PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION **(Taught Postgraduate)**		Newcastle University

1	**Awarding Institution**	Newcastle University
2	**Teaching Institution**	Newcastle University
3	**Final Award**	MA
4	**Programme Title**	Music Education
5	**Programme Code**	4182 F/P
6	**Programme Accreditation**	N/A
7	**QAA Subject Benchmark(s)**	Music Benchmarks
8	**FHEQ Level**	Level 7
9	**Last updated**	May 2024

10   Programme Aims

MA Music Education offers learners the opportunity to proactively address the changing landscape of the music education and community music sectors in the 21st century. The education of musicians is a global concern, and one that has in turn engendered specific responses from the global music community. The curriculum is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of music education in its practical, creative and cultural dimensions. Students engage with broad pedagogical skills linked with cognitive, intellectual, critical, practical, technical and contextual knowledge and understanding. Through collaboration with researchers, policy experts, educational professionals and settings, music education hubs, plus external organisations; learners explore innovative new approaches and pedagogies in music education focussing on pupil-centred approaches to music teaching and learning that aim to inspire and retain young people's life-long engagement with music.

The programme supports students to develop critical, academically rigorous and practical research methods and conceptual tools to facilitate scholarly research of a high standing in the fields of music education, music technology pedagogy, music learning as it relates to wellbeing, and community music. One of the key features of this programme is to offer learners the opportunity to enhance their music pedagogy through leadership, facilitation and research skills. Learners also benefit from joining a growing network of graduates fostering lifelong learning beyond the programme.

This programme aligns with the Education Strategy and the strategic priorities of Newcastle University. It prepares individuals to shape the future in an international context by fostering a global, responsible, and interconnected approach. Through a blended learning format, learners engage in transformative education that promotes critical thinking, reflection, analysis, development of leadership attributes and interdisciplinarity. Real-world challenges provide a rich learning environment and the opportunity to make an immediate impact on both personal and professional performance. In short, the aims of the programme are to:

1. Develop graduates who exhibit exceptional leadership qualities at all stages of their professional lives, within their chosen domain, whether it be in society or the career in which they operate, in respect to the challenges of and responses to pupil/learner centred approaches to music education in a range of contexts.
2. Expose learners to the historical context, current research, and ethically responsible pedagogical and methodological practices in relation to music teaching and learning.
3. Equip learners with the ability to work effectively and sensitively in and through music with people from a range of disciplinary backgrounds, taking into consideration a wide range of quantitative and qualitative knowledges, methodologies, feedback and evaluative mechanisms, working practices, pedagogical approaches and cultures.

4. Build a networked cohort of graduates who have built positive academic and professional connections between themselves, the external organisations with whom they work during the course, and with Newcastle University as a resource and support to their development, both during and upon completion of the course.

11 Learning Outcomes

The programme provides opportunities for learners to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas:

Knowledge and Understanding

On completion of the programme learners will have achieved critical knowledge and understanding of:

A1. Formal music education and community music in informal and non-formal contexts;
A2. Key approaches to researching music education in a variety of settings and global contexts;
A3. The diverse pedagogies, technologies, policies and approaches for use in classroom and community settings and for a range of ages, and how to use these in practice;
A4. Varied music curricula and broader sectoral contexts and how these are implemented in different global contexts;
A5. Relevant and ethical methodologies for creating and conducting music education and community music-based research.
A6. Pedagogical perspectives and digital learning technologies in teaching, lesson plans and curricula design.
A7. Current theoretical and practical research relevant for teaching in a diverse range of contexts.

11a. Teaching and Learning Methods

The Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) designed for this programme supports students to achieve the intended learning outcomes, in line with the principles and priorities set out in both the School Plan and the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy. Learning happens in one-semester modules, with clear transitions and progressions between semesters.

The pedagogical philosophy and Learning and Teaching Assessment Strategy (LTAS) aims to produce critically aware, reflective music educators, able to work in flexible facilitation modes within music. The LTAS aims to ensure those completing the programme will have developed rigorous research and practice-based skills in the field, along with broad sector-based knowledge in the context of the UK and globally.

Teaching and Learning is focused on key areas:
1) Students as music educators and facilitators (A1, A3, A6);
2) The assessment of both process and product (A1, A3, A5, A6);
3) The intercommunications between research-based critical thinking and practice; (A2, A3, A5, A7);
4) Mechanisms to facilitate meaningful feed-forward and feedback both within and across semesters to support learning and assessment (A1-A7).

