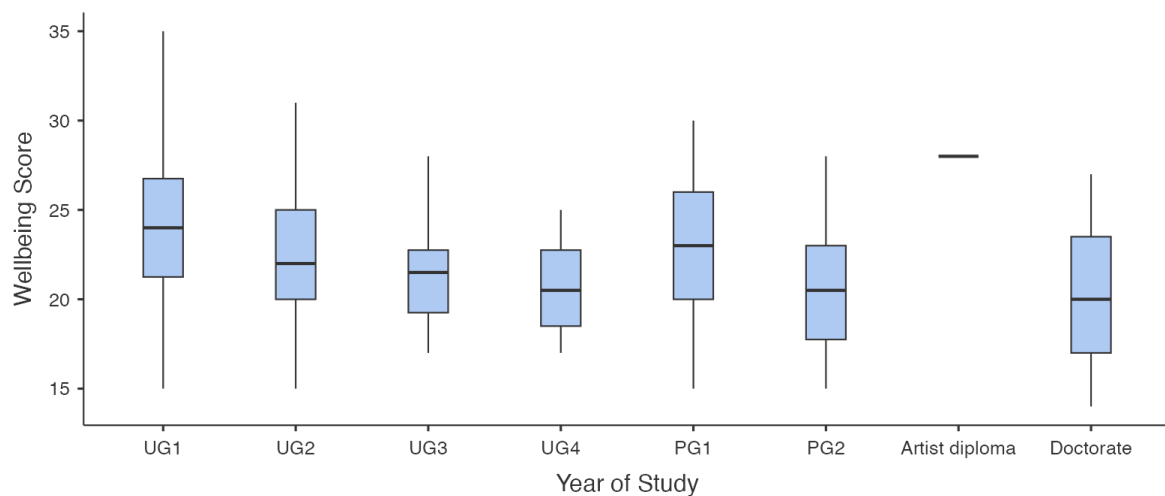
7.2.1.2.1.1 Gender

Excluding the minority of participants who regarded themselves as either agender ($n = 1$), non-binary ($n = 2$), gender fluid ($n = 1$), or would rather not say ($n = 3$), male conservatoire music students ($M = 22.3$, $SD = 4.16$, $\tilde{x} = 21.5$) and female conservatoire music students ($M = 22.5$, $SD = 3.83$, $\tilde{x} = 22$) reported similar scores for wellbeing. Considering that the participant groups in gender exceeded those of males and females, no independent-samples t-test was conducted to determine the significance of the differences in the mean score.

7.2.1.2.1.2 *Year of Study*

In terms of conservatoire music students' wellbeing across different levels of study, Figure 7.3 summarises the means of SWEMWBS scores in different year groups, from first-year undergraduate to doctorate conservatoire music students. Among the undergraduate year groups, first-year undergraduate students ($M = 24.1$, $SD = 4.27$) reported a higher score for wellbeing. Among the postgraduate year groups, first-year postgraduate students reported a higher score for wellbeing ($M = 22.7$, $SD = 3.81$) than did second-year postgraduate students ($M = 20.6$, $SD = 3.71$). There were no significant differences in terms of the mean, median, and standard deviation across the different years of study.

Figure 7.3 SWEMWBS score across year of study categories

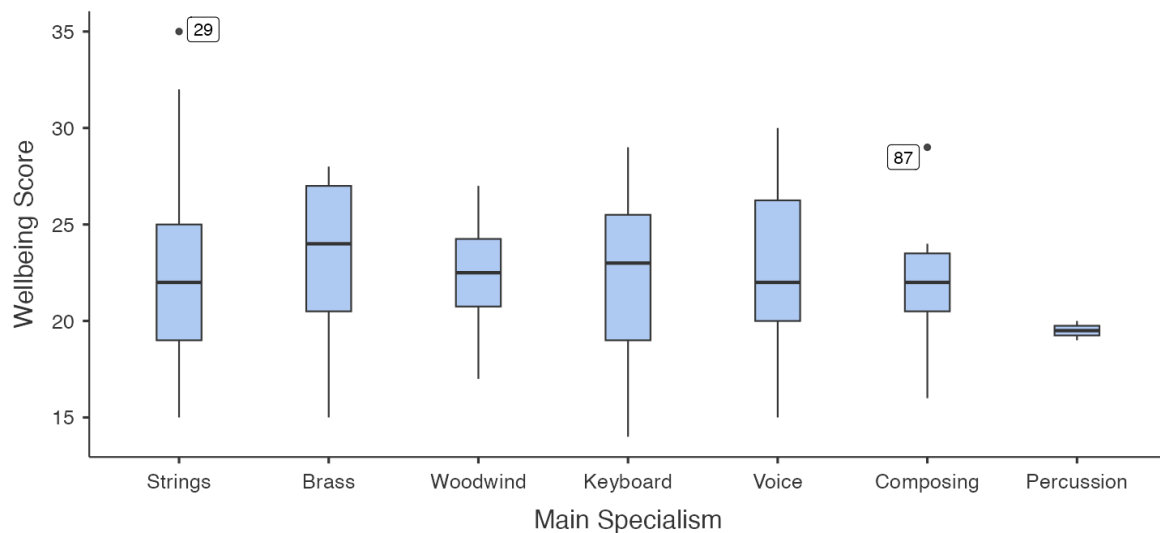


Note. UG1 ($M = 24.1$, $SD = 4.27$); UG2 ($M = 22.3$, $SD = 4.16$); UG3 ($M = 21.5$, $SD = 2.93$); UG4 ($M = 20.8$, $SD = 2.70$); PG1 ($M = 22.7$, $SD = 3.81$); PG2 ($M = 20.6$, $SD = 3.71$); Artist diploma ($M = 28.0$, $SD = N/A$); Doctorate ($M = 20.3$, $SD = 6.51$)

7.2.1.2.1.3 Main Specialism

In terms of conservatoire music students' wellbeing across different main specialisms, Figure 7.4 summarises the means of the SWEMWBS scores in the different main specialism groups. Excluding the lower mean score of percussion students ($N = 2$), for the majority of sample, brass students reported a higher score of wellbeing ($M = 23.0$, $SD = 4.58$), followed by vocal students ($M = 22.9$, $SD = 3.86$). There were no significant differences in terms of the mean, median, and standard deviation across the different main specialisms.

Figure 7.4 SWEMWBS score across main specialisms



Note. Strings ($M = 22.2$, $SD = 4.39$); Brass ($M = 23.0$, $SD = 4.58$); Woodwind ($M = 22.4$, $SD = 2.85$); Keyboard ($M = 22.3$, $SD = 4.37$); Voice ($M = 22.9$, $SD = 3.86$); Composing ($M = 22.1$, $SD = 3.98$); Percussion ($M = 19.5$, $SD = 0.71$)

7.2.2 Individual Factors, Environmental Factors, Health and Wellbeing

Following the above results in presenting conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing as well as their levels of coping, resilience, self-compassion, and perceptions of the educational environment in the previous chapters, Pearson correlations and independent sample t-tests were conducted to investigate the connections between these aspects of

conservatoire music students' coping, health, and wellbeing. As mentioned in Chapter 2, coping, health, and wellbeing interact with one another. To justify whether this relationship persisted, correlations between the level of coping (six COPE subscales) and resilience were assessed. The purpose of this section was to specifically address Research Question 4: the connections between coping strategies, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing.

7.2.2.1 Hypothesis 1 – Coping, Resilience, Self-Compassion, Health and Wellbeing

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between conservatoire music students' level of coping (the mean of the overall level of coping in general included six COPE subscales in calculation), level of resilience, level of self-compassion (mean of the overall level of self-compassion included both positive and negative constructs in the calculation), and levels of health and wellbeing of 120 respondents (see Table 7.1).

Several significant positive correlations were found between coping, resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing. In light of these particular findings, further linear regression analyses were conducted based on the statistically significant positive correlations found; therefore, the model fit measures (r-squared values) are also reported following the correlation coefficients in this section. There was a statistically significant strong positive correlation between conservatoire music students' levels of resilience and self-compassion ($r = 0.577$, $r^2 = 0.333$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of resilience tended to show higher overall levels of self-compassion in general. Coping was moderately and positively correlated with resilience ($r = 0.373$, $r^2 = 0.139$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$) and self-compassion ($r = 0.382$, $r^2 = 0.146$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of coping tended to show higher overall levels of both resilience and self-compassion. Although conservatoire

music students’ general health and wellbeing were moderately positively correlated ($r = 0.435$, $r^2 = 0.189$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), there was only a moderate positive correlation between conservatoire music students’ general health and resilience ($r = 0.365$, $r^2 = 0.134$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which was statistically significant. The correlations between general health, coping, and self-compassion were either weak or statistically insignificant.

However, there were statistically significant strong positive correlations between wellbeing and resilience ($r = 0.638$, $r^2 = 0.407$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$) and self-compassion ($r = 0.634$, $r^2 = 0.402$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$). There was also a moderate, positive, and statistically significant correlation between wellbeing and coping ($r = 0.368$, $r^2 = 0.136$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$). In summary, in addition to the two non-significant correlations between general health, coping, and self-compassion, there were positive and moderate correlations between conservatoire music students’ coping, resilience, self-compassion, and wellbeing.

Table 7. 1 Pearson correlation between the mean scores of conservatoire music students’ overall levels of coping, resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing

		Coping Total Score	Resilience Total Score	Self-Compassion Total Score	General Health	Wellbeing
Coping Total Score	Pearson’s r	—				
	p-value	—				
Resilience Total Score	Pearson’s r	0.373 ***	—			
	p-value	<.001	—			
Self-Compassion Total Score	Pearson’s r	0.382 ***	0.577 ***	—		
	p-value	<.001	<.001	—		
General Health	Pearson’s r	0.052	0.365 ***	0.238 **	—	
	p-value	0.573	<.001	0.009	—	
Wellbeing	Pearson’s r	0.368 ***	0.638 ***	0.634 ***	0.435 ***	—
	p-value	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $df = 118$

7.2.2.2 Hypothesis 2 – Educational Environment, Health and Wellbeing

Pearson's correlation was conducted to determine the relationship between conservatoire music students' educational perceptions (the combined total score of the two subscales, academic self-perceptions, and social self-perceptions), health, and wellbeing (see Table 7.2). There was a strong positive correlation between conservatoire music students' levels of DREEM and wellbeing ($r = 0.526$, $r^2 = 0.277$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$), which was statistically significant, indicating that conservatoire music students with a higher overall level of educational perception tended to show higher levels of wellbeing in general. Conservatoire music students' wellbeing was also strongly and positively correlated with academic self-perception ($r = 0.503$, $r^2 = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$) and moderately correlated with social self-perception ($r = 0.364$, $r^2 = 0.132$, $p < 0.001$, $n = 120$). By contrast, the correlations between general health, DREEM, and its selected subscales were either weak or insignificant.

Table 7. 2 Correlations between DREEM scores, health and wellbeing

		DREEM Total Score	Academic Self-Perceptions	Social Self-Perceptions	General Health	Wellbeing
DREEM Total Score	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
Academic Self-Perceptions	Pearson's r	0.851 ***	—			
	p-value	< .001	—			
Social Self-Perceptions	Pearson's r	0.810 ***	0.381 ***	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—		
General Health	Pearson's r	0.281 **	0.299 ***	0.160	—	
	p-value	0.002	< .001	0.080	—	
Wellbeing	Pearson's r	0.526 ***	0.503 ***	0.364 ***	0.435 ***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	< .001	—

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$. $df = 118$

7.3 Discussion

The parts related to health and wellbeing of the present study aimed to investigate the influences of coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion and the educational environment on conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing (Research Question 4). As a guiding principle, the investigation of conservatoire music students' health and wellbeing followed the validation of the SF-36 and SWEMWBS subscales in conservatoire music students, as presented by Araújo et al. (2017). To the best of our knowledge, this study represents the first holistic investigation of coping, resilience, self-compassion, educational environment, health, and wellbeing simultaneously with musicians.

7.3.1 Evaluation of Musicians' Health and Wellbeing

In the present study, the mean score for conservatoire music students' general health was 60.3 (SD = 21.3) on a scale of 0 to 100, where higher values indicate better health. When compared with the mean values of tertiary education students' health in the United Kingdom (Brazier et al., 1992) using one-sample t-tests, conservatoire music students' general health was significantly lower. Comparing the results of the present study with other published data on university students in the United Kingdom (Roberts et al., 2000; Stewart et al., 2000), conservatoire music students also reported poorer health in general, despite gender differences. The general health of conservatoire music students remains at the borderline of fairness and approaches a level of good self-perceived health. They also reported that their general health at the time of data collection was approximately the same as it had been one year prior.

Previous research has discussed gender differences in health (Araújo et al., 2017; McDowell, 2006); however, the report on the health of male and female conservatoire music students in the present study was conducted for demographic comparison purposes and not to consider gender as a predictive factor of conservatoire music students' health. This study also addressed concerns related to inclusivity. The same analysis approach was adopted to evaluate general health across different specialisms. The findings revealed that string students reported worse health; however, the majority of conservatoire music students in the sample (vocal, keyboard, and woodwind) reported similar levels of health with only slight differences.

