

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION  
(Undergraduate)**



<b>1</b>	<b>Awarding Institution</b>	Newcastle University
<b>2</b>	<b>Teaching Institution</b>	Newcastle University
<b>3</b>	<b>Final Award</b>	BA (Hons)
<b>4</b>	<b>Programme Title</b>	Folk and Traditional Music Folk and Traditional Music (with Year Abroad) Folk and Traditional Music (with Placement Year)
<b>5</b>	<b>UCAS/Programme Code</b>	W344 1344U (with Year Abroad) 1672U (with Placement Year)
<b>6</b>	<b>Programme Accreditation</b>	N/A
<b>7</b>	<b>QAA Subject Benchmark(s)</b>	Music
<b>8</b>	<b>FHEQ Level</b>	Level 6
<b>9</b>	<b>Date written/revised</b>	February 2024

**10 Programme Aims**

The BA in Folk and Traditional Music is the leading performance-based folk music course in England and fosters both a strong emphasis on understanding and interpreting the music of Britain, Ireland and related musical traditions with a belief in the individuality of each student who must find their own appropriate paths of development for their skills, knowledge and understanding. To this end the course strives:

1. To stimulate the development of thoughtful, well-informed traditional musicians possessing a wide range of musical experiences
2. To facilitate the critical understanding and engagement with traditional music from around the world with a specialist focus upon the music of these islands and Ireland
3. To foster a supportive and excellent educational environment for the development of leading performers of Folk and Traditional music
4. To facilitate the development of higher order analytical skills in students
5. To develop the students' understanding of the socio-cultural context(s) for traditional music from historical to contemporary contexts
6. To provide the essentials of a sound musical and academic training, encompassing approaches that are historical, cultural, theoretical, practical, technical, and creative
7. To prepare students of Folk and Traditional music for a variety of careers in the Arts
8. To provide an outstanding and sustainable flagship educational and research environment that contributes to a key component of regional identity in the North-East of England and the rest of the UK
9. To offer structured choice and flexibility so that students can pursue their own interests and aptitudes within a determined curricular structure;
10. To develop an awareness both of traditional areas of study and of recent and current developments in musical thinking and intellectual inquiry
11. To foster the development of skills valuable in themselves, of value to future employers and, in the best cases, providing a firm basis for postgraduate study
12. To conform, wherever appropriate, with prevailing University policies and QAA codes of practice
13. To provide a qualification which fully meets the learning outcomes at Level 6 in the Framework for Higher Educational Qualifications (FHEQ), and to meet the standards set out in the QAA's benchmark statements for music degrees

14. To provide a sustainable and intellectually challenging environment for the only specialist, undergraduate programme for traditional music in England and Wales

For Students Completing a Placement Year

15. Provide students with the experience of seeking and securing a position with an employer.  
16. Facilitate independent self-management and proactive interaction in a non-university setting.  
17. Provide a period of practical work experience that will benefit current academic study and longer-term career plans  
18. Enable students to ethically apply their knowledge and skills in the workplace, reflect upon their development and effectively evidence and articulate their learning in relevant future settings.

For Students Completing a Year Abroad

19. Offer students the opportunity to develop graduate attributes which increase employability, particularly communication and (where applicable) language skills, intercultural competencies, adaptability, resilience and global awareness.  
20. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.  
21. Provide the opportunity to experience new areas of study outside of their usual programme of study at Newcastle University.

## **11 Learning Outcomes**

The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes have references to the benchmark statements for Music.

### **Knowledge and Understanding**

#### **A Knowledge and understanding**

- A1 Broad understanding of traditional music in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales and areas with related traditions.  
A2 Issues in music history and the study of folk and popular music.  
A3 Interdisciplinary applications and theoretical approaches relevant to the study of music.  
A4 Critical understanding of, and approaches to, music of various historical contexts and cultures.  
A5 Sonic and performative understanding of traditional music performance practices across a range of instrumental and vocal styles.

For Students Completing a Year Abroad

- A6 Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.

For Students Completing a Placement Year

- A7 Apply personal and professional development strategies to prioritise, plan, and manage their own skills development and learning.  
A8 Research, select and apply relevant knowledge aimed at enhancing their own skills and effectiveness in specific duties at their placement.  
A9 Demonstrate an understanding of a work environment, how it functions and their contribution to it.  
A10 Relate their work-based learning to other areas of personal development, including academic performance.

