Royal Holloway, University of London
Course specification for a postgraduate award
MMus Music

Section 1 – Introduction to your course
This course specification is a formal document, which provides a summary of the main features of your course and the learning outcomes that you might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if you take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. Further information is contained in the University prospectus, and in various handbooks, all of which you will be able to access online. Alternatively, further information on the University's academic regulations and policies can be found here. Further information on the University's Admissions Policy can be found here. Your degree course in Music provides progressive structures in which you will be able to gain ever-wider knowledge and understanding, and appropriate skills. Your course contains a combination of mandatory modules to introduce you to historical periods, to the principle musical genres, and to contemporary critical and theoretical approaches, with a range of specialist options. While Royal Holloway keeps all the information made available under review, courses and the availability of individual modules, especially optional modules are necessarily subject to change at any time, and you are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect your decision to follow a specific course. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform you as soon as is practicable of any significant changes which might affect your studies. The following is a brief description for some of the most important terminology for understanding the content of this document: *Degree course* – Also referred to as 'programme', this term refers to the qualification you will be awarded upon successful completion of your studies. 'Courses' were formerly known as 'programmes' at Royal Holloway. *Module* – This refers to the credits you will study each year to complete your degree course. Postgraduate taught degrees at Royal Holloway comprise 180 credits. On some degree courses a certain number of optional modules must be passed for a particular degree title. 'Modules' were formerly known as 'course units' at Royal Holloway.

Section 2 – Course details			
Date of specification update	February 2026	**Location of study**	Egham
Course award and title	MMus Music	**Level of study**	Postgraduate
Course code	3500	**Year of entry**	2026/27
Awarding body	Royal Holloway, University of London		
Department or school	School of Performing and Digital Arts	**Other departments or schools involved in teaching the course**	
Mode(s) of attendance	Full time and part time	**Duration of the course**	One year (52 weeks) full-time Two to five years (104 - 260 weeks) part-time
Accrediting Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body requirement(s)	N/A		
Link to Coursefinder for further information:	https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studying-here/	**For queries on admissions:**	https://royalholloway.ac.uk/applicationquery

Section 3 – Degree course structure

3.1 Mandatory module information

The following table summarises the mandatory modules which students must take in each year of study

Module code	Module title	Credits	FHEQ level	Module status (Mandatory Condonable MC or Mandatory Non-Condonable MNC
MU5500	Skills in Advanced Musical Studies	30	7	MC

This table sets out the most important information for the mandatory modules on your degree course. These modules are central to achieving your learning outcomes, so they are compulsory, and all students on your degree course will be required to take them. You will be automatically registered for these modules each year. Mandatory modules fall into two categories: 'condonable' or 'non-condonable'.

In the case of mandatory 'non-condonable' (MNC) modules, you must pass the module before you can proceed to the next year of your course, or to successfully graduate with a particular degree title. In the case of mandatory 'condonable' (MC) modules, these must be taken but you can still progress or graduate even if you do not pass them. Please note that although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, changes to your degree course may be made where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events. For example, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of external advisors, to enhance academic provision.

3.2 Optional modules

In addition to mandatory modules, there may be a number of optional modules available during the course of your degree. Although Royal Holloway will keep changes to a minimum, new options may be offered, or existing ones may be withdrawn. For example, where reasonable and necessary due to unexpected events, where requirements of relevant Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) have changed and course requirements must change accordingly, or where changes are deemed necessary on the basis of student feedback and/or the advice of External Advisors, to enhance academic provision. There may be additional requirements around option selection; please contact the Department for further information.

The Department offers pathways through the MMus. In addition to the mandatory module MU5500, students take:

Composition Pathway

MU5549 Special Study: Composition (60 credits)
Modules in Composition (at least to value of 30 credits)
Optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level module from another Department.

Ethnomusicology/Musicology Pathway

MU5599 Special Study: Dissertation (60 credits)
Modules related to their pathway (at least to value of 30 credits)
Two optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level modules from another Department.

