

**PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION
(Undergraduate)**



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BMus (Hons)
4	Programme Title	Music
5	UCAS/Programme Code	W304
6	Programme Accreditation	N/A
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Music
8	FHEQ Level	Level 6
9	Date written/revised	March 2026

10 Programme Aims

1. To stimulate the development of thoughtful, well-informed musicians possessing a wide range of musical experiences.
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3. To provide the essentials of a sound musical and academic training encompassing approaches that are historically contextualised, theoretically informed, practically demonstrated, technically fluent and creatively inventive.
4. To offer structured choice and flexibility so that students can pursue their own interests and aptitudes within a determined curricular structure.
5. To develop an awareness both of traditional areas of study and of recent and current developments in musical thinking and intellectual inquiry.
6. 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.
7. To conform, where appropriate, with University policies and QAA codes of practice.
8. 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.
9. To develop an awareness of the place of British approaches to the study of music in a broader cultural context as facilitated by an additional year's study abroad.
10. 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.
11. Gain insight into international Higher Education and experience differences in academic approach and learning environment.
12. 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
On completing the programme students should have a broad knowledge and developed understanding of: A1 Cultural approaches to the study of music A2 Issues in historical musicology A3 Interdisciplinary applications and theoretical approaches relevant to the study of Music A4 Samples of musical repertoires of various kinds (including classical, world, folk and traditional, and contemporary and popular) A5 Musical processes and structures A6 Demonstrate the ability to adapt to different learning environments.
Teaching and Learning Methods
The primary means of imparting knowledge and understanding is lectures. These are supplemented by seminars and/or tutorials where students can evaluate their learning through discussion and group (or solo) practice. Students are taught material 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. A4-A5 require workshops, rehearsals and 1:1 teaching.
Assessment Strategy
Essay and portfolio assignments; seen, unseen and take-away exam papers; presentations, individual and group assignments for seminars, etc.
Intellectual Skills
On completing the programme students should have: B1 the ability to evaluate evidence from different sources B2 the ability to present coherent arguments and an independent viewpoint B3 analytical powers B4 critical skills (e.g. awareness of ideologies, and the culturally mediated nature of knowledge) B5 the ability to understand and handle non-verbal knowledge and thinking
Teaching and Learning Methods
These are acquired and developed in all the expected forums: lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops and 1:1 teaching. B1 and B2 are addressed at stage 1 in Study Skills teaching.. Individual module descriptions give more specific details.
Assessment Strategy
Essay and portfolio assignments; seen, unseen and take-away exam papers; presentations, individual and group assignments for seminars; live performances, etc.
Practical Skills
On completing the programme students will have acquired skills in the following areas:

- C1 Performance (instrumental, vocal)
- 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

Teaching and Learning Methods

C1 is taught through a combination of 1:1 and group tuition, with systematic support through MUSIC's series of master classes and workshops.

C2 is taught through a mixture of lectures (demonstrating relevant techniques and approaches), seminars, group projects and tutorials.

Musicological research skills (C3) are fostered within all music logically-based modules. At Stages Two and Three, 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 through a combination of Robinson Library induction and designated Study Skills sessions (see, under section B).

Options in musical analysis and harmony (see A5 above), taken alongside studies in composition and/or performance, enable students to develop their theoretical and notational fluency (C4 and C5).

Assessment Strategy

As **1st Assessment Strategy** plus performances, and portfolios of compositions and assignments.

Transferable/Key Skills

On completing the programme students should have developed 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.
- D8 Adapt and operate in a different cultural environment.

Teaching and Learning Methods

Research skills (D1) are embedded within musicological studies.

D2 is practised across the board in ways appropriate to each module, such as coursework assignments, written exams and oral presentations. Some modules offer the opportunity to submit work-in-progress on a formative, rather than summative, basis. Additional support is given through Music's Study Skills programme, which is compulsory 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 (Dissertation or Project options) in the Finalists Conference which takes place at the end of the first semester of a student's final stage.

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

D4: time-management training is offered, where appropriate, within the Study Skills programme. 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.