In terms of general health across different year groups, the findings were encouraging and suggest a generally improving trend in health, at least among undergraduate conservatoire music students. Among postgraduate conservatoire music students, their general health was above a good level, and they reported better health than undergraduate conservatoire music students.

Regarding conservatoire music students' wellbeing, the findings from the present study are in line with those reported by Araújo et al. (2017), and overall, conservatoire music students have satisfactory levels of wellbeing. In contrast, no differences were found between men and women, unlike previous research that found gender differences in conservatoire music students and university-level students (Araújo et al., 2017; Davoren et al., 2013). As an indicative comparison of means, conservatoire music students' wellbeing ($M = 22.4$) was lower than the mean values of the general population ($M = 24.3$, $n = 31970$) and the population aged 16–24 years ($M = 23.53$, $n = 3790$) in the United Kingdom (Office for National Statistics, 2023). However, the interpretation of these comparisons should be approached carefully because the Office for National Statistics does not provide standard deviations for their data. The importance of wellbeing in conservatoire music students

extends beyond its role in sustaining motivation to learn, fostering positive social connections, and nurturing commitment. It embodies a fundamental aspect of overall human functioning, influencing not only educational pursuits but also their psychological and emotional balance (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

7.3.2 Evaluation of Coping Related Factors, Health and Wellbeing

Pearson's correlation and regression analyses were conducted to understand the connections between coping, resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing among conservatoire music students. Looking at the connections between the above psychological aspects and health and wellbeing, there was only a moderate positive correlation which was statistically significant between general health and resilience. However, wellbeing was either strongly or moderately positively correlated with resilience, self-compassion, and coping, which also predicted that higher levels of these psychological aspects would lead to better wellbeing.

7.3.3 Evaluation of Environmental Aspects, Health and Wellbeing

In addition to the close relationships between self-perceptions of the educational environment, coping, resilience, and self-compassion, wellbeing was found to be strongly correlated with conservatoire music students' self-perceptions of the educational environment, particularly academic self-perceptions. This compelling finding supports the idea that the educational environment for conservatoire music students, particularly concerning their academic progress, also contributes to their overall wellbeing. Looking at conservatoire music students' overall DREEM scores, both academic and social self-perceptions predicted the individual psychological constructs summarised in Chapter 5 to a certain degree.

7.3.4 Practical Considerations and Limitations

7.3.4.1 Considerations of Internal Consistency

Further discussion of the issue of internal consistency is essential in addition to the interpretation of the findings. The overall metrics for the scales used were acceptable for general health (SF-36) and wellbeing (SWEMWBS). This study specifically concentrated on the health and wellbeing of conservatoire music students in relation to coping and relevant constructs, and the content validity of these scales demonstrated promise in capturing the intended construct of interest (Stewart-Brown et al., 2009; Ware & Sherbourne, 1992).

7.3.4.2 Limitations

Similar to other parts of the present survey study, parts related to health and wellbeing also adopted a self-report assessment approach which could lead to methodological constraints. Conservatoire music students who participated in this study responded to the questionnaire by referencing their own perceptions of their own health and wellbeing.

Moreover, the study included conservatoire music students from various conservatoires throughout the United Kingdom, representing different institutions, geographical regions, and countries of origin. The cultural, local, and institutional experiences of individuals undoubtedly impact how they think about and evaluate their health and wellbeing. Although it is crucial to examine the distinctiveness of institutions in fostering individuals' health and wellbeing, it is equally important to investigate patterns of perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards health on an international scale, with diverse cross-cultural representation.

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter pertains to the second phase of a doctoral research project exploring the relationships among individual factors (coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion), external factors (perceptions toward the educational environment), health, and wellbeing related to coping among conservatoire music students. This chapter also details the quantitative measures used in the survey study and presents the results of the questionnaire responses based on the health and wellbeing of conservatoire music students. The survey study answered the research question of how coping strategies along with their related factors (resilience and self-compassion) and environmental factors are related to the health and wellbeing of conservatoire music students. The results were based on the analysis of quantitative data on the levels of coping strategies, resilience, self-compassion, perceptions of the educational environment, health, wellbeing, and the correlation between these factors.

In response to the research question, hypotheses were tested during the data analysis process. Regarding the hypothesis that conservatoire music students' coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion are connected to their health and wellbeing, only a positive and significant correlation was found between their health and resilience. However, wellbeing was strongly or moderately positively correlated with resilience, self-compassion, and coping. The results demonstrate that these factors are connected to conservatoire music students to a certain degree. Regarding the hypothesis that conservatoire music students' academic and social self-perceptions are connected to their health and wellbeing, wellbeing was found to be strongly correlated with conservatoire music students' self-perceptions of the educational environment, particularly academic self-perceptions.

This part of the results from the survey study presented in this chapter revealed positive connections between coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing among conservatoire music students. Specifically, a strong positive and statistically

significant correlation was found among wellbeing, resilience, and self-compassion. The survey study also found that musicians' academic and social self-perceptions were connected to their health and wellbeing in general.

Chapter 8 – Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

This thesis aims to explore musicians' coping in relation to psychological resilience, self-compassion, and the educational environment. This chapter consolidates research findings from the studies constituting a doctoral research project. The findings from the interview study and survey study chapters are assessed in the context of the research questions outlined in Chapter 2 and are contextualised within relevant literature. Subsequently, the implications of the research for musicians' development are discussed. This discussion initially focuses on the psychological factors within musicians as individuals, then transitions to an examination of how the music-making environment and education contribute to musicians' health and wellbeing. Additionally, potential interventions in specific music-making and training contexts are explored. Apart from psychological intervention, this chapter delves into domains including existing innovations for musicians to enhance their health and wellbeing, and benefit for educators and support organisation. Finally, the limitations of this doctoral research project, directions for future research, and contributions to knowledge are outlined.

8.2 Research questions

At the beginning of this thesis, a literature review was conducted to evaluate the impact of both individual and environmental factors on musicians' coping strategies and relevant psychological aspects. It also suggests that, rather than understanding musicians' coping as only an internal process or outcome in the face of challenges, the impact of their surrounding environment plays an important role in the process of coping and supporting resources.

Setting the context of the research based on conservatoire music students, it focuses on the

impact of the educational environment and how students cope professionally as musicians, which is different from tertiary education students in other fields. From this holistic perspective, this doctoral research project aimed to investigate coping strategies and psychological resilience among conservatoire music students. This overarching aim led to three further questions containing both qualitative and quantitative studies as well as a workshop protocol that investigated conservatoire music students' coping from practical perspectives. The research questions are as follows.

- RQ1. What common challenges do conservatoire music students experience as they learn and perform?
- RQ2. What strategies do conservatoire music students use to cope with challenges?
- RQ3. How do conservatoire music students develop psychological resilience in their learning and performing?
- RQ4. How do conservatoire music students' coping strategies connect with other individual factors, including resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, as well as environmental factors they encounter during their learning and performing?

Following these research questions, two empirical studies were designed and conducted, and an intervention protocol for a series of workshops was introduced, in addition to the study findings. Study 1 (Chapters 3 and 4) qualitatively summarised the experiences and processes of conservatoire music students' coping, their perceptions of coping, and psychological resilience. Study 2 (Chapters 5, 6, and 7) employed a survey design by quantitatively measuring conservatoire music students' coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health and wellbeing, and relevant environmental aspects. The survey study also investigated significant factors related to conservatoire music students' coping and their

enhancement. The workshop protocol considered the practicality of translating findings from the interview and survey studies as an implication of research. The workshop protocol, which was based on an existing psychological training program, aimed to offer an intervention proposal that would improve conservatoire music students' coping mechanisms, psychological resilience, self-compassion, general health and wellbeing. Every study, as well as the workshop protocol, addressed relevant research questions, and some addressed multiple questions from different perspectives. The outcomes of each study are presented in their respective chapters, and insights derived from the studies and workshop protocol are examined in relation to the research questions.

8.2.1 RQ 1: The Psychological Challenges

The first research question, guiding Study 1 (interview study), focused on the psychological challenges conservatoire music students face in performance and practice. In line with the existing literature (Pecen et al., 2018), the findings of the interview study showed that physical and psychological demands are major challenges faced by conservatoire music students. It is worth noting that not only are psychological challenges such as performance anxiety and depression, that are significant for musicians, but physical demands, such as injury, also underlie their overall challenges. The causes or stressors of the psychological challenges faced by conservatoire music students are revealed in the findings, factors such as competition, careers and financial uncertainties, and time management are significant challenges to them. Musicians encounter challenges related to uncertainties during their career development. For instance, the transition from studying to a professional career places psychological pressure on their overall wellbeing. These challenges not only impact their mental health negatively but are also closely tied to task-oriented aspects of musicians'

professional lives. These challenges may arise from performance and practice demands or from the inherent nature of being a musician.

Further challenges were posed by the study findings in the investigation of musicians' resilience. In addition to competition and career uncertainties, pressure from performance and the need to manage one's own physical and mental health could be challenges for musicians. Although the findings showed that the majority of conservatoire music students agreed that supporting their coping and resilience is a mixture of both individual and institutional responsibilities, in line with Egeland et al. (1993) on the development of resilience, the displacement of supporting resources for their health and wellbeing could be a cause of the challenges mentioned above. The impact of the musicians' environment, in this doctoral research, the conservatoire or music-making environment, is crucial for understanding conservatoire music students' challenges.

From the discussions of challenges faced by musicians, the findings pointed out that how musicians perceive adversity as a challenge plays an important role. In particular, regarding peer competition and high personal standards in performance and practice, musicians' mindsets affect how they perceive a challenge and determine its impact. This also leads to the importance of individual differences in understanding such matters, as well as the challenges that might change over time during the musician's career development, and provides an overview of some common challenges instead of covering every category of challenges that musicians might encounter.

8.2.2 RQ 2: Musicians' Coping

The second research question was addressed in the first part of Study 1 (interview study) qualitatively and in the measurement of coping strategies using the COPE Inventory quantitatively in Study 2 (survey study). Understanding coping strategies from different

empirical perspectives provides a holistic overview of how musicians cope with challenges arising from performance and practice.

The coping strategies employed by musicians and their categorisation in this study largely align with Lazarus and Folkman (1984), but musicians sometimes use a combination of both categories. For example, musicians discussed uncertainties and competition in performance opportunities, but coping with this challenge involved changing perspectives and mindsets as well as actively seeking more opportunities and networking. This suggests that musicians use a hybrid coping approach to deal with challenges, and that their strategies may not fall neatly into a single category. Musicians adopt relevant coping strategies, depending on the nature of the challenge, regardless of whether they involve physical or psychological approaches. Parkes (1986) also emphasised the importance of considering individual differences, environmental factors, and situational characteristics in coping behaviours. Coping is, ultimately, an individual matter for musicians. Although common coping strategies were identified in the study's findings, there is no one-size-fits-all approach to coping in the music industry.

From a quantitative perspective, using the COPE Inventory, the survey study investigated conservatoire music students' coping strategies and found that positive reinterpretation and growth, planning, active coping, and use of instrumental social support are the most frequently used strategies. These findings align with previous research on music performance and education (Araújo et al., 2017; Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Dews & Williams, 1989; Jääskeläinen, López-Íñiguez & Lehikoinen, 2022; Kobori et al., 2011). The study also found that first- and final-year undergraduate students reported higher coping scores, whereas second- and third-year students reported lower scores. Finally, the study found a positive correlation between active coping, planning, and positive reinterpretation and growth. When examining conservatoire music students' coping strategies in general, both

problem- and emotion-focused aspects contributed to predicting their overall coping abilities to some extent.

In pursuing a more comprehensive understanding of the coping strategies employed by musicians and their impact on resilience development, musicians have also highlighted the behaviours and facilitators that foster resilience. These include shifting mentalities, prioritising focus, and cultivating a supportive network of individuals. In addition, musicians have reported that overcoming obstacles and stress during music-making can enhance resilience. Notably, participants emphasised the role of mindset and how their outlook influenced their ability to bounce back. For instance, when facing peer competition, musicians' personal expectations, perceptions of practice and performance can significantly affect their resilience. In summary, depending on how musicians cope, coping can contribute to resilience both positively and negatively.

8.2.3 RQs 3 and 4: Connections Between Psychological Factors

After gaining insight into musicians' perspectives on coping and resilience as well as their strategies for dealing with obstacles in performance practice, it would be possible to explore how psychological and environmental factors that contribute to coping are connected. Study 2 (survey study) was mainly led by research questions 2, 3 and 4, and aimed to examine the connections among coping strategies used by conservatoire music students in relation to psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing. In addition, it considered the impact of conservatoire music students' educational environments and career development.

Positive correlations of a considerable degree were found among coping, resilience, and self-compassion. Notably, there is a robust connection between resilience and self-compassion. The resilience of conservatoire music students was found to be substantially and

positively related to the beneficial aspects of self-compassion, specifically self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. The relationships between wellbeing and resilience, self-compassion, and coping were either strongly or moderately positive, indicating that higher levels of these psychological factors were associated with improved wellbeing.

