

**JASON MURPHY
THE ROCK MUSICIAN**

Jason Murphy says he is the world's worst banjo player but adds that he doesn't let that stop him playing. It's not the first time that the 36-year-old music technology tutor at City College Brighton and Hove has shown persistence. Getting anywhere in the music industry requires it – right from the start.

"I had really good tutors at college," he says, "but it was many years ago and none of them had any experience within the industry. I would ask them about how to get a record deal and they would say I should do some research and then tell them the answer. It was very frustrating."

Times have changed. Answers to such questions are routinely built into FE music courses. Murphy, thanks to his experience touring as a vocalist and guitarist, can give his students a real insight into the rock 'n' roll world. "I wanted to make sure that everyone who taught here was also actively working in the music industry or had a lot of history in it. That means the courses are up to date and relevant."

Murphy runs two BTEc level 3 courses, one in music production, the other in performance and composition. The students often work together with the producers, recording the performers as soon as they have some material. Then they put it out on the college's Brighton record label which they run.

"These courses are not about doing it in the classroom, they're about doing it for real," says Murphy. "People from the local music industry give seminars about how the students can get from doing the occasional gig to going out on tour and having a commercial release. We network with local and national studios and producers just to open a dialogue and give them a better chance of getting



It's who you know
Jason Murphy values his industry contacts
Andrew Hasson

their foot in the door of a really difficult industry."

When Murphy isn't teaching, he is ensuring his own music skills are up to date. Currently writing his second film soundtrack, he also puts on a popular weekly Americana music night in Brighton called Come Down the Mountain. He's also DJ, has an electronic music project plus a rock band, Accelerator.

He admits to not sleeping much. But, he says, "The people who get the most out of the music industry are those who invest all their time in it. I can't sit in front of the TV and watch X Factor, but I'll happily sit in front of a computer and write some breakcore which would drive someone else up the wall."

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**NICOLE GIBSON
THE TRAVEL AGENT**

Nicole Gibson has crammed a lot into the past 10 years. After studying tourism at Harlow College in Essex, she went to university and took a degree in travel and tourism management. Her summers were spent as a rep near Biarritz, organising barbecues, excursions and entertainment for families on holiday with Eurocamp and Keycamp.

With her degree secured, she got a job at Stansted airport as a passenger services agent. She checked in passengers, boarded and closed flights, and dealt with latecomers or complaints. "They always sent the angry ones to me because I'm so patient," she says.

Then, aged only 23, Gibson returned to Harlow, this time as a teacher. Her initial post was part-time so she carried on working at Stansted because "the college is really keen on us keeping our industry experience as up to date as possible". Harlow is also keen on teaching qualifications, so Gibson immediately started working towards her Certificate of Education.

'The college is really keen on us keeping our industry experience up to date'

Gibson, now 28, is a second-year tutor teaching BTEc national level 3 courses to 16- to 19-year-olds. She has maintained her contacts at Stansted and regularly takes her students there on trips. Most of her "lovely bunch" plan to enter the tourism industry – estimated by consultants Deloitte to be worth £114bn to the UK economy last year with the potential to grow to £188bn, about 10% of GDP. However, some students are focusing on careers in event management, some intend to go to university and one even wants to become a vet.

Next on Gibson's own agenda is a masters degree in travel and tourism. She, and her department, aim eventually to be able to teach foundation degree students. "But I have been quite busy," says the mother of a young child, "so I might not do it just yet."



High flyer
Nicole Gibson teaches tourism but maintains her contacts at Stansted, which benefits her pupils
Zak Waters

FE TEACHING QUALIFICATIONS

Since September 2007:

- All new teachers must achieve the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) award within a year of their appointment.
- Associate teachers must also achieve a certificate in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (CTLLS) within five years.
- Staff appointed to a full teaching role must achieve a diploma in teaching in the lifelong learning sector (DTLLS) within five years.
- All new teachers must complete the process of "professional formation", which culminates in having Qualified Teacher Learning and Skills (QTLS) or Associate Teacher Learning and Skills (ATLS) status.
- Teachers employed before September 2007 do not have to achieve QTLS or ATLS, but are encouraged to do so.