Performance Pathway
MU5539 Special Study: Performance (60 credits)
Modules related to their pathway (at least to value of 30 credits)
Optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level modules in another Department.

Collaborative Piano Pathway
MU5539 Special Study: Performance (60 credits)
Modules related to their pathway (at least to value of 30 credits)
Optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level modules in another Department.

Film, Television and Game Music Pathway
MU5599 Special Study: Dissertation (60 credits) or MU5549 Special Study: Composition (60 credits)
Modules related to their pathway (at least to value of 30 credits)
Optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level modules in another Department.

Music & Management Pathway
MU5505 Special Study: Music Industry Report (60 credits)
Modules related to their pathway (at least to value of 30 credits)
Optional modules from the Department of Music (to value of 60 credits). By arrangement, up to 30 credits may be replaced by Master's level modules in another Department.

Section 4 - Progressing through each year of your degree course

For further information on the progression and award requirements for your degree, please refer to Royal Holloway's Academic Regulations.

Progression throughout the year/s is monitored through performance in summative or formative coursework assignments. Please note that if you hold a Student Visa and you choose to leave (or are required to leave because of non-progression) or complete early (before the course end date stated on your CAS), then this will be reported to UKVI.

All postgraduate taught students are required to take and pass the non-credit bearing Moodle-based Academic Integrity module SS1001 in order to be awarded. The pass mark for the module assessment is stated in the on-line Academic Integrity Moodle module. Students may attempt the assessment as often as they wish with no penalties or capping. Students who otherwise meet the requirements for award as stipulated in the Academic Taught Regulations but fail to pass the Moodle-based Academic Integrity module will not be awarded.

The part-time course lasts 104 weeks, beginning in September of year one. Part-time students normally take mandatory module MU5500 Skills in Advanced Musical Studies plus three optional modules in their first year, and three optional modules and the Special Study in their second year.

CPD part-time students study for the MMus over a minimum period of three years and a maximum period of five years. CPD part-time students will accumulate credits towards the MMus by studying one or more MMus module each year. CPD part-time students will normally do the Special Study during their final year; they will also normally take the mandatory module MU5500 Skills in Advanced Musical Studies in their first year, and at any rate at least two years before they plan to undertake their Special Study (i.e. by year 3 if studying for 5 years; by year 2 if studying for 4 years).

Section 5 – Educational aims of the course

The aims of this course are to:

- to provide a flexible series of advanced level modules that engage with a range of more generalised issues and themes relevant to the study of music;
- to enable students to acquire systematic understanding and critical appreciation of problems, insights, techniques and knowledge drawn from the forefront of current musical research and performance;
- to develop specific techniques, skills and knowledge relevant to the interests and/or research needs of individual students;
- to equip students for independent research, analysis, writing or performance at an advanced/professional level;
- to allow for both breadth of study and distinct specialism;
- to develop key communications, IT and management skills relevant for postgraduate work.

Section 6 - Course learning outcomes In general terms, the courses provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes. (*Categories – Knowledge and understanding (K), Skills and other attributes (S), and Transferable skills (*))*	
Theme	**Course learning outcome**
1. Knowledge/ Understanding	1.1 Demonstrate further advances in their knowledge and understanding of the nature of professional musical activity (e.g. research, performance, composition, management) at the highest national and international levels. 1.2 Apply systematic and creative methods when dealing with complex issues associated with music's role in relation to other media or disciplines.
2. Musical/Technical Skills	2.1 Exercise initiative in discovering how to analyse or evaluate critically a musical score or performance using a variety of techniques. 2.2 Demonstrate self-direction and originality in using digital skills relevant to music (e.g. digital tools for music research, perf/comp technologies).
3. Research & Communication	3.1 Take initiative in constructing a research programme of relevant literature and materials (e.g. works, performances, screen media, businesses) on given musical topics. 3.2 Synthesize, evaluate, handle, describe, edit or analyse sources of information (including digital, ethnographic, audio, and audiovisual sources) at a professional level. 3.3 Communicate creative ideas effectively (e.g. through performance, composition, writing, oral presentations).
4. Creativity	4.1 Convey personal expression, meaning and ideas through creative work.
5. Employability	5.1 Continue to advance their knowledge of skills relevant to music-related careers (research, performance, composition, management).
6. Personal Skills	6.1 Apply principles of good citizenship to personal and professional practices (e.g. ethical and inclusive approaches to creation and production). 6.2 Continue to develop independent learning ability and skills in both collaborative and independent working (including leadership).

