

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION



1	Awarding Institution	Newcastle University
2	Teaching Institution	Newcastle University
3	Final Award	BA (Hons)
4	Programme Title	BMus Hons Popular and Contemporary Music
5	UCAS/Programme Code	W301
6	Programme Accreditation	n/a
7	QAA Subject Benchmark(s)	Music
8	FHEQ Level	Honours
9	Date written/revised	October 2002 / July 2007 /

10 Programme Aims

1. to enable students to extend and deepen their practical musical skills
2. to broaden the range of contemporary musics in which such skills can be practised
3. to place the practical activities within the context of a critical understanding of twentieth-century musical practices, their historical development and their role in contemporary culture
4. to stimulate the development of thoughtful, well-informed musicians specialising in contemporary and popular musics, but with an informed perspective of the wider study of music; and thereby,
5. to promote understanding of and engagement with a range of musical repertoires including popular and contemporary repertoires;
6. to enable students to extend and deepen their practical musical skills within the context of a critical understanding of current musical practices, their historical development, and their role in contemporary culture;
7. to provide a sound musical and academic training encompassing approaches that are historically contextualised, theoretically informed, practically demonstrated, technically fluent and creatively inventive;
8. to offer structured choice and flexibility so that students can pursue their own interests and aptitudes within a determined curricular structure;
9. to develop an awareness both of traditional areas of study and of recent and current developments in musical thinking and intellectual inquiry;
10. to cultivate skills which are valuable in themselves, of benefit to future employers and, wherever possible, provide firm foundations for postgraduate study;
11. to conform, where appropriate, with University policies and the Framework for Higher Educational Qualifications (FHEQ), and to meet the standards set out in the QAA's benchmark statements for music degrees

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 (subject) (X).

A-Knowledge and Understanding
<p>The programme provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding, discipline-related and general key skills in the following areas:</p> <p>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 from musical repertoires of many kinds (including classical, popular, world musics) A5 Musical processes and structures</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>The primary method of imparting knowledge and understanding is lectures. These are supplemented by seminars and/or tutorials where students are able to check their learning through discussion and through practice. Students are taught material through independent reading and listening, with close reading of set texts and close listening to set pieces often required 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 and A5 require workshops, rehearsals and 1:1 teaching, whereas independent study includes practice and composition.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Essay and project assignments, seen exam papers, take-away exam papers, individual assignments for lectures, seminars, etc.</p>
B-Intellectual Skills
<p>On completing the programme students will have acquired the following:</p> <p>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, the culturally mediated nature of knowledge) B5 the ability to understand and handle non-verbal knowledge and thinking</p>
Teaching and Learning Methods
<p>These are acquired and developed in all the expected forums: lectures, seminars and tutorials. Individual module descriptions give more precise details.</p>
Assessment Strategy
<p>Essay and project assignments, seen exam papers, take-away exam papers, individual assignments for lectures, seminars, etc.</p>
C-Practical Skills
<p>Graduates will have developed skills in at least two of the following areas (with at least one pursued as a specialism accounting for one third of their final stage):</p> <p>C1 Performance (instrumental, vocal or DJ) C2 Composition (score based) C3 Composition (electronically based) C4 Musicological Research skills</p> <p>Additionally, graduates will have acquired the following:</p>