After discovering a connection between coping and resilience, additional correlation analyses revealed a significant relationship between problem-focused coping methods and resilience among the conservatoire music students. Specifically, this study found that positive reinterpretation, growth, planning, and active coping are positively and significantly associated with resilience. In particular, positive reinterpretation and growth were found to be strong predictors of resilience in conservatoire music students.

The relationship between coping and self-compassion was examined, and the results showed that all the positive aspects of self-compassion were positively related to coping and self-kindness among conservatoire music students. Additionally, the positive aspects of self-compassion specifically predicted the overall level of coping among conservatoire music students. In summary, previous research (Dews & Williams, 1989; Dobson, 2010; Lam, 2018) has shown that self-compassion is a helpful coping mechanism. In the context of this research on musicians, especially when dealing with the challenges of uncertainty and competitiveness, self-compassion could be a perspective to approach and develop musicians' coping strategies as well. By promoting self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness, self-compassion can help musicians to adapt to these challenges.

8.2.4 RQ 4: Enhancement of Coping

The second part of the survey study builds upon an examination of the factors that optimise musicians' use and enhancement of adaptive coping strategies, particularly focusing on the impact and resources of their environment. This investigation into musicians' environments

follows an exploration of the environmental impact to understand which factors or support would enhance their coping. According to MacNamara et al. (2006), adapting to the evolving environment and demands of the music industry can pose a significant obstacle to musicians. Through an assessment of musicians' educational environment (Roff et al., 1997) and an understanding of how they perceive the environment and its academic and social aspects, the findings of this thesis reveal how the environment and support would influence their coping and related psychological factors.

The findings of this doctoral research show that academic and social self-perceptions are positively correlated and influence each other. Conservatoire music students scored higher on academic self-perceptions than on social self-perceptions, suggesting a positive academic experience, but concerns about social interaction, especially final-year undergraduates, reported lower scores. The study also found correlations between conservatoire music students' self-perceptions, coping, resilience, self-compassion, and wellbeing, with resilience being strongly correlated with academic self-perceptions.

The extent to which musicians receive resources and support can significantly impact their ability to cope and be resilient, as demonstrated in various studies (Cameron et al., 2007; Pierce et al., 1996; Schneider & Chesky, 2011). Despite the availability of health professionals and clinics, a majority of conservatoire music students reported that they would turn to friends or fellow players for advice on health and wellbeing, rather than seeking help from the NHS or their educational institution. This suggests that research and institutions should be aware that musicians tend to rely on their peers for advice, regardless of their level of training in health and wellbeing.

Matei et al. (2018) discussed the importance of incorporating health education courses within music curricula. These courses can empower students with accurate information and encourage proactive self-care. Furthermore, institutions should recognise that musicians often

turn to their peers for advice, regardless of their level of training in health and wellbeing. Therefore, education programs should address both formal and informal support networks. It is vital for musicians to recognise the resources available for health and wellbeing support. By being knowledgeable about these resources, musicians can seek professional guidance from trained individuals, which can significantly impact the quality of their support. The initial point of contact for seeking advice on health and wellbeing is critical in determining the appropriateness of the support provided.

To showcase how a practical intervention can serve as a viable solution for improving musicians' coping abilities, modification of an existing intervention has been proposed in this thesis, which adapts its components to address the needs of musicians effectively. The design of the intervention and the methodological considerations were customised to match the main goals of this doctoral research project, especially the influence of internal and external resources on musicians' coping strategies and resilience development. The planning in this protocol includes integrating existing resources in the musicians' surrounding environment, such as counselling services, student support services, and healthcare, which will enhance the support for their coping and resilience.

8.2.5 Summary

In summary, across the two empirical studies and the proposed intervention protocol, musicians' coping can be seen from multiple perspectives in relation to other closely related psychological factors, the impact of their environment, and practical support. The development of coping skills among musicians is not solely reliant on their individual parameters, but also on the long-term support and resources that prove to be beneficial.

8.3 Implications

The work discussed in this thesis has significant implications for music education and development, especially for students and musicians. This section highlights the most notable implications of this doctoral research.

8.3.1 A Workshop Protocol for Musicians: Development of Coping, Resilience and Self-Compassion

The findings from the interviews and survey studies in this thesis address the central research question and sub-questions from both qualitative and quantitative perspectives. Subsequently, the findings suggest the need to develop musicians' coping, resilience, and self-compassion at a practical level, which will enrich their toolbox of psychological and occupational coping strategies in light of the constantly changing music industry and music-making environment. Considering the practicality of research and connecting the findings from this present research project to practical applications, an intervention would be an appropriate next step in advancing our understanding of enhancing musicians' coping and resilience from a real-life perspective. The design of the intervention was based on relevant findings and understanding from interview and survey studies in practice. The intervention should represent how musicians cope with challenges and stress from performance and practice, particularly conservatoire music students, based on the context of the present study. In addition, the design of the intervention also aimed to justify how further support in coping skills will help musicians enhance their coping capacities, general health, and wellbeing.

8.3.1.1 Objectives

The primary goal of the proposed intervention protocol is to create an effective intervention that can evaluate the efficacy of a psychological training programme as a practical solution for improving musicians' coping skills. To achieve this, the proposed intervention protocol begins by defining clear objectives and identifying the needs and challenges of musicians based on findings from previous interviews and survey studies conducted as part of this thesis. Next, an evaluation of existing programs will be conducted, and the intervention will be tailored to meet the identified needs, incorporating evidence-based practices and strategies. Ensuring the wellbeing and confidentiality of participants is also crucial, and ethical considerations will be prioritised throughout the study. Finally, the proposed intervention is summarised, highlighting its potential to contribute to a broader understanding of effective interventions to enhance musicians' coping skills, psychological resilience, self-compassion, and overall health and wellbeing.

By incorporating a control group that does not participate in the intervention, the intervention protocol aims to identify the specific influence of the psychological training program on musicians' coping abilities. A control group is crucial to establish a benchmark against which facilitators can assess changes in stress levels, resilience, and overall wellbeing. Comparing the intervention and control groups enables research to isolate the effects of the programme, resulting in a more robust evaluation of its effectiveness within the context of music. Furthermore, recognising the unique obstacles faced by musicians ensures that the intervention is customised to their specific needs, leading to a more effective approach. Both full-time and part-time UK and international students are welcome to participate. The content of the intervention was finalised according to the demand of musicians' need for relevant psychological and coping skills based on the findings from the interviews and survey studies. In addition, throughout the workshop sessions, different

psychological constructs discussed in this doctoral research project were embedded into its contents, including psychological resilience and self-compassion.

It is important for research to seek to establish a set of guiding principles for interventions in the existing literature. Recognising the limited understanding of coping, resilience, and self-compassion in the field of music and its fundamental concepts, instead of implementing the intervention, it would be appropriate to contribute to knowledge by demonstrating its relationship with other relevant ideas. The goal of the proposed protocol is to lay the groundwork for future interventions based on an existing knowledge base. The proposed intervention is expected to be conducted face-to-face by health professionals together with online resources. The levels of coping, psychological resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing of the participants were assessed before and after the intervention using a questionnaire and individual feedback. Given these factors, this chapter focuses exclusively on presenting the design and protocol of the intervention.

8.3.1.2 Existing Workshop Protocols

As discussed in Chapter 2, existing interventions foster the development of self-compassion and resilience. Interventions addressing the implications of self-compassion are relatively novel, given the limited research on this construct in the fields of psychology and music. One notable intervention in the realm of self-compassion is the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme developed by Neff and Germer (2013). This 8-week programme incorporated a series of exercises, strategies, and content related to mindfulness, with the goal of enhancing individuals' self-compassion, mindfulness awareness, and overall well-being. The initial sessions of the MSC programme covered various topics, including the application of self-compassion and mindfulness in different life aspects, cultivating a compassionate mindset, introducing core values, managing emotions, navigating interpersonal relationships, and appreciating positive aspects of oneself. Additionally, the MSC programme integrates

mindfulness exercises, such as meditation, restorative yoga, and mindful eating, alongside the sessions.

Another intervention that focuses on the development of self-compassion is Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT). Unlike the Mindful Self-Compassion programme as a series of workshops, the CFT is a therapeutic approach developed by Gilbert (2014). Gilbert (2014) suggests that the development of compassion relies on the balance of basic social motivational systems and different functional emotional systems, particularly focusing on cognitive competencies. Similar to the MSC programme, CFT also embedded the development of mindfulness, and on top of this basis, the importance of tolerance, affiliative motives and emotions, and cultivating inner compassion (self-compassion). In addition to fostering the development of self-compassion, CFT includes considerations of compassion for others and receiving compassion from others (Tirch & Gilbert, 2015). However, CFT does not have a compulsory set of workshops, while the facilitators of this therapeutic approach are encouraged to incorporate techniques to develop people's self-compassion and address issues related to shame and self-criticism. The CFT established Compassionate Mind Training (cultivating qualities of warmth, understanding, and encouragement toward oneself and others), mindfulness and visualisation techniques (enhancing self-awareness and developing the capacity for self-soothing), and therapeutic techniques (for instance, imagery and cognitive restructuring). Depending on the demographics of the participants, both the MSC programme and the CFT can be delivered in individual and group settings. The content of existing intervention protocols is designed to develop a compassionate or self-compassionate mindset within individuals, which ultimately enhances their psychological wellbeing.

However, there are various workshops and programmes aimed at developing psychological resilience, particularly in the field of psychology. Depending on the content

and format of the workshops, these interventions usually focus on developing an individual's coping strategies in terms of managing adversity and stress. As discussed in Chapter 2, resilience could be seen as a valuable aspect of organisational development; subsequently, there are resilience training programmes within organisations to develop their members' resilience, which usually include the use of coping strategies and stress management through the lens of positive psychology.

In relation to building resilience, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) is a therapeutic intervention designed to promote mindfulness, initially developed to help individuals cope with and alleviate physical symptoms associated with chronic illness (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). The primary objective of MBSR is to equip individuals with coping mechanisms that are rooted in mindfulness. Although MBSR was initially developed to reduce stress, its principles and practices are valuable in fostering resilience. MBSR places considerable emphasis on reducing stress using mindfulness techniques. By regularly engaging in mindfulness practice, individuals develop the capacity to manage stress more effectively, which in turn contributes to greater psychological resilience, enabling them to recover from challenges. Furthermore, MBSR encourages the cultivation of self-compassion, fostering a kind and understanding attitude towards oneself. Resilience is characterised by treating oneself with kindness and bouncing back from adversity; the development of self-compassion through mindfulness supports this process.

In universities and colleges, it is common to find workshops and courses offered through the institution's student wellness or counselling services designed to promote the overall wellbeing and mental health of students. These programmes typically employ a comprehensive approach to address the multifaceted challenges of academic and personal life, often offering workshops, seminars, and counselling sessions that cover stress management, time management, and coping strategies. Mindfulness and meditation practices

are commonly integrated to enhance self-awareness and stress resilience, and some institutions also organise yoga sessions for their students. However, career development workshops also acknowledge the importance of resilience in navigating professional uncertainty. Online resources, community engagement, and service-learning programmes further enrich resilience-building experiences.

Table 8.1 provides a summary and comparison the key features of the interventions discussed in this section. It includes information on the content, length, delivery (individual or group), measures used, population originally designed for, and focus of the interventions, as well as pre- and post-measure efficacy.

In summary, there are existing interventions and organisational programmes for the development of self-compassion and resilience. However, the structure of these interventions varies in terms of their content or delivery; for instance, some of the interventions are largely therapeutic in the field of psychology, or the programmes are institutional without sufficient empirical evidence behind their designs. Most importantly, there are no interventions or support programmes specifically designed for musicians.

Table 8. 1 Comparative Overview of Mindfulness-Based Interventions: MSC, CFT, and MBSR

Intervention	Contents	Length	Delivery	Measures Used	Population	Focus	Pre/Post Measure
MSC	Mindfulness and self-compassion	8 weeks	Group or individual	Self-report based on mindfulness indicators	General population and stress-related issues	Self-compassion cultivation	Self-report stress and self-compassion
CFT	Compassion-focused cognitive therapy	Variable	Individual	Self-report based on clinical assessments	Primarily designed for shame, self-criticism	Cultivating compassion and addressing shame	Symptom severity and self-criticism
MBSR	Mindfulness meditation and stress reduction	8 weeks	Group or individual	Self-report based on physiological indicators	Originally designed for stress, but expanded to more related issues	Present-moment awareness and stress reduction	Self-report stress and mindfulness indicators

8.3.1.3 Theoretical Framework

The development of resilience and self-compassion in musicians is underpinned by several theoretical foundations and conceptual frameworks drawn from psychology, music performance, and practice. In this section, these foundations and frameworks are examined with respect to their roles in cultivating resilience and self-compassion in musicians.

8.3.1.3.1 *Theoretical Foundations*

8.3.1.3.1.1 Coping

The transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984) should be considered when designing interventions to improve musicians' resilience. This model comprises of individual engagement in the continuous process of appraising and coping with stress, which also involves the use of coping strategies. Supported by the findings from both interviews and survey studies in this doctoral research project, musicians suggested that resilience is built through effective coping strategies and adaptive responses to stressors. The inclusion of discussions on adaptive coping strategies in the face of psychological and occupational challenges is important in developing musicians' resilience.