The LTAS offers a combination of lectures, interactive seminars, practice-based workshops, and small group tutorials. Students learn to define and formulate research topics for investigation, skills in music education methodologies, relevant health and safety and ethical practices, bibliographic work, and competence in the critical use of sources in lectures, seminars, independent reading and hands-on experience through written assignments and professional practical work. Additionally, students investigate issues set by sector partners, and therefore to engage in a consultative capacity with the sector.

11.b Assessment Strategy

The main objective of the assessment strategy is to evaluate students' knowledge and understanding of key scientific theories, frameworks and practical approaches related to music in education and community contexts.

Assessments measure students' abilities to analyse educational, social, cultural, and political contexts influencing music education, and their appreciation of the challenges and responsibilities faced by teachers, facilitators and learners in terms of promoting the value of music in education. Additionally, the assessment strategy fosters multi-disciplinary collaboration and reflective practice among learners. The task specific assessment criteria focus on the depth of knowledge, critical analysis, creativity, interdisciplinary understanding, collaborative skills, practical/pedagogical skills, ethical awareness, and communication capabilities demonstrated by the learners in their respective assessments.

Across the programme, summative and formative assessments underpin a wide range of activities. These include:
- Written reports and essays to assess learners' grasp of key theory, varied music curricula and musical development frameworks, approaches to practice and to assess their ability to recognise and to communicate complex issues effectively and with criticality (A1);
- Group presentations, discussions, and debates to encourage collaboration and exchange of ideas among learners from diverse backgrounds, including multi-disciplinary group projects and presentations that require learners to work together, leveraging their diverse expertise to propose innovative solutions debates, issues and challenges in the music education field (A2);
- Reflective exercises, encouraging students to critically analyse their learning experiences, insights on specific topics related to music education theory and practice, and the potential wider impact of different approaches to practice on learners prompting students to introspect on their learning journey (A3);
- Lesson or workshop designs and plans, informed by relevant theory and intended for practical assessment. Such assessments will support students in developing practical tools, skills and repertoire for working in music education and community music contexts in practical terms (A4);
- Contribution to online discussion forums will promote and assess students' understanding of key theory and debate and how this may apply to their own context. Such assignments will also promote varied global perspectives and practices as represented by the cohort (A5).

Regular constructive feedback is provided to learners on their assessments. Feedback emphasises strengths and areas of improvement to encourage continuous learning and development throughout the programme. By employing this comprehensive assessment strategy, the programme effectively evaluates learners' knowledge and understanding, foster multi-disciplinary collaboration, and promotes a reflective approach to addressing current challenges in music education related research and practice.

Intellectual Skills

On completing the programme students should possess:

B1. Effective problem-solving strategies and high-level analytical and planning processes for teaching one-to-one and group;
B2. The capacity to define and formulate research problems, questions and hypotheses;
B3. The ability to reflect on the relationship between theory and practice;
B4. Conceptual, theoretical and methodological rigour in the application of knowledge to music education;
B5. The analytical, critical and reflective skills needed to assess and conduct current research and engage in advanced practice;
B6. The ability to critically analyse key theoretical and practical concerns relating to music education and education more widely informed by relevant historical and political contexts in a range of international settings
B7. The ability to reflect on practice in music teaching and learning contexts, and to adapt where necessary reflexively to provide support to students

Teaching and Learning Methods

The LTAS is set out in more detail in 11a. In addition, to develop the intellectual skills B1, B2, and B3, which encompass critical thinking, creativity, flexibility, problem-solving, and data analysis, the programme will provide a range of teaching and learning methods to engage learners actively. These include:

- Real-life scenarios or case studies related to music in classroom and community contexts, encouraging learners to identify key questions, gather relevant information, and analyse arguments to make evidence-based decisions and promote critical thinking (B1, B3).
- Debates and discussions on current debates and issues related to music education, education more broadly, requiring learners to critically analyse opposing viewpoints and develop evidence-based arguments (B1)
- Projects that require learners to propose and implement creative solutions to address specific issues relating to music teaching and learning (B2)
- Engaging learners in conducting observations, interviews or surveys to collect qualitative data from different stakeholders related to music education and music in communities (B2, B3)
- Exposing learners to different perspectives and problem-solving approaches through collaborative practical learning experiences and group projects (B3)

Combining these teaching and learning methods creates a dynamic and enriching educational experience, fostering the development of critical thinking, practical skills and knowledge, creativity, and analytical skills necessary for addressing sector-based challenges effectively.

