

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Taught Postgraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	MA
4	Programme Title	Music Industries Management
5	Programme Code	4183 F/P
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Music Benchmark Statement
8	FHEQ Level	7
9	Last updated	May 2025

10 Programme Aims

The MA in Music Industries Management develops essential skills and knowledge that shape successful careers in the music industries and wider creative sector. Students explore the varied professional landscape of the fast-paced global music sector and its ecosystems through exploring contemporary practice, issues, and case studies. Through engagement with a range of music industry professionals from within the music department and beyond, they learn about practices and contexts – from live music events and music policy to music marketing and distribution – in an environment that emphasises the close relationship between experienced professional practice and research expertise.

The programme offers learners the opportunity to proactively engage with the changing contexts and professional landscapes of the sector. From grassroots to corporate levels, the music industries operate globally, and across cultures – music itself is an economic activity that covers a range of practices and knowledge bases. The curriculum is designed to provide an understanding of the local, regional, national and global contexts in which music – and music-related – businesses work, alongside their historical evolution and present-day placement within the creative sector. The programme culminates with a major research project – which could focus on a music industry research topic chosen by the student or address a live research project set by an industry organisation or practitioner. The key programme aims are:

1. To provide students with broad knowledge and understanding of the practical and theoretical aspects of the music industries and their global, cultural contexts;

2. To equip students with the knowledge and skills for a range of music and creative industries roles, including employment, self-employment and freelancing;
3. To enhance understanding of the cross-cultural contexts in which the music industries have operated, past, present and future;
4. To develop practical and rigorous research skills suitable across industry, the creative sector, and academia;
5. To expose students to relevant music and connected creative industries practitioners regionally and nationally, and to acquire professional network building skills and intercultural learning opportunities.

11 Learning Outcomes

Graduates of this programme will be able to demonstrate the analytical and critical skills needed to conduct and evaluate current research and advanced scholarship, and the practical skills to adapt to roles within the fast-changing music industries and creative sector. The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, qualities, skills and other attributes in the following areas.

Knowledge and Understanding

On completing the programme students should have an advanced and critical knowledge and understanding of:

- A1.** The fast-changing music industries and the wider cultural sector along with their past, present and future development and critical contexts;
- A2.** The key approaches to theorising, analysing and formulating research problems for the music industries and the wider cultural sectors informed by cutting-edge research, professional practice and technological developments;
- A3.** The professional practices, challenges and opportunities relevant to the music industries in relation to the wider cultural and creative sectors, and changes to technology and audiences;
- A4.** The key production processes and professional practices relevant to live and recorded music, and their use in different professional settings;
- A5.** The cultural, social, historical, legal and political contexts – and types of organisation – with which the global music industries intersect, and their various institutional mechanisms and priorities;
- A6.** The relevant and ethical methodologies for conducting music industries and creative sector research.

11.a Teaching and Learning Methods

The pedagogical philosophy and Learning and Teaching Assessment Strategy (LTAS) aims to produce critically aware, reflective music industries practitioners and researchers, able to work flexibly and be responsive to shifting industrial practices and contexts. The LTAS aims to ensure that 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.

Students engage with broad pedagogical skills linked with cognitive, intellectual, critical, practical, technical and contextual knowledge and understanding. Through collaboration with researchers, policy experts, and industry/external professionals and organisations, learners will explore innovative responses to challenges and opportunities within the music industries at global to local scales.

This programme is designed for intercultural learners to enhance their personal development, employability, independent research capacity and scope for taking a leadership role in shaping the future of their organisations and communities. It is also designed to enhance expertise for professionals in the field and provide essential knowledge and skills needed to navigate the evolving landscape of work and wider society in the face of rapid, disruptive change. One of the key features of this programme is to offer learners the opportunity to enhance their teamworking and collaboration skills. Learners will 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 impact on both personal and professional performance.

Teaching and Learning is focused on key areas through a combination of lectures, interactive seminars, practice-based workshops and small group tutorials to facilitate:

1. Students as practitioners and project-based learning (A1, A3, A4, A5, A6);
2. The assessment of both process and product (A2, A3, A4, A6);
3. The intercommunications between research-based critical analysis and practice (A1, A2, A5, A6);
4. Mechanisms to facilitate meaningful feed-forward and feedback both within and across semesters;
5. Development of skills in defining and formulating research topics for investigation, skills in music and creative industries practices, relevant ethical practices, bibliographic work, and competence in the critical use of sources.