IT skills (D5) are ubiquitously used within music degrees. Training in the use of music notation and DAW software is given as part of the relevant composition modules; training in the use of research tools (JSTOR, RILM, First Search, Web of Science, etc.) is given to students taking historical/cultural optional modules and those writing dissertations or projects in their final year. In their first Welcome Week, all Music students are given training in the use of Blackboard, RAS, and other essential IT resources; this training is reinforced through the strategic use of Blackboard for the delivery of teaching materials and the electronic submission of assignments during the first stage of study. All submitted work must also be word processed.

D6: Generally (as is typical for an Arts degree) a high a proportion of individual preparation time to class contact time is assumed: students are ultimately expected to be responsible for their own learning. More specifically, opportunities are provided for individual project work – or example, in historical/cultural options, in which a small research project related to material studied on the module forms the main part of the assessment. At least one third of students' final stage is devoted to a specialist study, which is conducted largely through independent learning, with intermittent supervisions or vocal/instrumental lessons.

D7: students frequently work together in workshops, rehearsal, and peer study-groups, and are often required to produce a collaborative response to seminar assignments: teamwork is integral, for instance, to compositional studies at Stage One.

Assessment Strategy

D1-D2: As 1st assessment strategy.

D3: public recital or gig at final stage; 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 on CD or file share; students submitting score-based compositions normally use note-processing software (e.g. Sibelius)

D6: students take at least one historical/cultural option at each stage, which in most cases is assessed through an independently conducted research project. Students must take at least one Specialist Study, where the emphasis is primarily on independent learning.

D7: mostly not directly assessed, although contributions to team-based submissions, and effectiveness of team participation, are assessed in certain modules.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The BMus Year abroad has four '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 (identical for BA W300 and BMus with Year Abroad – W304)

Two routes are offered in the first year of studies: with music modules only or with a foreign language. Foreign language study is regarded as valuable for music students. The option of studying a foreign language for 20 or 40 credits is available. This option is particularly important for students on the BMus with Year Abroad, and even more so for those considering an exchange year at a non-Anglophone destination. Students are introduced to HE level study in areas that include musicology, music theory and analysis, performance, and composition. MUS1018 is the only Core module in this pathway.

Stage 2 (identical for BA and BMus with Year Abroad)

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.

All 120 credits are elective, there are no compulsory modules. However, students must choose at least one module from the lists of Musical materials (list 1) and Applied options (list 3), and two from the list of Historical and Cultural options (list 2).

At Stage 2 students may also take modules to the value of 20 credits in a subject other than Music. You might want, for example, to continue with a foreign language you began in Stage 1, or pursue a cultural, historical or theoretical topic from the complementary perspective of another subject, or gain vocational experience. If this is your intention you should make the necessary enquiries at the appropriate school.

On attainment of a combined stage 1 and semester 1 stage 2 mark average of 60% or higher students may be considered for transfer to the Year Abroad programme, W304. The relevant DPD should be consulted if this is being considered.

In addition, BMus with Year Abroad students undertake preparation for their year abroad in Stage 3. Satisfactory completion of this work is a prerequisite for the overseas year (otherwise you default to Stage 3 of the BA programme).

Stage 3: Year Abroad

At a relevant to host institution: progression is to complete one academic year of study at the host institution.

Stage 4

By the time you reach Stage 4, the final stage of the BMus programme, you are in a position to specialise to a considerable extent, building further on your particular strengths and interests. Normally at least a third of your time (40 credits) will be devoted to a Major Specialist Study and you will usually take a second, Minor Specialist Study.

As at Stage 2, a menu of 20-credit historical/cultural options and a menu of 20-credit applied options is also available. In usual circumstances students will take at least one module from each menu.

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

1. Exchange Year of study abroad at Stage Three (Year Abroad).
2. Inclusivity of curriculum and cohort – this degree enables students to experience a broad range of approaches to studying music, and a broad range of music from around the world, both art music and popular and contemporary music.
3. Emphasis on cultural theory.
4. Wide choice of options nearly all of which stem directly from staff research interests.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

[PROGRAMME REGULATIONS](#)

13 Support for Student Learning

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

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