Assessment Strategy

The main objective of the overall programme assessment strategy is provided in section 11a. In addition, intellectual skills are assessed by problem-based report writing (B1), Project proposal and group presentations (B2), Live project presentation and/or research dissertation (B3), Reflective essay, interdisciplinary report and group report (B4).

Practical Skills

On completing the programme students should be able to:

C1. Produce teaching resources, repertoire, and planning suitable for a range of pedagogical purposes, age ranges and instruments, in different formats;
C2. Produce professional writing for a range of different contexts;
C3. Utilise the bibliographic skills needed to identify and retrieve relevant material, including books, journal articles, conference proceedings, statistical data, government publications such as curriculum documentation and other public or sector reports including resources available online and offline;
C4. Demonstrate a sophisticated use of methods of evaluating a range of sources, texts and practices using theoretical frameworks that pertain to music education and community music theory;
C5. Reflect critically on the key theoretical, subject-specific and practical concerns of music education and community music practice and apply them to teaching;
C6. Select and utilise appropriate technologies and adapt attuned approaches in pedagogical practice, community music and wellbeing settings.
C7. Devise and develop creative and/or research projects and strategies pertinent to the fields of music education and community music.

Teaching and Learning Methods

- The LTAS is set out in more detail in 11a. In addition, teaching and learning methods for developing practical skills in the areas of C1, C2, C3, and C4 require a combination of theoretical knowledge, practical exercises, and reflective practices. These include:
- Interactive lectures and workshops where instructors provide guidance on research techniques, critical evaluation of sources and case studies, and applying theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios (C1);

- Project management principles and methodologies, including planning, scheduling, resource allocation, and risk management (C2);
- Introducing self-assessment tools and techniques and reflective learning through collaborative and individual projects (C3);
- Integrative workshops and opportunities to develop and showcase pedagogical/music facilitation and communication skills (C4).

Regular opportunities for reflection and feedback contribute to the development of these practical skills. Additionally, incorporating real-life examples and involving professionals from relevant fields enhances the learning experience and better prepares learners for the challenges they may face in practice.

Assessment Strategy

The main objective of the overall programme assessment strategy is provided in section 11a. In addition, practical skills will be assessed by research dissertation or live project final written report and presentation (C2, C3), individual project proposal (C2, C3), reflective essays and reflective journals (C4, C5) and individual and group work/presentation (C1).

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should have:

D1. The skills to communicate and present research findings effectively to specialist and non-specialist audiences;

D2. The skills of effective written and/or oral communication and presentation;

D3. The capacity to manage research effectively, including planning, implementing and producing reports, assignments, and related projects on time;

D4. The skills to manage workloads and to work to deadlines;

D5. The skills to work effectively, both independently and as a member of teams, in both an academic and professional context.

Teaching and Learning Methods

The LTAS is set out in more detail in 11a. In addition, the teaching and learning methods for developing transferable and key skills include lectures delivered by subject matter experts to provide learners with foundational knowledge and insights. These include:

- Case studies to help learners understand how experts apply their knowledge to solve problems/address challenges (D1).
- Engaging learners in debates and discussions to enhance their ability to distinguish authoritative knowledge from biased or unreliable information (D1).
- Assign group projects that require learners to collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds, fostering understanding and teamwork (D2).
- Present learners with real-world challenges and opportunities, guiding them to develop structured approaches to address them (D3).
- Provide opportunities for learners to present their arguments in front of their peers, academics and music education sector-based colleagues, allowing for constructive feedback (D4).

Regular opportunities for reflection and feedback contribute to the development of these practical skills. Additionally, incorporating real-life examples and involving professionals from relevant fields enhances the learning experience and better prepares learners for the challenges they may face in practice.

Assessment Strategy

The main objective of the overall programme assessment strategy is provided in section 11a. In addition, transferable and key skills will be assessed in the live projects the project proposal (D1, D3, D4), final project report (D1-D4) and group work/presentations (D2-D4), building on knowledge acquired in programme modules.