8.3.1.3.1.2 Resilience

As discussed in Chapter 2 on the definition of resilience, resilience can be seen as a dynamic interaction between the individual and their environment (Carpenter et al., 2001; Holling, 1973). The theory of resilience in ecology focuses on the importance of interacting systems in influencing an individual's resilience development. To put the matter of interactions with the environment in musicians, it would be sensible to consider the musicians' environment in

various occupational activities, such as the music-making environment, conservatoires or institutions, performing, practising, and learning for musicians. Ecological concerns in designing and implementing interventions for the development of resilience in musicians are essential.

In addition, interventions designed for musicians should be based on the perspective of positive psychology (Seligman, 2008), which focuses on the individual's strengths and proactively maintains their health and wellbeing. Supported by the findings of the interview study, musicians view resilience as a positive psychological characteristic that enables them to bounce back from adversity. Positive psychology, which focuses on strengths, positive emotions, social connections, and meaning, serves as a valuable foundation for the development of resilience. Through the cultivation of a positive mindset, gratitude, and promotion of wellbeing, positive psychology enables musicians to effectively navigate adversities, adapt to challenges, and flourish amidst uncertain circumstances. The application of positive psychology principles and practices offers practical methods for enhancing resilience on both a musician- and community-wide scale.

8.3.1.3.1.3 Self-Compassion

Several key theories provide insights into the foundation of self-compassion in musicians and inform interventions designed to promote this vital aspect of psychological wellbeing. As mentioned in previous sections, mindfulness-based approaches (Neff & Germer, 2013) are the main theoretical foundation for the development of self-compassion interventions. One of the important components of self-compassion and mindfulness-based approaches is mindfulness, for instance, Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC), which integrates mindfulness practices with self-compassion principles. The incorporation of mindfulness in music

education emphasises the cultivation of non-judgmental awareness, shared human experiences, and self-kindness. Mindfulness-based approaches enable musicians to develop heightened self-awareness, allowing them to recognise and acknowledge their thoughts, emotions, and experiences and to practice self-compassion. Mindfulness practice has the potential to foster a sense of common humanity, an essential component of self-compassion. Furthermore, Czajkowski et al. (2022) emphasised the importance of mindset changes in wellbeing and suggest that incorporating self-compassion practices can be beneficial. The interaction of mindfulness and self-compassion creates a collaborative influence, leading to the development of a compassionate and non-judgmental relationship with musicians, ultimately promoting overall health and wellbeing.

Secondly, Compassion-Focused Therapy (CFT) serves as a therapeutic foundation for constructing interventions aimed at fostering musicians' self-compassion (Gilbert, 2014). Specifically, CFT is designed to cultivate compassion, including self-compassion, as discussed previously. This approach integrates cognitive-behavioural techniques with principles derived from psychology. Additionally, Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is an alternative principle that guides self-compassion interventions. The CBT approach focuses on cognitive restructuring techniques that help musicians to identify and challenge self-critical thoughts, thereby fostering a more compassionate and balanced perspective. The theoretical foundations collectively contribute to the understanding of self-compassion as a multidimensional construct, which encompasses recognising musicians' challenges with kindness, understanding shared human experience, and cultivating an attitude of warmth and acceptance towards themselves.

8.3.1.3.2 *Conceptual Framework*

The conceptual framework for developing resilience and self-compassion interventions for musicians draws on a combination of key psychological theories and principles. A foundational aspect of this framework is rooted in positive psychology, which adopts a strengths-based approach that identifies and leverages individual strengths to cultivate a positive self-concept. Positive emotions are actively fostered to broaden musicians' perspectives and enhance their coping mechanisms, thereby contributing to overall wellbeing.

Building on cognitive-behavioural skills in psychological interventions, the framework incorporates cognitive restructuring to identify and challenge negative thought patterns in musicians. Additionally, the development of realistic and achievable goals is encouraged, providing musicians with a sense of purpose and direction for resilience development. Incorporating resilience-building strategies within this framework emphasises the potential for personal growth and positive transformation in the face of adversity. By enhancing their problem-solving abilities, musicians are equipped with a proactive attitude toward approaching and navigating challenges in their careers.

The development of self-compassion in musicians can be approached through its conceptual framework, which encompasses the principles of common humanity and self-kindness. Recognising shared human experiences, particularly among fellow musicians, interventions should focus on fostering a supportive environment that prioritises self-care and self-kindness as crucial aspects of overall wellbeing.

Utilising a comprehensive approach, the suggested intervention prioritises the harmonious integration of these elements to address the holistic wellbeing of musicians, encompassing mental, emotional, and physical health. The aim of a proactive stance is to cultivate the acquisition of effective coping strategies and mindsets that musicians can

seamlessly apply across diverse aspects of their professional lives, thereby fostering enduring resilience and self-compassion.

8.3.1.4 Rationale for a Workshop Protocol

8.3.1.4.1 *Need for the Practical Intervention*

The need for a practical intervention designed specifically for musicians aimed at developing resilience and self-compassion is closely related to their health and wellbeing. Establishing an intervention protocol could address the challenges musicians face in navigating their career uncertainties, adversities, and emerging a positive and adaptive mindset in response to challenges and stressors.

According to the findings of the interview study, musicians are aware of the uncertainties that come with their careers as performers; however, these uncertainties remain a significant source of stress throughout their professional development. Meanwhile, the survey study findings indicate that a portfolio career is a common career pathway for musicians. Given the unpredictable nature of their careers, musicians often face challenges, setbacks, and adversity (Bartleet et al., 2019; Bennett, 2008; Westerlund & López-Íñiguez, 2024). Therefore, it is essential to develop a practical intervention protocol to equip musicians, particularly musicians studying in conservatoires who are transitioning from students to professionals, with effective coping strategies that can help them navigate and bounce back from adversities with resilience.

The development of resilience is a key element in the long-term wellbeing of musicians. Throughout the preceding chapters, resilience was demonstrated to be a crucial factor in enabling musicians to adapt to challenges. To optimise the educational and musical environment, it is necessary to implement practical interventions aimed at building resilience, such as developing a proactive mindset that views challenges as opportunities for growth and

fostering long-term wellbeing. Although not all musicians may face challenges or have experienced them, it is vital to provide them with appropriate skills and resources to handle any potential adversities that may impact their career development.

Mental health is an essential element of musicians' overall wellbeing, and the difficulties posed by music performance and practice, such as stress, anxiety, and self-criticism, can have detrimental effects on their mental health. Interventions aimed at fostering resilience and self-compassion can equip musicians with skills to cope with stress and emotions and promote positive mental health overall. Moreover, these interventions can serve as preventative measures against the development of mental health issues in musicians and can be beneficial in managing the intense lifestyles associated with music performance. By taking proactive steps, musicians can assist in building psychological toolkits to manage mental health challenges effectively.

8.3.1.4.2 Alignment with Research Goals

The suggested intervention represents a focused and tactical method for transforming research outcomes into functional innovations and validates the research objectives of this doctoral research project in relation to institutional and organisational backing. By aligning seamlessly with the central research question – ‘what are the roles of coping, psychological resilience, and self-compassion in musicians' health and wellbeing?’ Based on the individual and environmental factors that optimise musicians' use, and enhancement of adaptive coping strategies, the intervention was positioned to provide valuable insights into the impact of psychological interventions on resilience and self-compassion among musicians.

8.3.1.5 Methodological Considerations

8.3.1.5.1 *Workshop Structure and Components*

The proposed intervention will be adopting an 8-week timeframe combining a series of workshops and additional activities around topics, including coping strategies, resilience, and self-compassion. The workshop structure was initially adapted from the Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) programme (Neff & Germer, 2013), infused with elements of resilience and coping strategies that are particularly relevant to the context of musicians and can be implemented in music performance and practice. The intervention is expected to run on a small group scale, aiming between 15 and 20 for every delivery to ensure the active engagement of the participants. The following is an overview of the intervention components:

- Week 1 - General introduction and review of resilience and self-compassion, and its importance for musicians (Birnie, Speca & Carlson, 2010; Germer & Neff, 2013)

The purpose of this session is to provide participants with an understanding of the fundamental concepts of resilience and self-compassion, and to emphasise their importance in the wellbeing of musicians. The session will explore the challenges musicians face in their industry and discuss how developing resilience and self-compassion can have a positive impact on mental and emotional health.

- Week 2 - Foundational knowledge of mindfulness, with introduction of mindfulness-related coping skills for musicians (Kabat-Zinn, 1990)

Participants will explore the fundamental ideas of mindfulness. The session will introduce practical skills based on mindfulness that can help musicians manage stress, and cultivate awareness of the present moment, which is crucial for their performance and practice.

- Week 3 - Discussion on the application of self-compassion in various aspects of musician's life, including performance, chamber group and practice (Lam, 2018)

This session will explore the practical use of self-compassion in musical settings. The conversation will focus on how self-compassion can have a constructive impact on performance anxiety, collaboration within chamber ensembles, and individual practice sessions, creating an encouraging musical atmosphere.

- Week 4 - Helping musicians to develop a compassionate and resilient inner voice in both general and musical activities (Clark & Williamon, 2011; Grant et al., 2009; Neff & Germer, 2013)

The objective of this session is to enable participants to discover methods for fostering a kind and encouraging an inner voice. The focus is on the importance of self-talk in building resilience and overcoming difficulties that arise in a career in music.

- Week 5 - Emphasise the importance of living in accordance with core values, in relation to the potential challenges as a musician and resilience (Robertson et al., 2015; Sarkar & Fletcher, 2017; Terzy, 2013)

This workshop will help musicians to discover and embrace their fundamental values. It emphasises the significance of leading a value-based career, which, in turn, fosters resilience and provides a robust support system to navigate the obstacles and uncertainties that characterise the competitive and demanding music industry.

- Week 6 - Skills to cope with difficult emotions caused by musical activities and in daily lives (MacNamara et al., 2006; Troy & Mauss, 2011)

During this session, participants will acquire hands-on skills to effectively manage and navigate the emotions that arise in both musical contexts and everyday life. The session will explore emotion regulation techniques, enabling musicians to cope effectively with stress, anxiety, and other demanding emotions.

- Week 7 - How to deal with challenging interpersonal relationships from the perspective as a musician (Friesen et al., 2013; Yarnell & Neff, 2013)

The session aims to tackle the specific interpersonal obstacles musicians might face, whether they arise in the context of group performance, creative partnerships, or broader professional associations. To this end, the session will examine practical techniques for fostering open communication, and building supportive connections.

- Week 8 - How to relate positive aspects of oneself and one's life with appreciation (Germer & Neff, 2013; Neff, Rude & Kirkpatrick, 2007)

The closing session will concentrate on cultivating gratitude and self-admiration. Participants will investigate methods for acknowledging and commemorating their accomplishments and the positive aspects of their lives, encouraging an attitude of appreciation in both individual and professional development.

In addition to the regular main content above, there will be additional activities and resources to support the delivery of the proposed intervention. Regarding the adoption of the mindfulness approach, there will be meditations, restorative yoga, and information on mindful eating, if musicians find any of these helpful throughout their participation. Breathing exercises will also be introduced throughout the intervention, particularly when introducing coping skills in week 6. At the end of every section, small group sharing and discussions are also expected to be exercises for using support language, and musicians are encouraged to share only if they feel comfortable. Regarding self-compassion, musicians in the intervention are invited to write a letter to themselves from a more self-compassionate perspective (Neff & Germer, 2013) based on their own challenges or experiences revisiting from a different perspective after the intervention.

Assessment of the intervention entails determining whether participants acquire valuable insights and practical abilities. It is essential to observe whether they actively applied and verified their newly acquired knowledge, as this demonstrates the effectiveness of the intervention. Furthermore, it is crucial to understand whether the contents of the intervention lead to transformative changes in behaviour or habits. This evaluation extends beyond the immediate learning context to examine the broader consequences. The initial objective is to determine whether the intervention had a positive impact on various aspects of musicians' lives, including enhanced performance and better overall health and wellbeing. Examining the long-term effects of the intervention makes it possible to gauge its effectiveness in fostering tangible and enduring improvements that extend beyond the initial learning experience.

8.3.1.5.2 Participant Selection

Undergraduate and postgraduate musicians from the UK's music conservatoires are targeted to participate in the proposed intervention. Information about the intervention and the link of further information on the intervention will be shared with the conservatoires' student unions and student services departments, thus ensuring that as many participants as possible can be reached.

In addition, the active recruitment of participants for both the control and comparison groups is crucial for a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of the proposed intervention for musicians. This approach involves seeking individuals who may not receive the intervention (control group) and those who may employ alternative coping mechanisms or no specific training (comparison group) to account for external factors that could have affected the results. Any observed changes in the implemented intervention can be attributed to the enhanced internal validity of the proposed intervention. Transparent communication

about the purpose of the intervention is essential when recruiting advocates for both groups, emphasising the significance of their contribution to advancing knowledge in the field of music and investigating psychological wellbeing. This balanced recruitment strategy enables a more nuanced understanding of the impact of the intervention by considering the broader context of the coping strategies employed by musicians.