Section 7 - Teaching, learning and assessment
Teaching and learning contexts take a variety of forms including lectures, seminars, group visits, workshops, individual or group tutorials, and individual supervision of special study research, as well as individual instrumental or vocal tuition (for students taking courses with a Performance element, such as Special Study Performance or Documenting Performance on Performance courses). Students are allocated both a Special Study supervisor and an advisor. Department-sponsored research seminars, study days and public lectures also provide important stimuli to advanced level study and learning. Learning also takes place though private study, individual research, practice and Department-sponsored (and other) musical activities and performances. Students are expected to demonstrate both initiative and commitment in terms of developing independent learning strategies. The assessment of the mandatory and optional modules is based on coursework essays or other assignments, mostly submitted during terms one and two. Special study dissertations, portfolios and performance examinations are assessed at the end of the course. Contact hours come in various forms and may take the form of time spent with a member of staff in a lecture or seminar with other students. Contact hours may also be laboratory or, studio-based sessions, project supervision with a member of staff, or discussion through a virtual learning environment (VLE). These contact hours may be with a lecturer or teaching assistant, but they may also be with a technician, or specialist support staff. The way in which each module on your degree course is assessed will also vary. Assessments designated as 'summative' will receive a mark which will count towards your overall mark for the module, and potentially your degree classification, depending on your year of study. On successful completion of the module you will gain the credits listed. More detailed information on modules, including teaching and learning methods, and methods of assessment, can be found via the online Royal Holloway Curriculum Catalogue. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed regularly by the university, and may also be checked routinely by external agencies.

Section 8 – Additional costs
There are no single associated costs greater than £50 per item on this course.
These estimated costs relate to studying this particular degree course at Royal Holloway. General costs such as accommodation, food, books and other learning materials and printing etc., have not been included, but further information is available on our website.

Section 9 – Indicators of quality and standards	
QAA Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level	7
Your course is designed in accordance with the FHEQ to ensure your qualification is awarded on the basis of nationally established standards of achievement, for both outcomes and attainment. The qualification descriptors within the FHEQ set out the generic outcomes and attributes expected for the award of individual qualifications. The qualification descriptors contained in the FHEQ exemplify the outcomes and attributes expected of learning that results in the award of higher education qualifications. These outcomes represent the integration of various learning experiences resulting from designated and coherent courses of study.	
QAA Subject benchmark statement(s)	http://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
Subject benchmark statements provide a means for the academic community to describe the nature and characteristics of courses in a specific subject or subject area. They also represent general expectations about standards for the award of qualifications at a given level in terms of the attributes and capabilities that those possessing qualifications should have demonstrated.	

Section 10– Intermediate exit awards (where available)		
You may be eligible for an intermediate exit award if you complete part of the course as detailed in this document. Any additional criteria (e.g. mandatory modules, credit requirements) for intermediate awards is outlined in the sections below.		
Award	**Criteria**	**Awarding body**
PG Diploma	Passes in at least 120 credits, with fails of between 40% to 49% for up to 40 credits condonable (with the exception of any course specific requirements).	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College
PG Certificate	Passes in at least 60 credits with no condonable fails	Royal Holloway and Bedford New College