Programme Specification 2020-21

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN MUSIC

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<tr>
<th>Awarding body</th>
<th>University of Cambridge</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching institution</td>
<td>Faculty of Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Accreditation details</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of final award</td>
<td>Master of Philosophy</td>
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<td>Programme title</td>
<td>MPhil in Music</td>
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<td>HECoS code(s)</td>
<td>100070 (music)</td>
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<td>Relevant QAA benchmark statement(s)</td>
<td>None</td>
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<td>Qualifications framework level</td>
<td>7 (Masters)</td>
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<td>March 2021</td>
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Educational aims

The MPhil in Music is a 9-month freestanding programme offering advanced training in key areas of music studies, while at the same time providing a preparation for doctoral research. Its main aims are to give students with relevant experience at first-degree level:

- critical awareness of issues and trends, informed by current research, across a broad spectrum of music studies
- the opportunity to acquire or develop research skills and expertise relevant to a specified area of music studies
- experience in carrying out focused research under close supervision.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the programme, students will have acquired or further developed:

- knowledge of and the ability to critically evaluate research techniques and methods relevant to a specialist area of music studies
- familiarity with current debates across a broad range of music studies
- a range of research skills relevant to music studies, together with skills appropriate to their specific research interests
- the ability to utilise established techniques of enquiry in the context of original research

Teaching and learning methods

Teaching and learning methods consist of lectures and/or seminars, together with supervisions, self-directed study and (where relevant) practical instrumental/vocal tuition. Students are also expected to participate in the research culture of the Faculty, in particular by attending its programme of research colloquia.

Assessment methods

Other than those taking an Extended project (see below), students submit three 3,500-word essays or equivalent (composition, transcriptions, fieldwork notes etc.), each of which counts for 15% of the total marks; of these, one must relate to Musicology and its debates, and two to specialist teaching. Musicology and its debates is additionally assessed through a portfolio of abstracts of literature covered in the seminar (no marks are awarded but students are required to pass). Individual projects count for 55%, and Extended projects for 70%, of the total marks for the course. In addition, candidates are required to give a short presentation.
on the subject of their thesis, recital or portfolio (as appropriate) during the course of the year.

Candidates must pass all of the course elements, subject to a compensation scheme.

**Programme outline**

Offering advanced training in key areas of music studies, while at the same time providing a preparation for doctoral-level research, this is a unified programme with two pathways: Music studies (including Musicology; Theory, analysis and criticism; Ethnomusicology; Jazz, popular and media music; Performance studies; Music and science) and Composition. The programme is divided into three components:

1. **Plenary courses**
   1.1 Music skills: a series of sessions covering general music study skills such as bibliography, discography, digital musicology, source study, ethnography, research ethics, thesis writing. This element is not separately assessed but feeds into all the others. Attendance is compulsory.
   1.2 Musicology and its debates: this series of seminars, based on set readings, introduces contemporary thinking across a wide range of musical topics.

2. **Teaching within specific areas**

Specialist teaching within each area takes the form of lectures, seminars, and/or supervisions. This teaching will cover key subdisciplinary areas and methodologies, but precise content as well as format will depend on the number of students taking the course and, in part, their particular interests. With the agreement of the Degree Committee, this teaching may be replaced by courses offered by other faculties (for example in Palaeography, for students working on medieval or renaissance music; or courses offered by the Social Science Research Methods Centre, for those working in music & science).

3. **Individual project**

Due in June, this supervised element of the course consists of a 15,000-word dissertation, except in the following cases:

3.1 in Performance studies, this element may alternatively consist of a recital lasting approximately 50 to 60 minutes plus a related essay of 7,500 words. The recital and essay will be assessed as an integrated submission, and students choosing the recital option are required to take 20 hours of instrumental or vocal lessons at their own expense with a teacher approved by the Faculty.

3.2 in Composition, this element will consist of a portfolio of four compositions lasting approximately 30 to 45 minutes plus an explanatory essay of 5,000 words, again assessed as an integrated submission.

Students may typically expect a minimum of 12 hours of supervision across Michaelmas, Lent and Easter Terms.

Composers may choose not to take Musicology and its debates but instead submit an extended portfolio of four compositions lasting approximately 45 to 60 minutes plus a related essay of 7,500 words.

**Management of teaching quality and standards**

The University ensures high standards of teaching and learning in the following ways:

- The completion of Annual Quality Updates by each Faculty and Department, to enable central overview of provision and assist in dissemination of good practice.
• Scrutiny of the reports of External Examiners for all teaching programmes
• Encouraging student engagement at both the local level, through involvement in Faculty and Departmental Committees, and at a central level by participation in nationally-benchmarked surveys
• Holding reflective, centrally-coordinated, Learning and Teaching Reviews for all teaching institutions every six years to explore provision and suggest constructive courses of action
• Mentoring, appraisal, and peer review of staff, and encouraging staff participation in personal development programmes

Student support

The Faculty of Music conforms to the University’s Code of Practice. All students are assigned a Graduate Supervisor, who will act as a first point of contact and monitor the student’s progress, in addition to an Advisor who will provide secondary support and may participate in supervision where appropriate. Further information about student support may be obtained on request to the Faculty.

Graduate employability and career destinations

Offering research preparation at one of the UK’s leading centres of advanced studies in music, the MPhil in Music will provide a pathway to doctoral research at Cambridge or at other research-led universities in the UK and abroad, and will in this way offer an excellent route towards a career in music academia (which includes conservatories as well as universities). While it is primarily conceived as a research preparation programme, we anticipate that a number of graduates will develop careers in other musical professions that require a combination of academic understanding and high-level practitioner skills, in particular certain areas of freelance performance and composition.

The Careers Service maintains links with relevant employers and takes into account employer needs and opinions in the services which it provides for students. The Careers Service also allocates a Careers Adviser to each College, Faculty and Department to act as a point of contact.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant Faculty Board (or equivalent). Programme specifications are reviewed annually, however, during the course of the academical year, any approved changes to the programme will be communicated to enrolled students through email notification or publication in the Reporter. The relevant faculty or department will endeavour to update the programme specification accordingly, and prior to the start of the next academical year.

Further information about specifications and an archive of programme specifications for all awards of the University is available online at: https://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/