8.3.1.5.3 *Ethical Considerations*

Given the subject matter, it is possible that participating in the intervention may be sensitive to some participants or lead to distress because the content includes descriptions of negative scenarios and feelings. Participation in the intervention is voluntary. The content and purpose of this academic research will be stated clearly at the beginning of the intervention, and it will be stated explicitly that participants can choose not to participate in the intervention for any reason, including if they are uncomfortable with the subject matter. Even if they participate, it will be made clear that the participants can withdraw from the intervention at any time, which can include cases when they find some content that is uncomfortable to them. At the end of the intervention, there will be reference to other sources of support, including the NHS and Samaritans, in the event that participation has led to distress, as well as to the researcher's contact details.

8.3.1.6 Implementation Plan

8.3.1.6.1 *Pre-Workshop Preparation*

8.3.1.6.1.1 Risk Management

Assessing potential risks and managing crises arising from participating in the proposed intervention are key aspects of pre-workshop preparation. Given that some of the intervention activities involved revisiting the past experiences of individuals, it is possible that this would lead to distress or have a negative impact on one's wellbeing. A crisis may occur at any time when the participant perceives that he/she has exhausted their own coping skills, self-esteem, social support, and power. In the context of the proposed intervention, these crises could be feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, psychological distress, and loneliness.

It is crucial to consider appropriate risk management prior to the commencement of the proposed intervention, although it is unlikely that participants will experience either psychological or physical crises during the course of their participation. Facilitators of the intervention must assess the potential for harm to participants, formulate a plan to mitigate risk, and develop strategies to manage any crises that may arise. There are two scenarios regarding risks arising from participation in the proposed intervention: (1) emotional distress and (2) the development of a crisis. If a participant is experiencing emotional distress but not an immediate crisis, facilitators should enquire about the factors that contribute to the participant's emotional state and identify any additional risk factors for depression and anxiety. If healthcare professionals are involved as support for intervention, a validated screening tool should be administered to assess participants' symptoms. In the event of a crisis, facilitators should remain composed and encourage participants to divulge further details about their situation. The facilitators should then assess whether there exists any immediate safety concern for the participant, such as suicidal ideation, infant harm ideation,

or symptoms of high impulsivity. In such cases, facilitators should seek immediate external professional assistance. The paramount concern should be the safety and wellbeing of both the participant and the facilitator.

8.3.1.6.1.2 Before and After Intervention Evaluation

To understand the impact of the proposed intervention on participants, a questionnaire evaluation is recommended to assess the psychological and health aspects of participants before joining the intervention and after the intervention. Considering the scope of the proposed intervention, aspects such as coping (use of the COPE inventory; Carver et al., 1989), psychological resilience (use of the Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale; Campbell-Sills & Stein, 2007), self-compassion (use of the Self-Compassion Scale; Raes et al., 2011), general health (use of the SF-36; Ware & Sherbourne, 1992), and wellbeing (use of the SWEMWBS; Tennant et al., 2007) were included in the measurement.

It is hypothesised that, after participating in the proposed intervention, musicians' performance in the above psychological aspects, health, and wellbeing will be improved. The before-and-after evaluations provide the opportunity to assess changes in target outcomes throughout the intervention period. This aspect of the evaluation aims to determine whether the observed improvements in psychological wellbeing, health, and related aspects can be attributed to the intervention itself or if external factors played a role. Statistical analyses will be conducted based on the differences between pre- and post-intervention data to determine the significance of the observed differences.

In addition, as the proposed intervention is expected to be delivered in small groups, individual- and group-level insights allow for the investigation of changes from different perspectives. This evaluation approach presents a comprehensive view of the impact of the

suggested intervention on musicians as a group, while simultaneously examining the presence of individual variations.

8.3.1.6.2 *Workshop Execution*

Executing the proposed intervention should involve careful planning and implementation of policies to ensure its effectiveness and adhere to appropriate ethical considerations. In this section, several aspects of workshop execution are discussed, including (1) training and supervision, (2) participant engagement, (3) flexibility, (4) documentation and data privacy, and (5) follow-up plan. It is important to note that these considerations were based on the context of executing the proposed intervention in a conservatoire setting for musicians. The details should be adjusted accordingly if the proposed intervention is adapted for professionals, amateurs, or other groups of musicians.

8.3.1.6.2.1 *Training and Supervision*

The proposed intervention is expected to be delivered by trained professionals, psychologists, or healthcare professionals in various modules. For instance, sessions involving mindfulness-related activities and social support should be led by experienced facilitators with a background in mindfulness-related interventions and student support professionals available at institutions. The various roles of the intervention team may require distinct training to effectively execute their designated responsibilities. Specifically, facilitators, counsellors, and support personnel may require specialised training to improve their proficiency in delivering specific components of the intervention.

It is essential to acknowledge the significance of cultural competence by integrating training modules to improve the intervention facilitators' comprehension of diverse cultural backgrounds. The global community within the conservatoires plays a crucial role in

successfully implementing the proposed intervention. This is to ensure that the intervention is delivered with sensitivity and respect for musicians' cultural distinctions.

8.3.1.6.2.2 Participant Engagement

A comprehensive needs assessment should be conducted as part of the pre-intervention evaluation to gain insight into the preferences and learning styles of participants. Ideally, facilitators should adapt engagement strategies based on the participants' interests to ensure that the activities are relevant and resonate with them.

Enhancing information retention and applications is crucial when engaging participants, and interactive formats are essential. Our proposed intervention includes workshops that prioritise interactivity and incorporate group discussions and hands-on activities following the main content, as opposed to a traditional lecture or seminar format, to promote active participation. The practical application of intervention concepts in real-world situations should also be the focus of the activity design. To this end, case studies or hands-on exercises can be employed to enable participants to directly apply concepts they have learned in their personal or professional lives.

Conducting routine assessments of participants' comprehension, tackling worries, and evaluating their involvement are highly recommended. These evaluations may be conducted through individual interactions or group discussions to guarantee a sense of being looked after. Facilitators of the intervention should create a sense of community among participants by promoting interactive support and collaboration, which enhances the effectiveness of the intervention.

8.3.1.6.2.3 *Flexibility*

Flexibility is a fundamental element in the successful implementation of the proposed intervention, requiring adaptability to the constantly changing demands and circumstances of both the participants and the intervention environment, including the resources available at various institutions. This necessitates a proactive approach to identify shifts in participant requirements, whether they are sudden changes in personal circumstances or evolving expectations within the intervention context. The capacity to modify intervention content, if necessary, in response to emerging situations ensures a personalised and effective support method for musicians as the targeted group of participants. A flexible approach not only improves the relevance of the proposed intervention, but also fosters a dynamic and supportive atmosphere, which contributes to the overall delivery of the intervention.

8.3.1.6.2.4 *Documentation and Data Privacy*

Effective implementation of the proposed intervention requires the utilisation of session plans, attendance records, and continuous documentation of participant progress. Session plans serve as a roadmap, outlining the session structure, goals, and activities, whereas accurate attendance records offer valuable insights into participant engagement and commitment, allowing for targeted follow-up when needed. Documenting the participants' progress is crucial, capturing both qualitative and quantitative data for the ongoing evaluation and adaptation of the intervention. These records facilitate transparent communication among intervention facilitators, ensuring continuity and accountability based on documented insights into participant development and the overall intervention trajectory.

In terms of data security, it is important to ensure secure storage of participant data and to adhere to privacy regulations and guidelines, particularly attendance records and participant progress. The only time that confidentiality would be broken is in the event that

the participant discloses the risk of immediate harm to themselves or others, in which case, the facilitator may need to discuss this with a third party. The data and documentation should be individually managed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) reviewed by the institutions.

8.3.1.6.2.5 Follow-Up Plan

A carefully designed closure plan is essential for a thoughtful end of the proposed intervention. This plan consisted of a structured strategy to effectively conclude a series of workshops and activities. It includes a comprehensive summary of the intervention's accomplishments, highlighting the milestones reached and the goals attained by participants throughout the intervention period. It also features a detailed review of the impact of the intervention and an assessment of its effectiveness in meeting its objectives. This reflective process not only acknowledges participants' efforts, but also provides valuable insights for future interventions. The closure plan serves as a connection between the intervention's achievements and participants' post-intervention journey.

Ensuring that participants experience a smooth transition and can sustain the gains made during the programme is crucial after the formal conclusion of the proposed intervention. This can be achieved through the provision of robust follow-up support in different forms such as access to additional resources, informational materials, and guidance on integrating skills learned from the intervention into daily life. The provision of follow-up resources may include recommendations for further reading, access to relevant community or online support networks, or information on local services that aligns with participants' ongoing needs. This sustained support not only reinforces the intervention's impact but also contributes to participants' wellbeing and resilience in the long term.

8.3.1.7 Protocol Summary

8.3.1.7.1 *Recapitulation and Significance*

In summary, the workshop protocol outlined in this section is specifically constructed for musicians, aiming to enhance their coping, resilience, self-compassion, health, and wellbeing. The protocol is structured with key components tailored to address the unique challenges musicians face within their occupational context. By adapting an existing psychological intervention, careful attention has been given to methodological considerations, including ethical aspects and implementation plans, ensuring the intervention's effectiveness. Rather than developing a new intervention, the protocol focuses on enhancing existing elements to better suit musicians' needs, addressing concerns regarding the reliability and validity of workshop outcomes. Additionally, potential risks and obstacles during the intervention's execution are examined, with proposed mitigation measures to address these issues.

It is essential to acknowledge the potential limitations of the proposed workshop protocol while emphasising its significance. The workshop protocol can only accommodate a small number of participants because of its delivery format and scale; in the case of conducting empirical analyses, this potentially limits the generalisability of the findings. The acknowledgement of the sample size and composition should be clear and should be discussed specifically based on participant characteristics. Second, it is essential to recognise that the availability of resources, including financial resources, materials, and personnel, varies among institutions, which can potentially influence the implementation of specific workshop aspects. Facilitators and organisers of the proposed intervention should prioritise resources based on their core objectives or explore alternative strategies and potential collaborations to overcome resource constraints.

8.3.1.7.2 *Future Work*

Considering the context of this doctoral research project, which is centred on conservatoire music students, the workshop might be carried out in a unique setting or context, which could limit the applicability of the findings to other circumstances. Future research could explore the applicability of the proposed workshop protocol in diverse contexts, such as musicians studying at universities and professional and orchestral musicians. Moreover, the suggested intervention could offer insights from pre- and post-workshop evaluations; however, its long-term effects may not be captured completely. Further research with follow-up studies to measure the long-term impacts or modifications in musicians' development would be beneficial.

8.3.2 Coping in Both Individual and Environmental Contexts

First, the review in Chapters 1 and 2, in conjunction with the findings of this thesis, prompts us to reflect on whether our perspectives on musicians' coping strategies are appropriate. Drawing conclusions on coping requires an evaluation of the strategies employed by individuals to adapt, considering their unique characteristics and the influence of their surroundings. Indeed, studies of musicians' coping have tended to assess the strategies used. In particular, musicians found that they were equipped with insufficient resources and skills to cope with negative emotions and challenges (Araújo et al., 2017), which may directly impact their wellbeing and general health. Given musicians' poor engagement in health-promoting behaviours and poor perceptions of health (Brazier et al., 1992; Jenkinson et al., 1999), the need for studies on musicians' health perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours (Araújo et al., 2017; Kreutz et al., 2008; Spahn et al., 2002) is critical. Research is required to enhance musicians' positive perceptions of health and encourage effective personal coping strategies (Araújo et al., 2017; Pender, 2011).

Musicians face specific occupational demands and challenges when transitioning to conservatoire training and professional careers, including uncertainty and high industry standards (Carey et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2017; Gaunt et al., 2021). The stressors experienced by musicians in music-making often include intense training and stress in performance, practice, and rehearsals (Ascenso et al., 2016; Pecen et al., 2018). The challenges faced by musicians also affect their health and wellbeing. A sustainable career for musicians not only requires advanced artistic skills but also effective coping skills to cope with the challenges raised by the competitive music-making environment. The findings of this research project contribute to existing exploratory research (Biasutti & Concina, 2014; Burin & Osório, 2017), which has gained insights into the skills musicians use to cope with adversity and stressful situations.

The findings of this research encourage the rethinking of understanding and enhancement of overall health and wellbeing in musicians, especially how particular psychological constructs such as coping and psychological resilience would contribute to this matter. In the context of musicians and the conservatoires in this research, the evidence from the sub-studies hinted at some important findings on how to equip musicians with the necessary skills to prevent, understand, and deal with the challenges in music making. In light of this, the impact of musicians, institutions, and research is equally significant in the process of enhancing coping skills. While musicians' development of coping and psychological resilience depends on their own psychological skills and strategies for challenges, institutions also influence their development in terms of how they can support musicians and provide relevant resources. In addition to the interactions between musicians and their institutions or environment, researchers are in place to oversee and contribute to the understanding of their coping mechanisms and the development of beneficial interventions.