12   Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Learning and assessment across modules and semesters works cohesively both laterally (working together with co-occurring learning to support development) and lineally (advancing knowledge and expertise in cross-semester and stage inter-related modules), leading to the final research project.

Semester 1 focuses on advancing knowledge and understanding and intellectual skills in three key areas:

- Research methods pertinent to developing the final project, and transferrable to professional practice;
- Underpinning theoretical models, statutory music curricula and the dominant music learning methodologies of the global music education sector, its past, present and future, and potential ways of navigating it as a music pedagogue;
- Theories and practical skills-based instrumental and vocal pedagogy, and strategies for incorporating this knowledge into real world competencies for instrumental or vocal teaching of both individuals and groups.
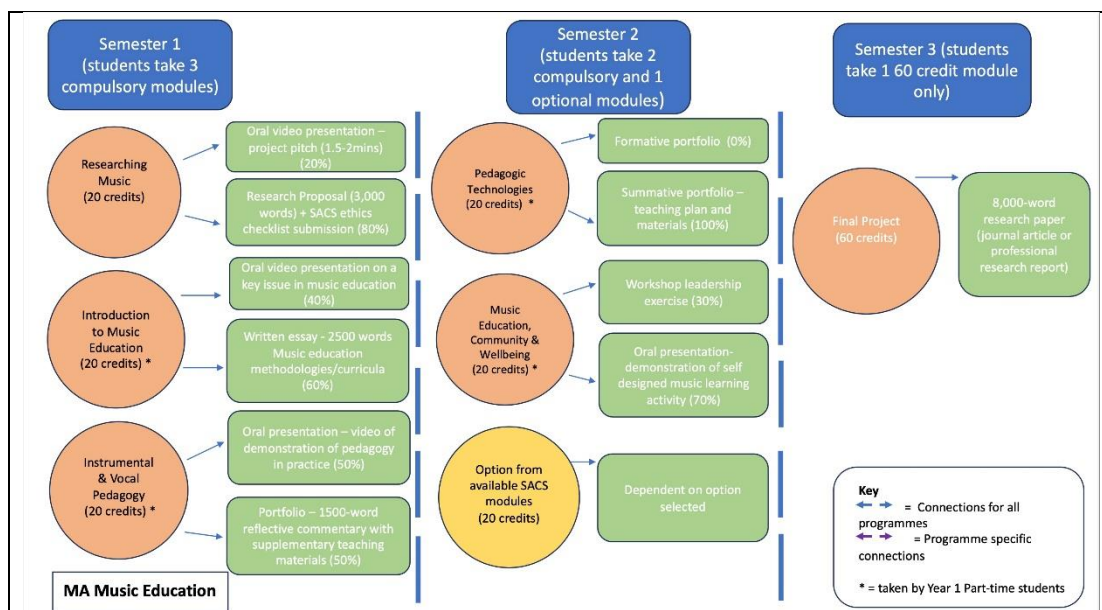
Semester 2 develops these foundations to explore in greater depth key areas of music education practice and contexts, through an examination of:

- Current theory and practice in music education, community music, music therapy and music in healthcare and a critical examination of the interrelationships between these fields, music learning for wellbeing and lifelong music learning pathways;
- Theoretical knowledge and practical, skill-based competencies relating to the use of technology in music education;
- Opportunities for critical engagement with current research and expert practitioners and the exploration of leadership, alongside the development of reflective practice skills. Learners will also be exposed to further music-based perspectives and disciplines across the university by engaging with learners on other taught postgraduate programmes within ICMuS and SACS through optional and shared modules.

In Semester 3 students undertake a rigorous research project either on a music education topic of their own choice or a live research project set by a sector professional or organization. This research project enables students to consolidate the knowledge, understanding and skills developed over the year and to apply it to an area of interest. It is designed to:

- Allow international learners to apply learning gained in semester 1 and 2 to propose their own project focused if they wish, on a music education topic set outside of the UK, although research must be completed here. This is intended to stimulate discussion and reflection on how different approaches to music education and curricula differ or are similar depending on context, supporting learners to apply course learning to their own cultural context.