<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p>Lectures, and related student reading and seminar tasks, are the primary means of developing students' knowledge and understanding. These are supplemented by seminars and/or tutorials where students can develop their learning through discussion and group (and solo) presentations. Students learn through independent reading and listening, with close readings/listening of set texts/pieces as required, in preparation for lectures and seminars. In some cases, learning is also peer-assisted by means of student study groups which focus on a lecture or seminar assignment. A1-A5 require workshops, rehearsals and 1:1 teaching.</p>
<p><b>Assessment Strategy</b></p> <p>Recital examinations, group work recitals, essay, and project assignments and individual and group assignments for seminars, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Intellectual Skills</b></p> <p>On completing the programme students should have:</p> <p>B1 the ability to evaluate evidence from different sources;  B2 the ability to present coherent arguments and an independent viewpoint;  B3 Higher order analytical skills;  B4 critical skills (e.g. awareness of ideologies, and the culturally mediated nature of knowledge);  B5 the ability to understand and handle non-verbal, musical and aesthetic knowledge and thinking.</p>
<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p>These are acquired and developed in all the expected forums: lectures, seminars and tutorials. Individual module descriptions give more specific details.</p> <p><b>B1-B3</b> are embedded within musicological studies; <b>B4</b> is inculcated through core historical-cultural modules; <b>B5</b> is developed through one-to-one lessons, tutorials, recitals and workshops.</p>
<p><b>Assessment Strategy</b></p> <p>Essay and project assignments; and individual and group assignments for seminars; live performances, etc.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Practical Skills</b></p> <p>On completing the programme students should have acquired the following skills::</p> <p>C1 Performance (instrumental, vocal, technologically-mediated)  C2 Composition (whether score-based, electronic, or improvisatory)  C3 Musicological research skills  C4 Harmony and aural skills  C5 Music-analytical skills  C6 Applied musical skills</p>
<p><b>Teaching and Learning Methods</b></p> <p><b>C1</b> is taught through a combination of 1:1 and group tuition, with systematic support through ICMuS's series of masterclasses and workshops. All students participate in group performances of one kind or another.</p> <p><b>C2</b> is taught through a mixture of lectures (demonstrating relevant techniques and approaches), seminars, group projects and tutorials, particularly through Stage 1 and 2 theory and creative practice modules, and the Stage 3 Specialist Studies in Composition modules,</p>

where large-scale student-defined composition projects delivered through a combination of seminars and 1:1 tutorials

Musicological research skills (**C3**) are fostered within all musicological-based modules. At Stages 2 and 3, students choose at least one historical-cultural option, taught in lectures and seminars, which considers recent research in the relevant field, and whose assessment is normally via an independently conducted research project. As appropriate, training in bibliographical techniques and musicological methodologies is given either through a combination of Robinson Library induction and designated Academic Practice for Music Studies sessions (see, under section B).

A range of honours level options in Applied Studies helps students to acquire skills in arranging, orchestration, and editing (**C5**). Designated modules in Professional Practice for Music and Teaching Music in Schools provide training in key aspects of musicians' professional and personal development.

### **Assessment Strategy**

As (**A**): plus performances, portfolios of compositions and assignments, and documentation relating to music business placements.

### **Transferable/Key Skills**

On completing the programme students should have the following skills:

- D1 Research skills;
- D2 Communication through both spoken and written word;
- D3 Public presentation;
- D4 Time management;
- D5 IT skills;
- D6 Independent Learning;
- D7 Team work;

#### For Students Completing a Year Abroad

- D8 Adapt and operate in a different cultural environment.

#### For Students Completing a Placement Year

- D9 Reflect on and manage own learning and development within the workplace;
- D10 Use existing and new knowledge to enhance personal performance in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate this process;
- D11 Use graduate skills in a professional manner in a workplace environment, evaluate the impact and communicate the personal development that has taken place.

### **Teaching and Learning Methods**

Research skills (**D1**) are embedded within musicological studies (see B3 above).

**D2** is practised across the board in ways appropriate to each module, such as coursework assignments. Some modules offer the opportunity to submit work-in-progress on a formative, rather than summative, basis. Additional support is given through ICMuS's Academic Practice for Music Studies programme (APMS), which is core for all students in their first stage. Spoken presentations are given in seminars, tutorials and peer study groups; final-stage students are required to give presentations on their on-going Specialist Study projects (Composition, Dissertation, Performance or Project) in the Finalists Conference which takes place at the beginning of a student's final semester of study.

**D3** is inherent within all performance, which is integral to all undergraduate music degrees, either by way of public concerts, gigs or within rehearsals.

**D4:** time-management training is offered, where appropriate, within the Academic Practice for Music Studies module. In any case, effective time management is integral to a music student's

*modus operandi* – in the maintenance of a balanced and sustainable schedule of rehearsals, lectures, seminars, independent study, and vocal/instrumental practice.