<p>C5 Harmony and aural skills</p> <p>C6 Music-analytical skills</p> <p>C7 Applied musical skills (e.g. arranging skills, studio skills, direction/production skills, music editing skills, music business skills)</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p> <p>C1 is taught primarily through 1:1 instrumental or vocal lessons, and is supported by periodic workshops on issues such as musical interpretation and performance practice. There is also a requirement to participate in at least one band or ensemble.</p> <p>At stage 3 C2 and C3 are taught through a mixture of lectures (demonstrating relevant techniques and approaches) and seminars / tutorials, where students discuss applications of these to their own creative projects. A large measure of independent production is assumed between sessions. In the final stage, students are given freer rein to define their own projects, and these are discussed largely in 1:1 tutorials, supported by group sessions.</p> <p>Musicological research skills (C4) are inculcated through all musicologically based modules. More specifically, at both stages students can pursue at least one historical-cultural option, taught by seminar, which considers recent research in the relevant field, and requires students to undertake a short, independently conducted research project following these examples. Additionally, sessions dealing with such matters as bibliographic IT applications (databases etc.) are laid on through the Robinson Library. In their final stage, students have the option of undertaking a dissertation, supported by 1:1 tutorials and seminars.</p>
<p>Assessment Strategy</p> <p>As A above. Plus performances, and portfolios of compositions and assignments.</p>
<p>D Transferable/Key Skills</p> <p>On completing the programme students will have acquired the following:</p> <p>D1 Research skills</p> <p>D2 communication through the written word</p> <p>D3 communication through the spoken word</p> <p>D4 public presentation</p> <p>D5 time management</p> <p>D6 computer and technological literacy</p> <p>D7 independent learning</p> <p>D8 team work</p>
<p>Teaching and Learning Methods</p> <p>For D1 (musicological research) see the paragraph on C4 above.</p> <p>D2 is practised across the board in ways relevant to each module, such as coursework assignments. Some modules offer the opportunity to submit work-in-progress on a formative, not-for-assessment basis. Additional support is given through the Study Skills activity, which is compulsory to all incoming students and also offered at other stages on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>D3 & D4: seminars, tutorials and peer study groups are typical forums in which oral communication skills are informally practiced. For musicians oral communication is also particularly important in rehearsals; and public performance is very much a fact of life for many of them. Additionally, final stage students are required to make a formal presentation in the Finalists' Conference, on their specialist study.</p> <p>D5: a seminar on time-management is offered as part of the study skills programme. Music students develop time management skills <i>de facto</i>, in order to balance a busy regime of classes, rehearsals, independent study, and practice on their instrument or voice.</p> <p>D6: induction week session; special sessions offering training on use of bibliographic databases (RILM, Web of Science etc.). Many students also pursue specifically musical IT applications (including music notation software, sequencing packages), taught in lectures and seminars.</p>

D7: 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 –for 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.

D8: students frequently work together in workshops, rehearsals and peer study-groups, and are often required to produce a collaborative response to seminar assignments.

Assessment Strategy

D1, D2: see A above.

D3 & D4: public instrumental or vocal recital at final stage; or presentation at Finalists' Conference.

D5: indirectly assessed (it's usually fairly obvious how well a student has managed their time).

D6: all students are required to produce word-processed essays, and to demonstrate internet literacy as part of their research assignments. Students engaged in electronically based composition submit their work on minidisc or CD. Many students present score-based compositional work using IT packages such as Sibelius and Finale.

D7: students can 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.

D8: not directly assessed.

12 Programme Curriculum, Structure and Features

Basic structure of the programme

The programme begins at Stage 3, when you study various aspects of music in contemporary culture, with an emphasis on 'contemporary' in the widest possible sense. We encourage creative exploration in performance, composition and song writing, in combination with critical, intellectual engagement.

At Stage 4 you usually undertake two specialist studies in areas of interest to you. These are assessed through a portfolio of work, a studio-produced album of original music, project or live public performance. You also study music and cultural theory, and further optional modules chosen from the wide selection available (see information for the BA in Music). You have the opportunity to work on contemporary music outside of the mainstream, and to develop original and imaginative approaches to your work on a course that recognises the diverse and often unorthodox nature of contemporary musical practice.

The pattern of study is:

		Units of Study		
	Comp	Core	Opt	Credits
Stage 3				
MUS1013	x			20
MUS2058	X			20
MUS2062	x			20
MUS2020			x	20
MUS2061			x	20
MUS2044			x	20
MUS1012			x	20
MUS1096			x	20
MUS2041			x	20

MUS2043			x	20
MUS2064			x	20
MUS3045			x	20
MUS3085			x	20
MUS3102			x	20
MUS3095			x	10
MUS3097			x	10

Plus further credits from a rotating selection of historical and applied modules.

Stage 4	Comp	Core	Opt	Credits
MUS3054	x			20
MUS3012	x			40
or MUS3013	x			40
or MUS3014	x			40
or MUS3015	x			40
or MUS3020	X			20
Note: MUS3020 to be taken in conjunction with one of MUS3016-3019 below:				
MUS3016			x	20
MUS3017			x	20
MUS3018			x	20
MUS3019			x	20
MUS2060			x	20
MUS2061			x	20
MUS2020			x	20
MUS2041			x	20
MUS2043			x	20
MUS3045			x	20
MUS3102			x	20
MUS3095			x	10
MUS3097			x	10

Plus further historical and/or applied options available on a rotating basis.

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

Students generally specialise in some form of contemporary music performance or composition, ranging from acoustic singer-songwriters through to extremely experimental electronic form. Strong emphasis is placed on creativity, artistic risk-taking and experiment. Students are encouraged to look beyond formulaic commercial music forms, and to engage with more exploratory contemporary ways of making music.

