

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

This document describes the **Master of Music in Advanced Musical Studies**. This specification is valid for new entrants from **September 2010**.

The aims of the programme are:

- to provide a flexible series of advanced level courses 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.

The programme is delivered over one year of full-time study (52 weeks) or two years of part-time study (104 weeks). On successful completion of the programme a student should have an understanding of the area of the programme at a level appropriate for a postgraduate qualification. While being a self-contained degree in its own right, the programme provides suitable and recognised qualifications for entry to PhD study in a number of sub-disciplinary fields of Music.

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This document provides a summary of the main features of the programme(s), and of the outcomes which a student might reasonably be expected to achieve if full advantage is taken of the learning opportunities provided. Further information is contained in the College prospectus, the College Regulations and in various handbooks issued to students upon arrival. Whilst Royal Holloway keeps all its information for prospective applicants and students under review, programmes and the availability of individual courses are necessarily subject to change at any time, and prospective applicants are therefore advised to seek confirmation of any factors which might affect their decision to follow a specific programme. In turn, Royal Holloway will inform applicants and students as soon as is practicable of any substantial changes which might affect their studies.

Learning outcomes

Teaching and learning in the programme are closely informed by the active research of staff. In general terms, the programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge and understanding

- a critical understanding of the nature of professional musical, musicological and/or compositional activity at the highest national and international levels;
- familiarity with the most important and sophisticated issues, techniques and literature relevant to the chosen area of musical enquiry/expertise;

- an awareness of and ability to critically engage with new thinking in music, musicology and/or compositional practice;
- a critical understanding of the complex linkages between the many aspects of a period, problem or theme;
- enhanced understanding of the contingency of musical assumptions and judgements;
- an advanced knowledge of a variety of critical and new technology approaches applicable to the specific field.

Skills and other attributes

Students will be able to:

- handle, describe, edit or analyse sources of information (including IT sources) at a professional level;*
- relate musical sources to their social, political or economic contexts;
- analyse or evaluate critically a musical score or performance;
- communicate complex ideas, in writing, oral presentations and group discussion;*
- take initiative in constructing a reading programme of relevant literature on given topics;*
- conduct independent research at an advanced level and employ developed writing skills;*
- analyse and problem-solve in the process of musical composition;
- demonstrate skills of reflection in reading and learning, and skills in information handling and retrieval;*
- articulate knowledge and the understanding of texts, concepts and theories at an advanced level, demonstrating self-direction and originality;*
- present logical and coherent written and oral arguments of varying lengths;*
- comprehend and develop sophisticated concepts and original critical ideas;*
- demonstrate enhanced interpersonal skills, involving recognising and respecting the viewpoints, and interacting constructively with other people;*
- demonstrate enhanced time management and organisational skills including working to deadlines, prioritising tasks, organising work-time;*
- In addition, the programme fosters the development of a range of personal attributes that are important in the world of work, and that strengthens our postgraduates' abilities to engage in lifelong learning and contribute to the wider community. These include personal motivation; the ability to work autonomously and with others; self-awareness and self-management; empathy and insight; intellectual integrity; awareness of responsibility as a local, national and international citizen; interest in lifelong learning; flexibility and adaptability; creativity.*

* transferable skills

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Teaching, learning and assessment

The programme exploits a modular format to permit an effective combination of both general and specialised courses, giving students flexibility to create a programme suited to their own skills, interests and ambitions. Methodological, technical and practical training is provided across a broad range of sub-disciplines which prepare students for a wide choice of Special Studies based on guided individual study/research/practice. In addition, a common core course provides a general grounding in the discipline as a whole. Courses are delivered and most coursework tasks submitted during terms one and two, enabling students to focus on their individual Special Study for the remainder of the programme.

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 through 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 core and elective courses 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 programme. All assessment is subject to double marking. Several courses include unassessed formative tasks or assignments (such as presentations). These enable

students to appreciate the expected standards and acquire feedback in advance of submitting assessed assignments that will contribute towards the final award. Full details of the assessments for individual courses can be obtained from the [Department](#).

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Details of the programme structure(s)

The programme is divided into three strands, consisting of:

- (1) Core course (taken by all students): (12.5%) – MU5500 Skills in Advanced Musical Studies
- (2) Five elective courses, all including elements of research training, some of which relate to the Special Study: (12.5% each) – A full list of elective courses for the current academic year can be obtained from the [Department](#).
- (3) Special Study: (25%) – One chosen from either: MU5599 Special Study: Dissertation, MU5539 Special Study: Performance or MU5549 Special Study: Composition.