8.3.3 Thinking About Coping and Resilience Together

Coping skills and psychological resilience are closely associated with stress management and emotional regulation (Van der Hallen et al., 2020), and resilience has been suggested as a bridge between coping abilities and development (Leipold & Greve, 2009). Research indicates that coping strategies can enhance resilience (Gloria & Steinhardt, 2016), and studies have shown that coping and psychological resilience can predict each other (Cameron et al., 2007; de la Fuente et al., 2017). The findings of this research project confirmed that a link between coping and resilience also exists among musicians.

Psychology studies show that individuals who use more coping strategies, such as problem solving and positive reframing, report higher levels of resilience and better mental and physical health (Zoellner & Maercker, 2006). While previous studies have explored the

connection between coping and psychological resilience, research on how these constructs apply to musicians is limited. The findings of this research project fulfil the necessity of drawing on existing knowledge from psychology to investigate how coping and psychological resilience intersect in the music context.

Among populations similar to musicians, findings suggest that higher levels of psychological resilience are related to better coping, fostering the use of adaptive coping styles, and benefiting mental health and wellbeing (Wu et al., 2020). The findings of this doctoral research provide further evidence that shows the close relationship between coping and resilience, as well as the contribution to musicians' health and wellbeing. This is a significant contribution to the knowledge required to further investigate whether the relationship between coping and resilience exists within the context of music. The inclusion of coping and resilience explicitly expanded the measurement of musicians' health and wellbeing.

The development of resilience is influenced by an individual's personality and their interaction with the environment (Egeland et al., 1993). Although psychological resilience and coping are related, they are distinct constructs of emotion regulation and capacity. For musicians, who often face stress and challenges in music-making, a range of stressors can have a significant impact on their health and wellbeing. Musicians can develop a holistic and personal approach to support their own health and wellbeing by considering both coping and resilience together, which would be highly useful for musicians to manage stress and adversity effectively and develop their careers.

8.3.4 Promoting Psychological Wellbeing

Within the context of music making, psychological resilience among musicians can be understood and investigated through their use of coping behaviours, as well as their

interactions with the conservatoire or professional music-making environment. A clear understanding of the interactions between musicians and their environments reveals how coping and resilience are connected. In addition to individual factors, the music-making environment is crucial to understanding how these constructs relate to musicians.

These implications are closely related to the potential to promote resilience, self-compassion, and institutional support for musicians' coping strategies. The way musicians perceive coping has a significant impact on the support institutions provide regarding initiatives for musicians and the standards used to assess their health and wellbeing. Enhancing musicians' wellbeing extends beyond simply understanding coping mechanisms and strategies if research considers wellbeing as an individual topic with differences among populations. Enhancing coping capacities and strategies requires proactive approaches that focus on both personal development and changes in perspective. At the institutional level, the need for an approach that emphasises coping and resilience, and considers the enhancement of musicians' wellbeing is obvious. Achieving this objective involves equipping musicians with adaptive coping strategies and developing resilience by promoting personal growth and cultivating healthy environments in music-making.

Practical interventions adapted and emerging in the field of psychology would be beneficial for developing musicians' coping strategies, resilience, and self-compassion. Interventions could be designed to encourage musicians' wellbeing as individuals and groups within the music-making or educational environment, targeting a range of emotional and occupational aspects, including challenges experienced by musicians and those existing in the music industry. Evidence from this doctoral research supports the necessity of psychological interventions for musicians, supporting the practicality of enhancing health and wellbeing while balancing the challenges and pressure from high-standard music-making and technical training.

8.3.5 Benefits for Educators and Support Organisations

The research findings of this thesis could have practical implications for both educators and support organisations, particularly those working with conservatoire music students. By comprehending coping strategies, psychological resilience, and self-compassion levels of musicians at their stage of conservatoire training or study, educators and support organisations can effectively develop their interventions and support services. These may include tailored support services, curriculum adjustments to incorporate mental health education, and the provision of specialised health support services.

Educators and support organisations can utilise the research findings to craft tailored support services for conservatoire music students. For example, they can design targeted programmes to assist these students in enhancing their skills in managing stress and navigating challenges in their professional and academic pathways. Workshops and training sessions can be conducted to teach conservatoire music students effective coping mechanisms for managing performance anxiety, handling academic pressure, and maintaining overall wellbeing.

Additionally, insights from the findings of this thesis can inform curriculum adjustments to better support the health and wellbeing of conservatoire music students. Educators can integrate topics related to coping skills, resilience-building, and self-compassion into their teaching materials. This could involve incorporating stress management techniques and self-care strategies into music education programmes. By embedding these concepts into the curriculum, educators can equip conservatoire music students with the tools they need to thrive both academically and personally.

Finally, the findings can guide the development of mental health support services specifically tailored to the needs of conservatoire music students. This may entail providing

access to counselling services, support groups, and health and wellbeing resources. By fostering a culture of openness and encouraging discussions around health, conservatoires can create an environment where students feel comfortable seeking help when needed. These support services can play a vital role in safeguarding the wellbeing of conservatoire music students and ensuring they have the necessary support to succeed.

8.4 Limitations of This Work

In the preceding chapters (Chapters 3 to 7), the individual limitations of the empirical studies and intervention protocols were examined. This section focuses on the limitations of this doctoral research.

Existing research indicates that musicians may not have sufficient resources and skills to cope with negative emotions and challenges, which could potentially affect their overall wellbeing and health (Araújo et al., 2017). Despite this, although this doctoral research provides pioneering findings to holistically investigate musicians' health with both individual and environmental factors, it remains possible to testify how effectively the coping strategies employed by musicians support their health and wellbeing with different research designs, such as the consideration of cultural backgrounds, population characteristics, and longitudinal differences, particularly in relation to the role of psychological resilience and the music-making environment.

The cross-sectional design of this research has a drawback in that it cannot examine how different factors are related to one another, which is crucial for conducting essential investigations. Consequently, it is difficult to determine whether the effects are caused by cumulative advantages, differences among generations, or a combination of both. Consequently, this design is not suitable for establishing conclusions regarding individual differences, which is a key area of interest.

Finally, this thesis cannot be considered to have a genuine international profile, as this doctoral research might demonstrate a preference for Western culture. The measures used were standardised and validated in Western countries, and the sample of this doctoral research was predominantly composed of Western classical conservatoire music students within the United Kingdom. The sample was limited to English speakers, which reduced the representativeness of the research.

8.5 Areas for Future Research

The findings of this thesis suggest several areas for future investigation. Further empirical studies are necessary to establish the significance and efficacy of coping and psychological resilience interventions for musicians, which should be tailored to the specific occupational demands and challenges they face. Additionally, it is crucial to understand the effectiveness and impact of such interventions on musicians' health and wellbeing. Future research should focus on refining supportive resources, including integrating coping resources and enhancing psychological resilience in music education and music-making. Further investigation into the coping strategies adopted by musicians, with supporting perspectives on psychological resilience and the music-making environment, should lead to a comprehensive understanding of musicians' coping mechanisms. These calls for further research will inform future interventions and studies aimed at enhancing musicians' coping skills and resilience.

Incorporating technology and mobile applications has emerged as a potential tool for promoting the development of coping strategies and resilience in psychological interventions. These platforms offer accessible and personalised support, empowering musicians to effectively navigate challenges in the competitive music industry. Mobile applications for mental wellbeing can provide a range of resources, including guided meditation sessions, stress management techniques, and cognitive behavioural therapy exercises. The convenience

of accessing these tools on digital devices allows musicians to incorporate mental health practices into their daily routines and promote the use of adaptive coping strategies. Additionally, the interactive nature of these applications enables individuals to track their progress, set goals, and receive real-time feedback, thereby creating a sense of accomplishment. Enhancing accessibility to mental health resources and empowering musicians to develop resilience in the face of challenges are two key benefits of incorporating technology into psychological interventions. This approach not only promotes wellbeing, but also makes it possible for musicians to overcome adversity and maintain mental health.

8.6 Contributions to Knowledge

This thesis provides new insights into musicians' coping strategies by exploring their relevance to psychological resilience, self-compassion, the music-making environment, supporting resources, health and wellbeing. By examining the common challenges experienced by musicians in their learning and performance, the coping strategies used by musicians were identified in the studies of this thesis from an occupational perspective.

Findings from the studies in this thesis demonstrated the practicality of incorporating resilience, self-compassion, and support from the music-making environment in musicians' health and wellbeing, as well as the interactive connections between these topics. Supported by empirical findings and a tailored intervention protocol, this thesis provides insights into how musicians develop and maintain resilience in learning and performance. The implications of this doctoral research project encouraged further experimental studies to validate the practical value of coping and its relevant psychological constructs for musicians as well as how musicians' self-compassionate behaviours respond to emotional challenges (Hollis-Walker & Colosimo, 2011). Understanding how musicians' coping strategies interact with other individual and environmental factors encountered during their learning and

performance also reflects the balance between research and intervention efforts in striving for healthy career development.

The goal of this research is to investigate coping strategies and psychological resilience in musicians, particularly in helping them thrive and survive in the music industry. Finally, this thesis builds on prior research by emphasising the benefits of psychological training programs for musicians, particularly in the areas of integrating coping strategies, resilience, self-compassion, mindfulness, and effective functioning of supporting resources.

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APPENDICES

Appendix – Interview Protocol

Coping and Resilience in Musicians: The Impact of Using Coping Strategies in Musical Activities and Development of Psychological Resilience

Frederick Lam*

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Interview Schedule

1. Introduction

- Retrieve informed consent from participant, reminding participant of anonymity and seeking permission to record.
- *Reminder for researcher:* Wording and order of the questions are flexible, and follow-up/prompts questions can be used.
- This interview is about your experiences of, and perceptions toward, coping and resilience as a conservatoire student.
- Describe target participant: Music performance students currently studying at the RCM are welcome to participate in this research, as we hope to explore the interactions between individual practice and environmental support within conservatoires.
- Remind participants that they can stop the interview at any time.

2. Starter questions

- Participant's background: Age, specialism, and year of study.
- First of all, I would like to know more about you and your experiences as a music student. Could you tell me about your musical background and education prior to joining the College?
 - Prompts:

- When did you start learning music, or your instrument?
- Why did you choose your instrument/specialism?

What have been some of the milestones in your musical journey so far?

3. Main body

I. Participant's perceptions toward coping in conservatoires

What have been some of the milestones at the RCM so far?

- What are the biggest *opportunities* for you as a music student, or musician?
 - Prompts:
 - What are the sources of those opportunities?
 - Are these opportunities raising from your career as a musician, or the conservatoire environment in general?
- What do you think the biggest *challenges or difficulties* are for conservatoire students in general? (or why is that particular activity stressful or challenging?)
 - Turning and bridging to coping -
- Could you tell me what comes into your mind when you think about music students' coping and health?
 - Sources of coping-
- Could you tell me more about how you cope with challenges and difficulties as a musician?
 - Prompts:
 - Is there any relation between the challenges, your identity as a musician, and the conservatoire environment?
 - Categories of coping, explain the range of coping, series of different types of coping (in a non-leading direction), pull all the coping strategies from them
 - Why are you using this coping strategy?
- How important are coping strategies to you as a *music student*?
 - Prompts:
 - Why are you using these coping strategies?
 - What does this mean in terms of your conservatoire education?

- Who or where would you approach for advice/assistance/support on coping with challenges?
- How important do you think coping is within what music conservatoires offer?
 - Prompts:
 - If important, where does it fit?
 - And who should provide or lead the supporting resources for that?
- How important do you think coping strategies are in terms of preparing for your musical career?
 - Prompt:
 - How important are coping strategies to you as a *musician* in general?

II. Participant's perceptions toward psychological resilience as music student (same structure as above) Understanding resilience/ music students asking about what's coping/resilience?

- What does psychological resilience mean to you, as a music student or musician?
- What enables you to be resilient?
 - Prompts:
 - Sources of support, capacities, and perceptions
- Do you think it is your responsibility or the College's responsibility to support your resilience?
 - Prompts:
 - Details, experiences, why?
- What would you like to experience at a conservatoire, in an ideal world, to support and enhance your psychological resilience? Why?

4. Follow-up

- Is there anything else you would like to add to what we have discussed today?

5. Close

- Thank participant.
- Provide contact details for follow-up questions/contact.

Appendix – Questionnaire Template

Part I – Basic Information

1. Are you a full-time or part-time student? (please choose from the following answers)
 - A. Full-time student
 - B. Part-time student

2. I identify myself as: (please choose from the following answers)
 - A. Male
 - B. Female
 - C. Would rather not say
 - D. Other (please define)

3. What is your nationality? (please type in your response in the box provided)

4. Currently, which year of study are you in? (please choose from the following answers)
 - A. Undergraduate year one
 - B. Undergraduate year two
 - C. Undergraduate year three
 - D. Undergraduate year four
 - E. Postgraduate year one
 - F. Postgraduate year two
 - G. Artist diploma
 - H. Doctorate study
 - I. Other (please specify)

5. What is your main specialism? (please choose from the following answers)
 - A. Keyboard instrument
 - B. Strings instrument
 - C. Woodwind instrument
 - D. Brass instrument
 - E. Percussion instrument
 - F. Voice
 - G. Conducting
 - H. Composing
 - I. Other (please specify)

6. Which conservatoire are you studying at right now? (please choose from the following answers)
- A. Guildhall School of Music and Drama
 - B. Leeds College of Music
 - C. Royal Academy of Music
 - D. Royal Birmingham Conservatoire
 - E. Royal College of Music, London
 - F. Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
 - G. Royal Northern College of Music
 - H. Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama
 - I. Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance

Part II – Musician’s Psychological Resilience

The 10-Item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC-10)

References: Campbell-Sills, L., Cohan, S. L., & Stein, M. B. (2006). Relationship of resilience to personality, coping, and psychiatric symptoms in young adults. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 44(4), 585-599. doi: 10.1016/j.brat.2005.05.001
 Campbell-Sills, L., & Stein, M. B. (2007). Psychometric analysis and refinement of the Connor-davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC): Validation of a 10-item measure of resilience. *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 20(6), 1019-1028. doi: 10.1002/jts.20271

Please read each statement carefully and indicate how true or false is each of the following statements for you.

