



DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

APPENDIX TO THE MPhil/PHD DEGREE STUDENT HANDBOOK 2024/25

This appendix should be read in conjunction with the [core MPhil/PhD student handbook](#)

The Department of Music sits within the School of Performing and Digital Arts, which covers the following disciplines: Drama, Theatre and Dance, Media Arts and Music.

Welcome to your department

The Department of Music is located in Wettons Terrace, standing to the North of the A30 and approached by footbridge from the main University campus. Wettons Terrace contains staff and teaching rooms, administrative offices, an IT suite and a student common room. Performance, teaching and practice rooms are in neighbouring buildings: Woodlands and Woodlands Cottage. Music IT studios and world music facilities are also available. The Boilerhouse Auditorium and Wettons Annexe, behind Wettons Terrace, provide large rehearsal spaces.

Access to Wettons Terrace and the practice rooms in Woodlands/Woodlands Cottage/Engineer's Cottage is by means of the University RCS swipecard. All students receive a card as a matter of course.

Bedford Square: Royal Holloway also has a central London base at Bedford Square, 2 Gower Street, WC1E 6DP. This is widely used for postgraduate activities and is situated a few minutes' walk from the British Museum and the University of London Senate House Library. The nearest tube stations are Euston Square, Goodge Street, Russell Square and Tottenham Court Road, which are all about a five-minute walk away. For room bookings contact BedfordSquare@rhul.ac.uk.

Key contacts

Role	Name	Email	Phone	Room
Executive Dean	Professor Roberta Mock	Roberta.Mock@rhul.ac.uk	TBC	TBC
Head of Department	Professor Stephen Rose	stephen.rose@rhul.ac.uk	01784 443806	WT206
School Director of PGR Education and Department PGR Lead	Professor Tina K. Ramnarine, FBA	tina.k.ramnarine@rhul.ac.uk	via Teams	WT204
School helpdesk*		PDA-School@rhul.ac.uk	01784 276885	KWB01/2

* For the majority of your non-academic related issues, please contact the Doctoral School. However, for queries about teaching contracts, expenses and study space within the school, please contact the School of Performing and Digital Arts helpdesk.

Staff

[List of staff in the Department of Music](#)

Research areas

[Research areas in the Department of Music](#)

Student committees

The School of Performing and Digital Arts' PGR Staff-Student Action Meeting meets once a term. Please get in touch with the School Director of PGR Education if you would like to join. If you would like to raise an issue to be discussed there, please contact the Doctoral School.

Ways of Working and research skills training

The School of Performing and Digital Arts also provides a series of training workshops called 'Ways of Working'. This programme complements the University's Researcher Development Programme but is focused on Arts and Humanities disciplines: the aim is to encourage a sense of collegiality and interdisciplinary enquiry amongst research students in the School. You will be sent (via your Royal Holloway email address) details of the "Ways of Working" programme at the start of the academic year: please note there is no need to book in advance for these sessions and students in their first year are expected to attend the majority of programme if possible.

The training requirement can also be fulfilled through:

- Departmental and school courses which offer generic skills training (subject-specific training courses cannot be used to meet the requirements);
- By attending courses relevant to study at other institutions e.g. St George's, University of London and Kingston University; or online courses if a certificate of completion is gained;
- By doing language training (individual lessons or courses);
- Completion of the inSTIL teacher-training programme (which can only be taken when you are teaching at the University) – this counts as 5 days research training;
- Attendance at reading groups such as HARC;
- Running reading groups.

Unless stated, these count according to how many hours the given course or activity is, so 3 hours can be half a day, and twice that a full day.

The following research activities also count as follows:

- submission of conference paper abstract: half day;

- presentation of poster at conference: half day;
- presentation of conference paper: 1.5 days;
- attendance at a conference: 0.5 days for a one day conference and maximum 1 day for conferences any longer than that;
- submission of paper or book chapter for publication: 2 days;
- organisation of conference as part of a committee: 2 days;
- volunteer to help at a conference for one day: 1 day organizing a Music Department PG day: 1 day;
- giving a paper at a Music Department or School PG day: 1 day.

NB: some supervisors run workshops for their students, where they present work. This is formally listed as supervision, so does not count for research training. Please include maximum 1 hour supervision per student presenting in such a seminar under supervision, unless their presenting and getting feedback on their work is for longer than that.