By arrangement, up to two elective courses may be replaced by two Masters' level courses of 12.5% (200 NLHs) or one course of 25% (400 NLHs) in another department or, for Performance students only, an optional dissertation (Special Study: Performance Studies).

Part-time programme structure

The part-time programme lasts 104 weeks, beginning in September of year one. Part-time students normally take core course MU5500 Skills in Advanced Musical Studies plus 3 electives in their first year, and two further electives and the Special Study in their second year.

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Progression and award requirements

Progression throughout the year is monitored through coursework assignments and periodic reviews (informal in January, formal in May). Part-time students must normally pass the core course (taken in the first year) and at least two electives in order to progress to a second year. To pass the programme a student must achieve an overall weighted average of at least 50.00%, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%. Failure marks between 40-49% can be condoned in courses which do not constitute more than 25% of the final assessment, provided that the overall weighted average is at least 50.00%.

The Masters degree with Merit may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 65.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 50%.

The Masters degree with Distinction may be awarded if a student achieves an overall weighted average of 70.00% or above, with no mark in any element which counts towards the final assessment falling below 60%. A Distinction will not normally be awarded if a student re-sits or re-takes any element of the programme. In exceptional circumstances a viva may be held for a student at the request of the Examiners.

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Student support and guidance

Beyond the systems of teaching and learning to support academic development, students are supported and guided by various departmental and College systems and services, including the following:

- MMus Programme Director and Director of Graduate Studies oversee the running of the programme, and work in an advisory and pastoral capacity;
- Informal progress Review in January and formal progress Review in May;
- The allocation of a Special Study supervisor and adviser from the academic staff of the Department, who may also work in a pastoral capacity;
- Dedicated 'office hours' when all members of academic staff are available to students without appointment, and access to members of staff at other times by appointment;
- The Department's Postgraduate Induction session for incoming students in the first week of the Autumn term, aligned with the College Induction process;

- The annual Department *Postgraduate Student Handbook*, issued to all PG students, and various College publications;
- Elected student representatives on the Department Postgraduate Committee, Composition Committee, Performance Committee and Student-Staff Committee;
- The Department Careers Liaison service, allied to the College Careers Service;
- Central College support services, including the Student Counselling Service, the Health Centre, Royal Holloway International, the Educational Support Office, the Careers Service, the Students' Union and the Chaplaincy.

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Admission requirements

The normal requirement is an Upper Second Class Honours or equivalent degree in Music. In addition the admission process includes an interview and (if relevant) audition. The Department operates a flexible policy with respect to admissions and welcomes applicants with non-standard qualifications, mature or overseas applicants and applicants with unusual backgrounds, if appropriate aptitude and interest can be demonstrated. Students whose first language is not English may also be asked for a qualification in English Language at an appropriate level. For further details please refer to the [Prospective Students](#) web page. It may also be helpful to contact the [Admissions Office](#) for specific guidance on the entrance requirements for particular programmes.

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Further learning and career opportunities

The programme provides a firm foundation for students wishing to embark upon MPhil/PhD research and for professional work in a range of areas of the music profession. These include the media, research, academia, teaching, performing and arts administration. For more details on further learning and career opportunities please refer to the [Careers Service](#).

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Indicators of quality and standards

Royal Holloway's position as one of the UK's leading research-intensive institutions was confirmed by the results of the most recent Research Assessment Exercise (RAE 2008) conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council (HEFCE). The new scoring system for the RAE 2008 measures research quality in four categories, with the top score of 4* indicating quality that is world-leading and of the highest standards in terms of originality, significance and rigour. 60% of the College's research profile is rated as world-leading or internationally excellent outperforming the national average of 50%. The College is ranked 16th in the UK for research of 4* standard and 18th for 3* and 4* research. The Department of Music is the top Music department in the UK, further recognition of its world-leading research excellence.

The excellence of the Department's research informs its teaching, since many of the courses of the MMus programme are able to present the latest advances in those areas. The Department continually monitors and assesses the quality and standards of its activities through various systems such as students' evaluation questionnaires on courses and programmes, peer review of teaching, postgraduate student representation on Department committees, and the rigorous processes of scrutiny and annual reports by the Visiting Examiners and the Annual Review.

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List of programmes with details of awards, teaching arrangements and accreditation

The programme is taught entirely by staff at Royal Holloway, University of London, and leads to an award of the University of London. Programmes in Music are not subject to accreditation by a professional body. The Banner programme code is given in parentheses.

Master of Music Programme in Advanced Musical Studies

MMus in Advanced Musical Studies (2346)

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