**D5:** IT skills are ubiquitously used within music degrees. Training in the use of music notation and DAW software is given as part of the relevant music skills and composition modules; training in the use of research tools (JSTOR, RILM, FirstSearch, Web of Science, etc.) is given to students writing dissertations. In their first Induction Week, all ICMuS students are given training in the use of Canvas, and other essential IT resources; this training is reinforced through the strategic use of Canvas for the delivery of teaching materials and the electronic submission of assignments.

**D6:** students frequently work together in workshops, rehearsal, ensemble and peer study-groups, and are often required to produce a collaborative response to seminar assignments: teamwork is integral, for instance, to ensemble studies at all stages.

### **Assessment Strategy**

**D1-D2:** see A above.

**D3:** public recital or gig at final stage public performances at other stages; presentations in seminars

**D4:** mostly indirectly assessed (success/failure in time-management is usually self-evident)

**D5:** all students are required to produce word-processed essays and to demonstrate internet and general IT literacy as part of their research assignments. Students undertaking studio-based composition submit their work digitally via Canvas; students submitting score-based compositions and course work normally use note-processing software (e.g. Sibelius).

**D6:** mostly not directly assessed, although contributions to team-based submissions, and effectiveness of team participation, are assessed in ensemble-based performance assessments.

## **12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features**

### **Basic structure of the programme**

The BA in Folk and Traditional Music has three 'stages', each equivalent to one academic year of full-time study. For full-time students 'Stage 1' means 'first year', 'Stage 2' means 'second year' and so on. You will find full descriptions of each module in the module outlines website

#### **Stage 1**

In the first Stage students are required to take 120 credits of modules that work towards the ICMuS ethic of encouraging an agile thinker and an accomplished practical musician. The student is exposed to various aspects of folk and traditional music culture. The modules in the first stage can be divided into the following broad topics of performance, music theory, studio skills, and musicology. MUS1018 is the only Core module in this pathway.

#### **Stage 2**

The second stage has among its aims: exposing students to more diverse musical experiences; developing their research skills; encouraging more in-depth practical, creative and academic activity. All this prepares students for their final stage with its emphasis on greater specialisation and independent learning. All Stage 2 modules are Honours modules. For the purposes of final average and degree classification, stage 2 modules count as one third of the final total weighting.

Students must take the modules Performance Studies (MUS2058), Ensemble 2 (MUS2092), and MUS2088 and then choose at least one module from the Historical and Cultural and Applied Options lists and choose a further 20 credit module from either list in order to make their total credits up to 120.

At Stage 2 the student may also take modules to the value of 20 credits in a subject other than Music. They might want, for example, to continue with a foreign language, or pursue a cultural, historical or theoretical topic from the complementary perspective of another subject, or gain vocational experience. If this is their intention you should make the necessary enquiries at the appropriate school.

#### **Year Abroad**

Students wishing to spend a year abroad as part of their degree can do so in consultation with and at the discretion of the DPD in a partner institution. This is also subject to a threshold of at least 60% in the first three semesters of study. These candidates will be transferred to the internal degree programme code 1344U.

#### **Placement Year**

Students have the option to take part in a Careers Placement Year in-between Stage 2 and 3 of their programme. They will be transferred on to programme code 1672U.

#### **Stage 3**

By the time the student reaches Stage 3, the final stage of the BA programme, they are in a position to specialise to a considerable extent, building further on their particular strengths and interests. Normally at least a third of their time (40 credits) will be devoted to a Major Specialist Study. You may also take a second, Minor Specialist Study.

As at Stage 2, a menu of 20-credit historical/cultural, and applied options are also available, from which the student choose a selection of 20 credit modules in order to make their total credits up to 120.

#### **Key features of the programme (including what makes the programme distinctive)**

Public performance is a requirement built into the honours stages of the degree.

#### **Programme regulations (link to on-line version)**

[W344 Programme Regulations 2024/25](#)

### **13 Support for Student Learning**

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

#### *Performance resources*

These are available in the Armstrong Building by way of practice rooms, band rehearsal rooms, drum studios, the Recital Room and the Kings' Hall; and in the Music Studios by means of two studios, a suite of practice and teaching rooms, and a gig space in the basement.

### **14 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning**

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

#### *Accreditation reports*

N/A

#### *Additional mechanisms*

N/A

### **15 Regulation of assessment**

Generic information regarding University provision is available [here](#).

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/degrees/#subject>

Degree Programme and University Regulations: <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>

Please note. This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and of the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve if they takefull advantage of the learning opportunities provided.