Facilities and resources

Practice rooms

Practice rooms are situated in the Woodlands Building and Cottage (the house down the drive from the Department), Engineer's Cottage (beside the Boilerhouse Café), and Wettons Terrace 005 (behind the Music building accessed via the central alleyway). A room in Woodlands/Engineer's cottage is available for ensemble rehearsals by way of an online booking system, contact the Performance Manager to be given access and guidance. In the interests of security and personal safety, access to Woodlands is by means of the student's Student ID card (as a swipe card), which operates during the hours 06.00 – midnight daily. Full access to the Woodlands/Engineer's Cottage practice rooms is restricted at present to Music students and Music Department staff; although by special arrangement members of certain ensembles may be given off-peak access. Wettons Terrace 005 is accessed via a key that can be signed out during working hours from the Music office. Almost all rooms contain a piano; and all rooms in Woodlands Building have mirrors. Please treat the practice rooms and the instruments and equipment they contain with care and respect. Pianos and other keyboard instruments should not be moved about any of the rooms: this can lead to damage and disturbs the tuning. Eating and drinking are not allowed in the practice rooms, nor are students permitted to engage in any teaching of their own there (whether of University students or those from outside RHUL).

Room 001 in Wettons Terrace also acts as a small recital room, and is available for some rehearsals by arrangement when it does not clash with or disrupt teaching in the Department. The Picture Gallery is not normally available for practice and nor is the Boilerhouse Auditorium unless in exceptional circumstances.

Specialist studio facilities include audio/video studios for composition, film music and ethnomusicology, and two rooms housing a gamelan and a large collection of world music instruments. Enquiries about the studio should be addressed to the Music Studios Manager, Jon Samsworth (Jon.Samsworth@rhul.ac.uk), enquiries about the gamelan and instrument collection should be addressed to Dr Henry Stobart (H.Stobart@rhul.ac.uk).

Access to the studios and world music rooms is restricted to Music students taking studio based courses and Music Department staff (contact the Department Office).

Computers

The IT Suite in Wettons Terrace is open to all students from 8.30am to 6pm via your Student ID

swipe card. The IT suite on the ground floor of Wettons Terrace was created with the help of a generous benefaction by Miss Agnes Divine, a former member of the University. It contains 16 iMACs, midi keyboards, headphones, music sequencing software (Logic Audio), Sibelius, and music samples (Komplete II), which will be maintained by the Music Studios Manager (MusicStudios@rhul.ac.uk). Plus 2 networked PCs, with standard word-processing, database, internet and music-processing software (including Finale, Sibelius and EarMaster) maintained by the University's Computer Centre, to whom all issues and problems should be addressed. The Sibelius software is also installed on PCs in the Davison Building.

Department seminars, colloquia, special lectures

The MMus course MU5500 (Skills in Advanced Musical Studies) includes seminars led by members of RHUL staff, guest seminars on methodology from visiting specialists, and may involve visits to major research libraries and archives. In whole or in part, it forms part of the department's general induction/training available to incoming MPhil/PhD students.

The department runs a general Research Colloquium, including visiting speakers, on Tuesdays. There are also special lectures, seminars, study-days and conferences.

It is expected that MA by Research and MPhil/PhD students will make every effort to attend these colloquia. Details of the Research Colloquium and of series run by other Music Departments are sent via email. It is expected that MPhil/PhD students will give papers and other public presentations regularly throughout their time at Royal Holloway, and normally, at least one paper/presentation per year is required from the second year of full-time study onwards (or part-time equivalent).

The internet is indispensable as a source and disseminator of information, and for the exchange of ideas. A good place to start is the [Music Department's home-page](#).

Performance

Royal Holloway University of London Department of Music offers a variety of thriving and exciting performance opportunities. Different ensembles of all shapes, sizes, and genres include a Symphony Orchestra, Chapel Choir, Chamber Orchestra, New Music Collective, an Andean Band, a Balkan Ensemble, a Korean Percussion Group and a Gamelan Orchestra (Gamelan Puloganti). Not all ensembles run every year. There is also a very popular student-run Big Band (Undergraduates) and Early Music Ensemble. Choral Music comprises the Royal Holloway Chorus, Founder's Choir and renowned Chapel Choir; the Chapel Choir sings regularly at the University and further afield, broadcasts on the BBC and engages in tours abroad.

In addition, each year there are new student-run ensembles that vary depending on the tastes and interests of current members of the department. The Royal Holloway Music Society often oversee many of student-led music groups. To find out more, get to know your current Music Society committee and they will be more than happy to point you in the right direction.