Additionally, students have the opportunity for their final project to investigate issues in live projects set by sector partners, and therefore to engage in a consultative capacity with the sector.

11.b Assessment Strategy
The curriculum underpins a meaningful and coherent assessment and feedback strategy which, while allowing for varieties of project, offers a familiar structure to students in terms of weighting, the construction of assessment criteria, submission and how feed-forward and feedback are received and responded to. This course involves a distinctive combination of a sophisticated analytical approach with practical training to provide students with advanced skills to operate in a range of industry and academic contexts. The range of assessment reflects this diversity. Assessment requires students to: 1. engage with theories and concepts (A2, A4, A5, A6); 2. formulate areas of enquiry and engage with relevant literature (A2, A5, B2, B3); 3. demonstrate a critical understanding of modes of music industries, and their relationship to creative sector practice (A1, A2, A3, A4, A6, B1, B3); 4. develop advanced practical skills associated with entrepreneurial activity and small businesses, working with - and within - large organisations, and operating within related social and policy creative management contexts (A1, A3, A4, A6, B1, B2, B4). This is assessed by a variety of means. The programme therefore uses a broad range of assessment methods, including oral presentations, case-study and professional reports, essays, methodological critiques of selected research studies, written assignments, and portfolios of work to assess students' ability to gather, assimilate and synthesize information of different types pertinent to the music industries and creative sector.
Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should be able to: B1. Develop effective problem-solving, analytical and planning strategies for the music industries and in relation to the wider cultural and creative sectors; B2. Think and work across disciplines and creative sectors with confidence and agility; B3. Apply principles, theories and methods to define, formulate and critically analyse research problems, questions and hypotheses; B4. Critically reflect, innovate and adapt to change in music business practice both individually and in groups;
Teaching and Learning Methods
A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a. Learning and teaching methods designed to develop intellectual skills also include: 1. Lectures and problem-driven small group teaching that encourage the acquisition of the tools with which to think critically, and the application of these in concrete contexts (B1; B2; B3; B4);

2. A multidisciplinary teaching team and student cohort who are encouraged to share disciplinary experience and expertise through small group teaching that facilitates dialogue, and problem-based learning activities that demand that students employ the wealth of disciplinary knowledge they will be exposed to in considered and practicable ways (B2; B3); 3. Seminars and workshops built around real-world examples, in which students can consider how theory and practice might interplay and learn to apply it to their own professional behaviours (B3); 4. Guided independent study, supported with one-to-one supervision and access to an array of staff across SACS through office hours, drop-in surgeries and other opportunities for informal discussion led by the student's interests (B2; B4).
Assessment Strategy In addition to the overall assessment strategy detailed in 11b, assessment methods designed to evaluate and further intellectual skills include: 1. Written essays and reports that encourage students to think critically about real-world case studies of their own choosing (B1; B3; B4); 2. Reflective analysis which requires students to draw on an interdisciplinary pool of knowledge in order to respond to the brief (B2); 3. Creative and experimental written and verbal assessments, including portfolios of writing which reward innovation and independence (B2; B4); 4. A final research project led by students and born of their own areas of interest. (B4)
Practical Skills On completing the programme students will be able to: C1: Advocate for the music industries and their significance within a variety of sites and contexts relating to the cultural and creative sectors; C2: Have confidence in their ability to work with musicians, and other creative practitioners, as well as programmers, intellectual property managers and other leads within the creative sector; C3: Be sensitive and adept in communication across cultures, and practice social responsibility in their work and life; C4: Communicate effectively about the music industries both orally and in a variety of written forms and media.
Teaching and Learning Methods A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a. In addition, through C1, C2, C3, C4, 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 1. Real-life scenarios and case studies related to music industry practice and contexts, encouraging learners to identify key questions, gather relevant