	Not true at all	Rarely true	Sometimes true	Often true	True nearly all the time
1. I am able to adapt when changes occur.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I can deal with whatever comes my way.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I try to see the humorous side of things when I am faced with problems.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury or other hardships.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I believe I can achieve my goals, even if there are obstacles.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I am not easily discouraged by failure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I think of myself as a strong person when dealing with life’s challenges and difficulties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings like sadness, fear, and anger.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part III – Musician’s Use of Coping

The COPE Inventory – selected subscales

References: Araújo, L. S., Wasley, D., Perkins, R., Atkins, L., Redding, E., Ginsborg, J., & Williamon, A. (2017). Fit to perform: An investigation of higher education music students’ perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward health. *Frontiers in Psychology*. 8:1558. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01558
 Carver, C. S., Scheier, M. F., & Weintraub, J. K. (1989). Assessing coping strategies: a theoretically based approach. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56, 267-283. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.56.2.267

Please indicate the degree to which you have done this during the last seven days when facing a stressful experience.

	I didn’t do this at all	I did this a little bit	I did this a medium amount	I did this a lot
1. I tried to grow as a person as a result of the experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I tried to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I looked for something good in what is happening.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. I learned something from the experience.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I made a plan of action.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I tried to come up with a strategy about what to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I thought about how I might best handle the problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. I thought hard about what steps to take.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. I concentrated my efforts on doing something about it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. I took additional action to try to get rid of the problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. I took direct action to get around the problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. I did what has to be done, one step at a time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. I tried to get advice from someone about what to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. I talked to someone to find out more about the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. I talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. I asked people who have had similar experiences what they did.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. I got upset and let my emotions out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. I got upset, and was really aware of it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. I let my feelings out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. I felt a lot of emotional distress and I find myself expressing those feelings a lot.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. I kept myself from getting distracted by other thoughts or activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. I focused on dealing with this problem, and if necessary let other things slide a little.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. I tried hard to prevent other things from interfering with my efforts at dealing with this.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. I put aside other activities in order to concentrate on this.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part IV – Musician’s Level of Self-Compassion in General

The Self-Compassion Scale (12-Item Short Form)

Reference: Raes, F., Pommier, E., Neff, K. D., & Van Gucht, D. (2011). Construction and factorial validation of a short form of the Self-Compassion

Scale. *Clinical Psychology & Psychotherapy*, 18, 250-255.

Please read each statement carefully before answering and indicate how often you behave in the stated manner.

	Almost never	Occasionally	About half of the time	Fairly often	Almost always
1. I try to be understanding and patient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. When I'm going through a very hard time, I give myself the caring and tenderness I need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I'm disapproving and judgmental about my own flaws and inadequacies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I'm intolerant and impatient towards those aspects of my personality I don't like.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I try to see my failings as part of the human condition.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. When I feel inadequate in some way, I try to remind myself that feelings of inadequacy are shared by most people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. When I'm feeling down, I tend to feel like most other people are probably happier than I am.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. When I fail at something that's important to me, I tend to feel alone in my failure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. When something painful happens I try to take a balanced view of the situation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. When something upsets me I try to keep my emotions in balance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. When I fail at something important to me I become consumed by feelings of inadequacy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. When I'm feeling down I tend to obsess and fixate on everything that's wrong.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part V – Musicians’ General Health

The MOS 36-Item Short-Form Health Survey (SF-36)

References: Ware, J. E., & Sherbourne, C. D. (1992). The MOS 36-item short-form healthy survey (SF-36): I. Conceptual framework and item selection. *Medical Care, 30*(6), 473-483. doi: 10.1097/00005650-199206000-00002
 McDowell, I. (2006). *Measuring Health: A Guide to Rating Scales and Questionnaires*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195165678.001.0001

1. In general, would you say your health is: (please indicate in below)

Poor	Fair	Good	Very good	Excellent
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. How true or false is each of the following statements for you? (please indicate in below)

	Definitely true	Mostly true	Do not know	Mostly false	Definitely false
(a) I seem to get sick a little easier than other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) I am as healthy as anybody I know	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) I expect my health to get worse	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) My health is excellent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. Compared to one year ago, how would you rate your health in general now? (please choose from the following answers)

- A. Much better now than one year ago
- B. Somewhat better now than one year ago
- C. About the same now as one year ago
- D. Somewhat worse now than one year ago
- E. Much worse than one year ago

Part VI – Musician’s Wellbeing

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)

- References:** Stewart-Brown, S., Tennant, A., Tennant, R., Platt, S., Parkinson, J., & Weich, S. (2009). Internal construct validity of the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS): A Rasch analysis using data from the scottish health education population survey. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*. 7:15. doi: 10.1186/1477-7525-7-15
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Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experiences of each over the last two weeks.

	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
1. I've been feeling optimistic about the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I've been feeling useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. I've been feeling relaxed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. I've been dealing with problems well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I've been thinking clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. I've been feeling close to other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. I've been able to make up my own mind about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Part VII – Support to Musician’s Development

Section A

The Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) – selected subscales

Reference: Roff, S., McAleer, S., Harden, R., Al-Qahtani, M., Ahmed, A., Deza, H., Groenen, G., & Primparyon, P. (1997).

Development and

validation of the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM). *Medical Teacher*, 19(4), 295-299.

doi: 10.3109/01421599709034208

Please read each statement carefully before answering. During your time studying at music college, indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement of the statement.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
(1) Learning strategies which worked for me before continue to work for me now.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(2) I am confident about passing this year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(3) I feel I am being well prepared for my career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(4) Last year’s work has been a good preparation for this year’s work (in terms of college or school work).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(5) I am able to memorise all I need.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(6) I have learned a lot about the way music research is carried out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(7) My problem-solving skills are being well developed here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(8) Much of what I have to learn seems relevant to a career in music.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(9) There is a good support system for students who get stressed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(10) I am too tired to enjoy the course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(11) I am rarely bored on this course.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(12) I have good friends in this faculty (department or school).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(13) My social life is good.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(14) I seldom feel lonely.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(15) My accommodation is pleasant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Section B

Brief evaluation on career planning | Music and health questionnaire

- References:** Shury, J., Vivian, D., Catherine, T., & Downing, C. (2017). Planning for success: Graduates' career planning and its effect on graduate outcomes. Department of Education. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/604170/Graduates_career_planning_and_its_effect_on_their_outcomes.pdf
- Williamon, A., & Thompson, S. (2006). Awareness and incidence of health problems among conservatoire students. *Psychology of Music*, 34(4), 411-430. doi: 10.1177/0305735606067150

1. Which of the following statements will describe your career pathway as a performer most appropriately? (please choose from the following answers, choosing more than one answer is allowed)
 - A. Solo or concert performer
 - B. Playing in small ensemble / chamber or collaborative musician
 - C. Playing in large ensemble / orchestral musician
 - D. Other (please specify)

2. How likely will the following statements describe your primary motivation for studying music as a subject at a conservatoire? (please rank the following statements from 1 = most likely to 12 = most unlikely, in order of importance)
 - To improve ability to get a job in the field
 - Out of academic interest or curiosity
 - To pursue a specific career
 - Encouragement from family, friends or school
 - Desire to be a student
 - Friends or peers were going
 - Did not know what else to do
 - Enjoyment or interest in the subject
 - A subject strong in at school or college
 - Thought would lead to good employment opportunities
 - Pre-requisite for a chosen career
 - To keep options open

3. How likely will you be to seek *advice on your health and wellbeing* from the following sources? (please rank the following items from 1 = most likely to 8 = most unlikely, in order of importance)
 - Educational institution(s)
 - Employer(s)
 - Friends or fellow players
 - NHS (or private physician)
 - Principal study teacher
 - Professional body (e.g. Musicians' Union)

- Specialist clinic for musicians
- Other (please specify)

4. How likely will you be to seek *careers advice and support* from the following sources? (please rank the following items from 1 = most likely to 6 = most unlikely, in order of importance)
- College Careers Services
 - Family members
 - Peers
 - Personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher
 - Previous or current employer if any
 - Professional in field of interest
5. How likely will you be to seek *advice on learning and studies* from the following sources? (please rank the following items from 1 = most likely; 6 = most unlikely, in order of importance)
- College Careers Services
 - Family members
 - Peers
 - Personal tutor, supervisor, lecturer, instrumental or vocal teacher
 - Previous or current employer if any
 - Professional in field of interest

Part VIII (Optional) – Contact Information

If you would like to be contacted for taking part in further studies focusing on mental skills and resilience training, please provide your contact information below and we will invite you to participate in more studies in the future, including interviews and training programmes. Please note that providing your own contact information is completely voluntary and the contact information you provided will remain secure and stored separately from the above responses. Your contact information will only be used for interest in participating in further study of this ongoing doctoral project.

1. Name in full
Type in the response in box provided
2. Email address
Type in the response in box provided

(cont.)

Thank you for taking part in my research!

If completing this questionnaire has raised any issues of concern for you, you can seek help from the following sources:

- NHS services (including your GP and NHS Direct - <https://www.nhs.uk>)
- Your conservatoire student services
- Mind (<https://www.mind.org.uk>)
- The Samaritans (<https://www.samaritans.org>)
- Help Musicians UK (<https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk>)
- Music Minds Matter (national support line dedicated to the music professionals - <https://www.musicmindsmatter.org.uk>)
- The British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM - <https://www.bapam.org.uk>)

Appendix – Participants Information Sheet for Survey Study

Title of research

Coping and resilience in musicians: The impact of using coping strategies in musical activities and development of psychological resilience

Date: 27 February 2020

Introduction

Thank you for considering taking part in my research project, undertaken as part of my PhD research, under the supervision of Professor Aaron Williamon, Dr Terry Clark and Dr George Waddell. In line with the aim of improving mental health of music students and musicians, I want to find out how coping and psychological resilience functions in musical activities, especially for the enhancement of music students' mental health in the United Kingdom.

Why have you been chosen?

I have asked you to participate in this study because you are currently a music student at a conservatoire or specialist music college in the United Kingdom. Any music student currently studying at a conservatoire or specialist music college can join this research project.

Informed consent

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and you may withdraw from the study at any time if you wish. By submitting a completed questionnaire, however, you are giving your informed consent to participate in my study. You do not have to answer any question that you do not wish to answer.

What will I do with your data?

The data you provide will be anonymous (separated from your name) and confidential (not disclosed to anyone else). I may publish reports based on my findings, but you will not be identifiable from the data included.

The data themselves will be stored securely on a password-protected computer for ten years. If I wish to re-use your data within this time period I will seek your permission to do so. At the end of the period your data will be destroyed. Your responses will be managed in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) reviewed by the Royal College of Music, London.

Contact for further information

If you would like to know more about this research, please contact me at frederick.lam@rcm.ac.uk or my supervisor Professor Aaron Williamon at aaron.williamon@rcm.ac.uk.

If completing this questionnaire has raised any issues of concern for you, you can seek help from the following sources:

- NHS services (including your GP and NHS Direct - <https://www.nhs.uk>)
- Your conservatoire student services
- Mind (<https://www.mind.org.uk>)
- The Samaritans (<https://www.samaritans.org>)
- Help Musicians UK (<https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk>)
- Music Minds Matter (national support line dedicated to the music professionals - <https://www.musicmindsmatter.org.uk>)
- The British Association for Performing Arts Medicine (BAPAM - <https://www.bapam.org.uk>)

This project has been reviewed and approved by the CUK Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in my research!