All of our students receive specialist guidance from not only our University-based experts but also from a wide breadth of external professional artists and Ensembles-in-Residence. These include The Tippett Quartet, CHROMA ensemble, The King's Singers, London Mozart Players and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. We often host side-by-side opportunities for students to work alongside professionals and specialists in the field.

The University is an All-Steinway Institution and owns primarily Steinway and Steinway-designed instruments.

Auditions are held for the Symphony and Chamber Orchestras early in the first term and are open to all students of Royal Holloway. It is necessary to apply for orchestral audition times via the website.

The department offers opportunities to its students to perform concertos with one or other of its orchestras. Auditions are normally held towards the end of the second term for the following academic year.

Please note that performance activities may be affected/ modified according to Covid-guidance.

Administration

The focal point of administration of all performance which takes place under the auspices of the department is the Performance Manager, located in the departmental administrative office, room 004. In the interests of the efficient and successful running of performance, all administrative matters and other arrangements concerning performance should be directed to the Performance Manager.

Students are able to contribute to administration of performance through their membership of the Music Society.

The Music Society also provides an opportunity for students to gain valuable experience in various aspects of administration and prospective employers will clearly view involvement here in a positive light. The committee is elected annually, part in June and (to include incoming first-year students) part in October.

Wherever possible student conductors are also given opportunities to direct the department ensembles during the year.

Instruments

The department's stock of instruments includes the pianos in the staff, teaching and practice rooms in the department, pianos in the performance venues of the Picture Gallery, the Auditorium of the Windsor Building and the Boilerhouse Auditorium, as well as three harpsichords, a clavichord, and a fortepiano. In addition, the Department recently purchased a brand-new set of orchestral percussion, a double bass, a baritone saxophone and a vibraphone. The harpsichords should be used only with prior permission of Professor Stephen Rose (Stephen.Rose@rhul.ac.uk) or Mr Rupert Gough (Rupert.Gough@rhul.ac.uk). The percussion instruments should be used only with prior permission of the Performance Manager.

Additional departmental instruments and accessories include tuned and untuned percussion, string instruments, wind instruments such as cor anglais and bass clarinet, a chest of viols, a gamelan ensemble, various Andean folk instruments and a Korean percussion set. In special circumstances, some instruments are available for loan with the approval of the Performance Manager. It need hardly be said that all instruments should be treated with the utmost care.

The organs in the University Chapel and at St Paul's Church, Egham, are available only to those taking organ lessons. Enquiries should be addressed to Rupert Gough, Director of Choral Music and University Organist (Rupert.Gough@rhul.ac.uk).

Financial support

[Apply for PGR Research Expenses from the School of Performing and Digital Arts](#)

MPhil/PhD in Composition

[Find out more about the MPhil / PhD in Composition](#)

Annual reviews and upgrade

Although you will meet with your supervisor regularly during the academic year, your academic progress is formally reviewed at least once every twelve months, regardless of whether you are studying full or part time.

- [Core annual review details](#)
- [Annual reviews in the Department of Music](#)

All MPhil / PhD students start their programme on the MPhil and have to pass the upgrade review meeting in order to be eligible to submit for the PhD.

- [Core upgrade details](#)
 - [Upgrades in the Department of Music](#)
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Preparation for your viva

In advance of your oral examination, you may wish to schedule a 'mock' viva to help you prepare (and note that your actual examiners are the only readers who determine the outcome of your submission). You might also look out for viva training courses run by the University's Researcher Development Programme.

During the viva process, the examiners have a checklist of criteria and will need to be satisfied that your thesis meets these criteria before recommending you for the award of the degree. These criteria are, that the thesis:

- is genuinely the work of the candidate
- forms a distinct contribution to knowledge of the subject
- affords evidence of originality by the discovery of new facts and/or by the exercise of independent critical power
- is an integrated whole and presents a coherent argument
- gives a critical assessment of the relevant literature
- describes the method of research and its findings
- includes discussion of those findings and how they advance the study of the subject.
- demonstrates a deep and comprehensive understanding of the field of study and the capacity for objective judgement in complex situations.
- is satisfactory as regards literary presentation
- includes a full bibliography and references
- demonstrates research skills relevant to the thesis

- is of a standard to merit publication in whole, in part or in a revised form
- is of an appropriate length for the discipline/ subject.