information, and analyse arguments to make evidence-based decisions and promote critical thinking (C2, C3, C4); 2. Debates and discussions on current issues facing the music industries and creative sector, more broadly, requiring learners to critically analyse opposing viewpoints, synthesize different types of industry and related outputs, and develop evidence-based arguments (C1, C4); 3. Projects that require learners to propose and implement creative solutions to address specific issues relating to current and evolving music industry practice (C2, C3); 4. Engaging learners in research methods, to enable synthesis of varied sources of information, and a flexible, future-facing approach to industry issues (C1, C3, C4); 5. Exposing learners to different perspectives and problem-solving approaches through collaborative practical learning experiences and group projects (C1, C2, C3).
Assessment Strategy The key features of the overall programme assessment strategy are provided in section 11a. In addition, practical skills will be assessed by research journal article or live project final written report and presentation (C2, C3), individual project proposal (C2, C3), written essays and case study analyses (C4), and individual and group work/presentation (C1).
Transferable/Key Skills On completing the programme students will be able to: D1: Write confidently for a range of audiences, demonstrating technical proficiency and digital capability; D2: Communicate and collaborate effectively and be able to mediate between stakeholders; D3: Programme and manage events and individual research projects, and plan and perform administration and time management with confidence; D4: Source and utilise expert knowledge from a range of disciplinary backgrounds and sources.
Teaching and Learning Methods A broader discussion of the LTAS for the programme can be found in 11a. In addition, the teaching and learning methods for developing transferable and key skills include: 1. Lectures delivered by subject matter experts to provide learners with foundational knowledge and insights; 2. Case studies to help learners understand how experts apply their knowledge to solve problems/address challenges (D1); 3. Engaging learners in debates and discussions to enhance their ability to distinguish authoritative knowledge from biased or unreliable information (D1); 4. Assigning group projects that require learners to collaborate with peers from diverse backgrounds, fostering understanding and teamwork (D2); 5. Presenting learners with real-world challenges and opportunities, guiding them to develop structured approaches to address them (D3);

6. Providing opportunities for learners to present their arguments in front of their peers, academics and visiting experts, allowing for constructive feedback (D4).

Assessment Strategy

The key features of the overall programme assessment strategy are provided in section 11a ('Knowledge and Understanding'). Additionally, transferable and key skills will be assessed in the live projects, the project proposal (D1, D3, D4), final project report or journal article (D1-D4) and group work/presentations (D2-D4), building on knowledge acquired in programme modules.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

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).

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

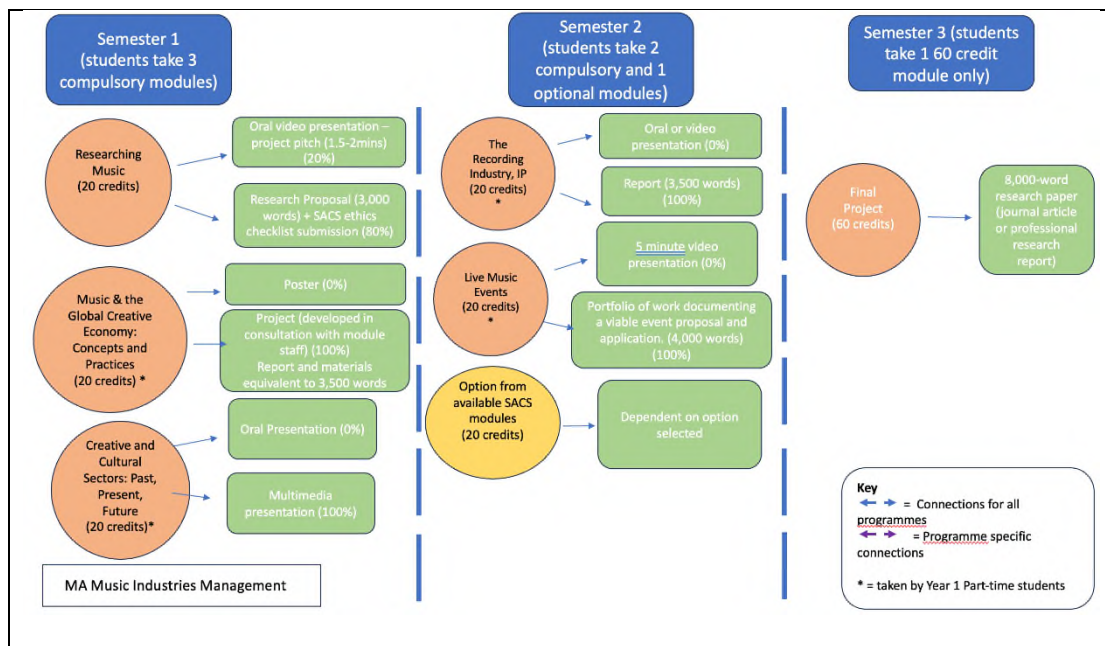
- Research methods pertinent to developing the final project, and transferrable to professional practice.
- Underpinning theoretical models of the creative sector, its past, present and future, and potential ways of navigating it.
- Outlining music's role in the global creative economy, and critical engagement with current research and expert practitioners.