Programme regulations (link to on-line version)

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/programme/>

13 Criteria for admission

Entry qualifications

BTEC Higher National Diploma in popular music or music production at Pass grade, to include at least three distinctions, two of which should be from the areas of composition, songwriting, studio production and/or performance.

Music Foundation Degree: Good grade in a Foundation Degree where the curriculum topics provide suitable preparation for this programme.

Admissions policy/selection tools

Some applicants may be interviewed, depending on prior qualifications, evidence of performance ability on the UCAS form, and experience.

Non-standard Entry Requirements

Additional Requirements

Level of English Language capability

14 Support for Student Learning

Induction

During the first week of the first semester students attend an induction programme. New students will be given a general introduction to University life and the University's principle support services and general information about the School and their programme, as described in the Degree Programme Handbook. New and continuing students will be given detailed programme information and the timetable of lectures/tutorials/etc. The International Office offers an additional induction programme for overseas students (see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/international/coming_to_newcastle/orientation.phtml)

There is a comprehensive programme of induction centred around week zero, but continuing wherever appropriate.

Study skills support

Study Skills support is available at both stages.

Academic support

The initial point of contact for a student is with a lecturer or module leader, or their tutor (see below) for more generic issues. Thereafter the Degree Programme Director or Head of School may be consulted. Issues relating to the programme may be raised at the Staff-Student Committee, and/or at the Board of Studies.

Within their general academic studies, students have extensive access to module leaders, whether by way of 1:1 tutorial or in small groups.

Mid-way through the academic year (usually at the end of January), students attend a Module Fair, at which the following academic year's menu of modules is advertised and, immediately following which, initial module choices are made following discussion with personal tutors.

The following provide essential information by way of academic support:

- ICMuS Undergraduate Handbook (extensively revised in 2006);
- School web site;
- Student e-mail and direct access to DPD and tutorial staff;
- Direct access to named contacts in the Careers Service.

Pastoral support

All students are assigned a personal tutor whose responsibility is to monitor the academic performance and overall well-being of their tutees. Details of the personal tutor system can be found at <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/tutor.phtml>

In addition the University offers a range of support services, including the Student Advice Centre, the Counselling and Wellbeing team, the Mature Student Support Officer, and a Childcare Support Officer, see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/welfare.phtml>

Support for students with disabilities

The University's Disability Support Service provides help and advice for disabled students at the University - and those thinking of coming to Newcastle. It provides individuals with: advice about the University's facilities, services and the accessibility of campus; details about the technical support available; guidance in study skills and advice on financial support arrangements; a resources room with equipment and software to assist students in their studies. For further details see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/disability-support/>

Learning resources

The University's main learning resources are provided by the Robinson and Walton Libraries (for books, journals, online resources), and Information Systems and Services, which supports campus-wide computing facilities, see

<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/acfacilities.phtml>

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The Robinson Library, now houses the (quondam) Music Department Collection of books, journals, recordings and scores in addition to its own holdings.

Teaching resources include high-specification teaching spaces within ICMuS (with keyboards, interactive white-boards, data projection and sound).

In addition to generic IT resources across campus, subject-specific IT facilities include: - ICMUS music technology studios (including recording facilities) and workstations; ICMUS resources room, generously equipped with audio, video and computing facilities Sibelius (on PC clusters and on RAS), PC suite in ICMuS's student common room; large collection of CD and vinyl recordings; plus archive of 78 records.

Performing resources are available by way of practice rooms, band rehearsal studios, auditorium (King's Hall).

All new students whose first language is not English are required to take an English Language test in the Language Centre. Where appropriate, in-session language training can be provided. The Language Centre houses a range of resources for learning other languages which may be particularly appropriate for those interested in an Erasmus exchange. See <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/support/facilities/langcen.phtml>

15 Methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of teaching and learning

Module reviews

Module reviews are conducted by questionnaires each semester and results are considered by the Board of Studies and discussed with student representatives. Changes to, or the introduction of new, modules are considered at the Board of Studies. Student opinion is sought at the Staff-Student Committee and/or the Board of Studies. New modules and major changes to existing modules are subject to approval by the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee.

Programme reviews

The Board of Studies conducts an Annual Monitoring and Review of the degree programme and reports to Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. In addition, a wide-ranging curriculum review was carried in 2005 and 2006.

External Examiner reports

External Examiner reports are considered by the Board of Studies. The Board responds to these reports through Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee. External Examiner reports are shared with institutional student representatives, through the Staff-Student Committee.