Appendix for Chapter 5 – Survey Study Part One

Figure 1 COPE Inventory total score of coping across year groups in detail

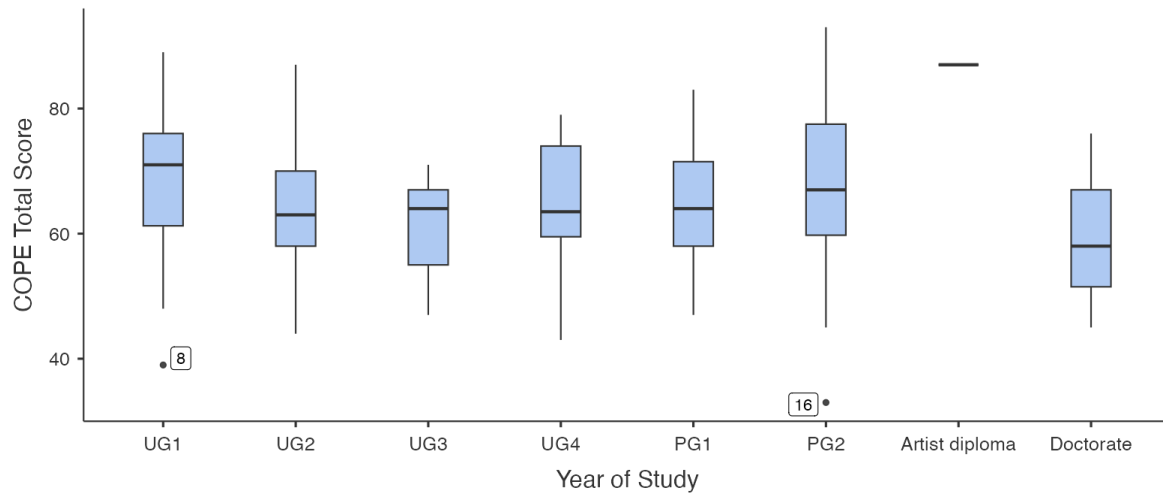


Figure 2 CD-RISC-10 total score across year groups in detail

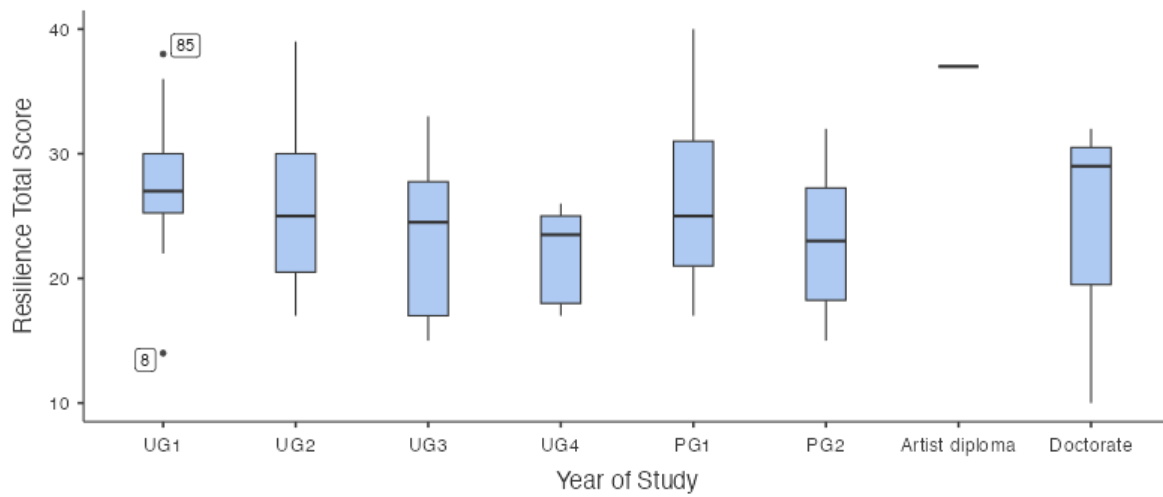


Figure 3 SCS-12 total score across year groups in detail

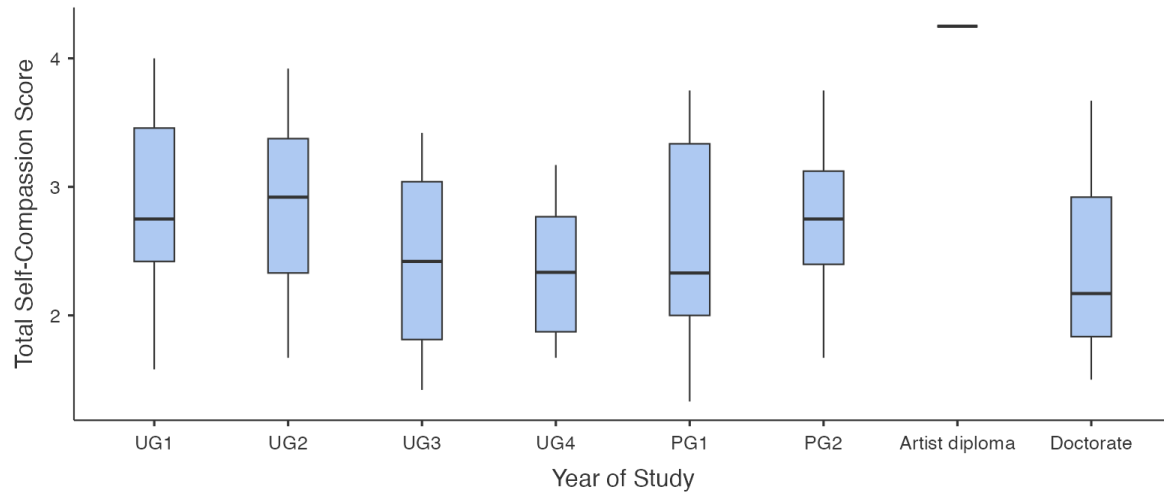


Table 1 COPE Inventory total score and sub-scale scores across year groups in detail

Year of Study	Total Score		Positive reinterpretation		Planning		Active coping		Use of instrumental support		Focus on & venting of emotions		Suppression of competing activities	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
UG1 (n=30)	68.5	12.2	12.9	2.64	12.7	2.83	12.5	3.31	10.8	3.72	9.83	3.52	9.77	2.22
UG2 (n=19)	64.5	10.7	11.1	3.09	11.7	3.20	11.1	2.94	11.3	3.18	10.7	2.85	8.63	2.43
UG3 (n=14)	60.9	8.27	11.6	2.98	11.4	2.21	10.6	3.23	9.00	3.04	9.14	3.37	9.21	2.46
UG4 (n=10)	65.0	10.8	11.5	2.59	11.1	3.96	10.8	2.04	9.70	3.43	12.1	3.14	9.80	3.16
PG1 (n=26)	65.1	10.1	12.2	2.38	12.4	2.86	11.6	2.62	10.6	3.31	9.33	3.23	8.96	2.44
PG2 (n=16)	66.9	16.5	12.1	3.05	11.4	3.14	11.6	3.54	11.7	4.01	10.3	3.68	9.88	3.42
Artist diploma (n=1)	87.0	N/A	15.0	N/A	16.0	N/A	16.0	N/A	12.0	N/A	14.0	N/A	14.0	N/A
Doctorate (n=4)	59.7	15.6	10.7	4.93	9.00	5.00	8.67	3.79	8.33	4.93	11.0	2.65	12.0	1.00

Table 2 CD-RISC-10 total score and item scores across year groups in detail

Year of Study	Total Score		1. I am able to adapt when changes occur		2. I can deal with whatever comes my way		3. I try to see the humorous side of things		4. Having to cope with stress can make me stronger		5. I tend to bounce back after illness, injury or other		6. I believe I can achieve my goals		7. Under pressure, I stay focused and think clearly		8. I am not easily discouraged by failure		9. I think of myself as a strong person		10. I am able to handle unpleasant or painful feelings	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
UG1 (n=30)	27.9	4.77	3.13	0.681	2.93	0.640	2.53	1.04	2.57	0.817	2.97	0.809	3.20	0.805	2.57	1.01	2.57	0.935	2.80	0.961	2.63	0.928
UG2 (n=19)	25.5	6.07	2.79	0.631	2.47	0.612	2.58	1.35	2.16	0.834	2.68	0.885	3.16	0.834	2.53	0.964	2.42	1.22	2.68	1.16	2.00	1.29
UG3 (n=14)	23.4	6.31	2.64	0.633	2.36	0.633	2.29	1.07	2.21	1.12	2.86	1.03	2.64	0.633	2.14	0.949	1.86	0.864	2.29	1.07	2.14	1.17
UG4 (n=10)	21.9	3.96	2.80	0.632	2.30	1.25	2.30	0.483	2.30	0.483	2.40	1.26	2.30	0.823	1.80	0.789	1.60	1.17	2.20	0.789	1.90	1.10
PG1 (n=26)	25.9	6.13	3.00	0.734	2.78	0.801	2.59	0.931	2.33	1.04	2.78	0.892	3.00	0.734	2.52	0.802	1.93	1.11	2.52	1.05	2.44	0.934
PG2 (n=16)	22.8	5.66	2.50	0.632	2.50	0.730	2.25	0.931	2.25	0.931	2.81	0.750	2.75	0.931	1.88	0.806	1.69	1.25	2.38	0.806	1.81	1.28
Artist diploma (n=1)	37.0	N/A	3.00	N/A	3.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	3.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.00	N/A
Doctorate (n=4)	23.7	11.9	2.67	0.577	1.67	0.577	2.33	1.15	2.67	1.15	2.67	1.15	2.00	1.73	3.00	1.73	1.67	1.53	2.33	2.08	2.67	1.53

Table 3 SCS-12 total score and category scores across year groups in detail

Year of Study	Self-Compassion Total Score		Self-Kindness		Self-Judgement		Common Humanity		Isolation		Mindfulness		Over-Identification	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
UG1 (n=30)	2.85	0.640	2.73	0.878	2.60	1.24	2.70	0.970	2.93	1.09	3.53	0.730	2.62	1.07
UG2 (n=19)	2.87	0.697	2.58	1.10	2.66	1.14	2.95	1.08	2.95	1.42	3.24	0.948	2.84	1.39
UG3 (n=14)	2.45	0.679	2.50	1.02	2.46	1.05	2.61	1.21	2.18	1.15	2.93	1.16	2.04	0.950
UG4 (n=10)	2.33	0.522	2.65	0.784	2.00	0.782	2.95	1.01	2.00	0.882	2.95	0.896	1.45	0.550
PG1 (n=26)	2.56	0.747	2.46	0.746	2.33	1.11	2.54	0.898	2.44	1.18	3.30	0.880	2.26	1.21
PG2 (n=16)	2.75	0.565	2.78	1.25	2.59	1.28	2.72	0.999	2.25	1.08	3.16	0.889	2.97	1.09
Artist diploma (n=1)	4.25	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.50	N/A	3.50	N/A	5.00	N/A	4.00	N/A	4.50	N/A
Doctorate (n=4)	2.45	1.11	2.83	1.53	1.50	0.866	2.67	1.15	2.67	1.04	3.33	1.26	1.67	1.15

Appendix for Chapter 6 – Survey Study Part Two

Figure 1 Total DREEM score across year groups in detail

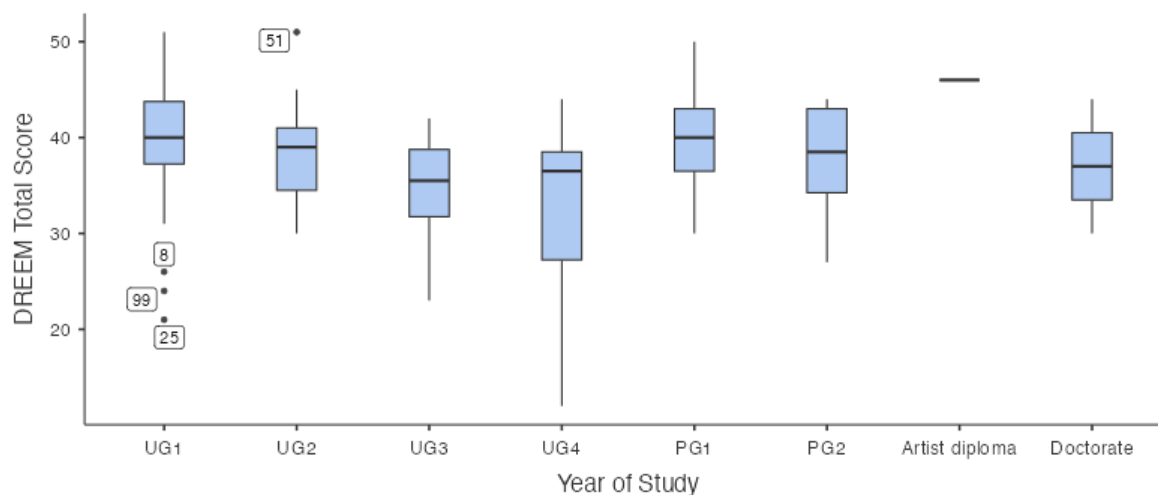


Table 1 DREEM total score and sub-scale scores across year groups in detail

Year of Study	DREEM Total Score		Academic Self-Perceptions		Social Self-Perceptions	
	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD	MEAN	SD
UG1 (n=30)	39.4	7.25	21.7	4.13	17.7	4.09
UG2 (n=19)	38.9	5.28	21.2	3.35	17.7	3.62
UG3 (n=14)	35.1	5.54	17.9	4.07	17.1	2.91
UG4 (n=10)	32.5	9.49	17.8	5.47	14.7	4.79
PG1 (n=26)	39.6	5.68	22.7	3.81	16.9	3.52
PG2 (n=16)	37.8	5.27	21.2	3.06	16.6	3.61
Artist diploma (n=1)	46.0	N/A	29.0	N/A	17.0	N/A
Doctorate (n=4)	37.0	7.00	20.3	2.08	16.7	5.03