Semester 2 develops these foundations to explore in greater depth key areas of music industry practice and contexts, through an examination of:

- Music as Intellectual Property, its relationship to national and global policy frameworks, and their consequences for industry and consumer practice.
- Live music and the practical skills required to organise live events, including planning, marketing and promotion, and the development of effective networks.
- Key contextual practices and areas of operation, through which the music businesses intersect with the wider creative sector (such as PR, digital communication, media law, freelancing, and data management)

In Semester 3 students undertake a rigorous research project of their students, consolidating the knowledge, understanding and skills developed over the year, and directing it towards an independent project of their own choosing.

Basic Structure and Assessment Journey



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

MA Music Industries Management offers a **contemporary education in the modern music industries, incorporating learning that equips graduates with a versatile set of skills applicable to the music and wider creative sectors**. The music department at Newcastle University enjoys a **long tradition of forward-facing education, informed by cutting edge research and practice** – it pioneered the study of popular and folk musics in the UK, and has continued to drive forward the integration of theoretical, practical work, current issues and sectoral debates in its degree programmes.

The programme draws on our **extensive connections with local, regional and national professional and industry bodies**, embedding their perspectives within teaching to promote our distinctive approach to combining practice with a deep theoretical understanding of overarching conceptual issues that equips students with the conceptual tools to make meaningful contributions to their field. Our **network of expertise and partners** covers a broad spectrum of music sector roles and interests, from PR and artist management to event promotion, A&R, the charitable and policy roles.

At the heart of the curriculum is an approach that encourages **critical, reflective research, and its application to current issues**. Through workshops, lectures, group work and independent study projects, students develop their skills, networks, employability and capacity to respond flexibly and innovatively to the dynamic and fluid music industries and creative sector. **Professional research and real-world live project-based learning are the key features of this programme**. All modules feed through to and support the final research project where learners work individually to design either a music industries research project presented as a journal article or respond to a **live research topic set by an external client in the**

sector. The work is intellectually informed by leading researchers and industry experts 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, set if they wish, in their own country although work will be completed in the UK. This is intended to stimulate discussion and reflection on the interconnections, and varieties, of music industry practice in different business, cultural and regulatory environments, supporting learners to apply course learning to their own cultural context.

Students benefit from substantive theoretical and practical contextualising of the music industries within the Creative and Cultural Industries in conjunction with the music department's **strong connections and cross-learning capacity** within the School of Arts and Cultures. They will be exposed to current and practical perspectives from industry practitioners and experts and gain direct experience of industry-relevant project planning and skills in network building.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[Programme Regulations 2025-26](#)

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

Additional mechanisms

15 Regulation of assessment

Generic information regarding University provision is available at the following link.

[Generic Information](#)

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In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:
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The University Prospectus: http://www.ncl.ac.uk/postgraduate/courses/
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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 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	1, 6	2, 3, 4	4	3, 4
MUS8023 Music & the Creative Economy: Concepts and Practices (20 credits)	Compulsory	1, 5, 3	1, 3, 4	1, 4	4.
MUS8027 Live Music Events (20)	Compulsory	1; 3	2, 1, 4	2	2, 3.
MUS8028 Pedagogical Technology in Music Education	Option	3, 4	1, 3	3	1
MUS8029 Music Education, Community and Wellbeing	Option	2, 4, 5,	1, 3, 4		3, 4
MUS8030 The Recording Industry, IP and A (20)	Compulsory	4, 5, 2, 3	3, 2, 4	4	2
MUS8032 Music Research Project (60)	Compulsory	1, 6	2, 3, 4	4	1, 3, 4
SAC8001 Creative and Cultural Sector: Past, Present, Future (20)	Compulsory	1, 2, 3	2, 3	2, 3, 4	2, 4