Student evaluations

Module Evaluation Questionnaires are carried out each semester, and their results inform revisions to existing modules and the drafting of Module Outline Forms for new ones; Graduands are also asked to complete an end-of-programme questionnaire prior to graduation.

The National Student Survey is sent out every year to final-year undergraduate students, and consists of a set of questions seeking the students' views on the quality of the learning and teaching in their HEIs. Further information is at www.thestudentsurvey.com/ With reference to the outcomes of the NSS and institutional student satisfaction surveys actions are taken at all appropriate levels by the institution. The National Student Survey informs reviews of the programme, in particular the applicability of current assessment mechanisms.

Mechanisms for gaining student feedback

Feedback Mechanisms include Staff-Student Committee, MEQs and end-of-programme questionnaires. Informal mechanisms include ongoing dialogue between staff and students during lectures and tutorials.

Faculty and University Review Mechanisms

The programme is subject to the University's Internal Subject Review process, see http://www.ncl.ac.uk/aqss/qsh/internal_subject_review/index.php (last carried out in 2004)

Accreditation reports

n/a

16 Regulation of assessment

Pass mark

The pass mark is 40 (Undergraduate programmes)

Course requirements

Progression is subject to the University's Undergraduate Progress Regulations (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugcont.pdf>) and Undergraduate Examination Conventions (<http://www.ncl.ac.uk/calendar/university.regs/ugexamconv.pdf>). In summary, students must pass, or be deemed to have passed, 120 credits at each Stage. Limited compensation up to 40 credits and down to a mark of 35 is possible at each Stage and there are resit opportunities, with certain restrictions.

Weighting of stages

Stage 3 and Stage 4 results are weighted at 1/3 and 2/3 respectively

Common Marking Scheme

The University employs a common marking scheme, which is specified in the Undergraduate Examination Conventions, namely

	Honours	Non-honours
<40	Fail	Failing
40-49	Third Class	Basic
50-59	Second Class, Second Division	Good
60-69	Second Class, First Division	Very Good
70+	First Class	Excellent

Role of the External Examiner

An External Examiner, a distinguished member of the subject community, is appointed by Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee, after recommendation from the Board of Studies. The External Examiner is expected to:

- See and approve examination papers
- Moderate examination and coursework marking
- Attend the Board of Examiners
- Report to the University on the standards of the programme

In addition, information relating to the programme is provided in:

The University Prospectus (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/undergraduate/>)

The School Brochure (contact enquiries@ncl.ac.uk)

The University Regulations (see <http://www.ncl.ac.uk/regulations/docs/>)

The Degree Programme Handbook

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. The accuracy of the information contained is reviewed by the University and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education.

Mapping of Intended Learning Outcomes onto Curriculum/Modules

	Units of Study				
Stage 1	Com	Core	Opt	Credits	Learning outcomes
MUS1013	x			20	A1/A3/B4
MUS2062	x			20	A1/A3/C1-4/D3
MUS1012	x			20	A2/A4/B2
MUS2020	x			20	C5/A5/B4
MUS2060	x			20	A1-4/C4/B1-2
MUS2061	x			20	A1-4/C4/B1-2
MUS2044	x			20	A5/C4/B3/B5
MUS1096			x	20	A1/A4/C4/B1-2
MUS2058			x	20	A4/C1/C5
MUS2064			x	20	A4/B1/B4/D6
MUS2041			x	20	A4-5/C2-3/C5/B5
MUS2043			x	20	A4-5/C2-3/C5/B5
MUS3045			x	20	A4-5/C5/B5
MUS3085			x	20	A3/A5/C6/C7/
MUS3102			x	20	A3/C5/C2/D2-5
MUS3095			x	10	A3/C5/D4-6
MUS3097			x	10	A3/C5/D4-6
MUS3054	X			20	A1-3/4/B1-4
MUS3012	x			40	C2-3/B2-5/D1/D4-5
or MUS3013	x			40	A1-5/C4/B1-5/D1-5
or MUS3014	x			40	A4-5/C1/B3-5/D4-5
or MUS3015	x			40	A1-5/C1-5/B1-5/D1-5
or MUS3020	x			20	A1-5/C1-5/B1-5/D1-5
MUS3016			x	20	C2-3/B2-5/D1/D4-5
MUS3017			x	20	A1-5/C4/B1-5/D1-5
MUS3018			x	20	A4-5/C1/B3-5/D4-5
MUS3019			x	20	A1-5/C1-5/C1-5/D1-5