Basic structure of the programme and assessment journey

MA Music Education programme structure

Semester 1 (students take 3 compulsory modules)

- Researching Music (20 credits)
  - Oral video presentation – project pitch (1.5-2mins) (20%)
  - Research Proposal (3,000 words) + SACS ethics checklist submission (80%)
- Introduction to Music Education (20 credits) *
  - Oral video presentation on a key issue in music education (40%)
  - Written essay - 2500 words Music education methodologies/curricula (60%)
- Instrumental & Vocal Pedagogy (20 credits) *
  - Oral presentation – video of demonstration of pedagogy in practice (50%)
  - Portfolio – 1500-word reflective commentary with supplementary teaching materials (50%)

MA Music Education

Semester 2 (students take 2 compulsory and 1 optional modules)

- Pedagogic Technologies (20 credits) *
  - Formative portfolio (0%)
  - Summative portfolio – teaching plan and materials (100%)
- Music Education, Community & Wellbeing (20 credits) *
  - Workshop leadership exercise (30%)
  - Oral presentation- demonstration of self designed music learning activity (70%)
- Option from available SACS modules (20 credits)
  - Dependent on option selected

Semester 3 (students take 1 60 credit module only)

- Final Project (60 credits)
  - 8,000-word research paper (journal article or professional research report)

Key
- = Connections for all programmes
- = Programme specific connections
- * = taken by Year 1 Part-time students

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

MA Music Education offers a contemporary education in the landscape and practical application of formal, non-formal and informal modern music teaching and learning, incorporating learning that equips graduates with a versatile set of skills applicable to the music, education and wider creative sectors.

Study visits and practical workshops with music educators from partner organisations and settings, such as regional music education hubs, music therapy charities, local schools and colleges are a particular feature of this course, aimed at building course community and introducing participants to the local area and resources, examining aspects of music in education and community through a local and regional lens to complement the overarching global perspective of the programme.

At the heart of the curriculum is an approach that encourages critical, reflective research, and its application to current practices and contexts. Through workshops, lectures, group work and independent study projects, students develop their skills, networks, employability and capacity to respond flexibly to the contemporary music education and community music sectors in regional, national and global contexts.

Professional research and real-world live project-based learning are the key features of this programme. All modules feed through and support the final research project module where learners work individually to design either a music education research project presented as a journal article or respond to a live research topic set by an external music education organisation or professional practitioner. The work is intellectually informed by leading researchers and music education experts where applicable and framed pedagogically by the course team.

Through our global and intercultural approach, the research project is designed to allow international learners to apply learning gained in semester 1 and 2 to propose their own project, on a topic set, in their own country although completed in the UK. This is intended to stimulate discussion and reflection on the interconnections, and varieties, of Music Education, cultural and regulatory environments, supporting learners to apply course learning to their own cultural context.

The music department offers access to a wide range of musical performances and spaces in which to specialise and a unique learning environment of studios, practice rooms and the King's Hall as a live music venue. There are weekly free student and professional concerts which are part of The City of Newcastle's thriving music scene.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)
<mark>Programme Regulations 2025-26</mark>

13   Support for Student Learning
Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.
Generic Information
.

14   Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning
Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.
Generic Information
Accreditation reports N/A
Additional mechanisms N/A

15   Regulation of assessment
Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.
Generic Information

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:
The University Prospectus: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/
Degree Programme and University Regulations: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/

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 she/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities provided.

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

Module	Type	Intended Learning Outcomes			
		A	**B**	**C**	**D**
MUS8020 Researching Music (20)	Compulsory	2, 5, 7	3, 2, 5,	2, 3, 4, 7	2, 4
MUS8021 Introduction to Music Education: International Perspectives, Theories & Practices	Compulsory	2, 3	3, 6,	5	1
MUS8022 Instrumental and Vocal Pedagogy: Practice Based Teaching (20)	Compulsory	1, 3, 4, 7	1, 4, 7	1, 6	1, 4.
MUS8027 Live Music Events	Optional	1, 7	5	3	1, 2, 3
MUS8028 Pedagogical Technology in Music Education (20)	Compulsory	6		1	1
MUS8029 Music Education, Community and Wellbeing	Compulsory	1, 2, 4, 7	7	3, 6, 7	2, 5
MUS8030 The Recording Industry, IP and AI	Optional	1, 7	5	3	2,
MUS8032 Music Research Project (60)	Compulsory	2, 4, 5, 7	2, 3, 4	3, 5, 7	1, 3