

Department of Music

About the department

The internationally-renowned Department of Music is one of the largest and most distinguished in the United Kingdom, and in the 2008 government-led Research Assessment Exercise, the department was rated top in the country. The courses listed below are available to all Study Abroad, International Exchange and Erasmus Students, provided that sufficient prior knowledge and experience of the subject can be shown where required. The Music Department reserves the right to review each application to assess the suitability of the applicant and his/her chosen course(s).

Entry requirements

Level One Courses:

There are no formal pre-requisites, but a background in music and music theory is seen as very beneficial to students.

Level Two Courses:

A solid foundation in the rudiments of Western music (an ability to read music fluently, identify key signatures, rhythms, etc.) plus an understanding of Western harmony (an ability to write and/or identify harmonic progressions: i.e. being able to harmonise a Bach chorale) is required for Intermediate courses, as well as completion of any first year courses at undergraduate level in music theory.

Level Three Courses:

Advanced knowledge and extensive experience in the subject area and at least two years of experience is expected. Please note that these are advanced courses, typically equal to senior year/graduate level work in the USA.

Performance Courses:

Subject to an audition that will take place once you arrive on campus. If you have chosen a performance course, be prepared for a 10 minute audition, but also have a back-up course choice.

The information contained in the course outlines on the following pages is correct at the time of publication but may be subject to change as part of our policy of continuous improvement and development.



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Course options for visiting students

Level One:

Course code	Course name/pre-requisites	½ or 1 unit	Start date	Course description/pre-requisites
MU1110	Theory & Analysis	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	The course addresses the contrapuntal, melodic, harmonic and formal elements of tonal music. Students are introduced to analytical concepts and then practice deploying them, through listening, score study and the completion of practical exercises.
MU1111	Practical Musicianship	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	Through practical exercises that focus on aural perception and awareness, and on responding to heard music in practical ways (including singing and playing), students train themselves to hear and analyse the musical parameters of metre, rhythm, pitch, timbre, dynamics, expression and structure.
MU1112	Creative Composition Techniques	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	The course may include the study of soundworlds and scale formations, the vertical dimension (chords & simultaneities), the horizontal dimension (melody & voice leading), developments in rhythm, harmonic vocabulary and tonalities, form in contemporary composition, acoustic timbre and texture.
MU1113	Practical Composition Skills	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	The course may include the study of writing for solo instrument or voice with accompaniment, writing for small chamber ensemble, introduction to media and film music or studio techniques.
MU1114	Very Short History of Music	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	The course will offer students a conceptual map of musical styles, composers and practices by introducing them to a wide chronological range of repertoires, from early music to music of the 20th century. It will emphasise questions of change, interaction and transmission through the study of forms and repertoires in their historical context.
MU1115	Introduction to Historical Musicology	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	This course introduces students to the different kinds of historical question that we can ask about music, and interrogates some of the terminology and categories frequently used in the secondary literature (e.g. canonisation, reception, tradition, nationalism, exoticism, the work concept).

Course Specifications - <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/music/prospectivestudents/undergraduate/home.aspx#tabbedareaA>



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MU1116	<i>Introduction to World Music</i>	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	<i>The course may include the study of World Music (culture, contact & concepts), South America: Andes to Amazon, Africa: Jaliya and Mbira, Indonesia: Sundanese Gamelan), North India: The Classical Tradition, Papua New Guinea: The Kaluli or Iran: The Persian Classical Tradition (music & religion).</i>
MU1117	<i>Contemporary Debates in Music</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>This course will survey some of the key contemporary issues in music that have arisen from the changes of the modern world, as well as contemporary debates in musicology. The 20th century in particular has seen a transformation of musical cultures across the world, and this course looks at a range of the issues that have emerged as a result.</i>
MU1118	<i>Solo Performance</i> (Audition Required)	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	<i>This course aims to further students' skills as performers through regular lessons with an approved visiting teacher. Students will be offered opportunities to perform in practical seminars where matters of interpretation and stage manner will be discussed, as well as developing students' skills in delivering feedback.</i>
MU1119	<i>Creative Ensemble Performance</i>	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	<i>The course will use workshops and lectures to encourage the abilities to work creatively and constructively as a team. This will include preparing ensemble performances, group participation and self-organisation, with coaching sessions replacing lectures in term 2.</i>

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Level Two:

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MU2000	<i>Studies in Music Analysis</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>This course introduces a range of important concepts for analysing music. Students will broaden their knowledge (through scores/recordings) of a wide range of Western musical repertoire through analytical methods and learn the vocabulary technical proficiency necessary for reading/evaluating analyses of music by scholars from those traditions.</i>
MU2001	<i>Studies in Composition</i>	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	<i>Students will develop knowledge of a range of fundamental techniques of musical composition with particular focus on structure, harmonic control and the manipulation of rhythmic/melodic material. Key works by a diverse range of composers will be used as springboards for your own musical invention.</i>
MU2002	<i>Studies in Music History</i>	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	<i>This course introduces students to a wide range of issues in the history of music. Questions of style history, technical developments in musical composition, and the relation of music to broader political, artistic, intellectual, and institutional histories are only the most obvious of those that will be interrogated in the course.</i>
MU2003	<i>Studies in Ethnomusicology</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>In what way is ethnomusicology more than the study of world music genres? This introductory course examines key issues and topics in ethnomusicology such as fieldwork and ethnography, the music business, musical change, music cognition and approaches to instruments.</i>
MU2004	<i>Studies in Music, Media & Technology</i>	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	<i>The course will introduce students to a range of ways in which electronic media and technology have affected and transformed musical cultures across the world. The course will cover a range of key phenomena and issues in contemporary musical culture that are inextricably linked to electronic media and technology.</i>
MU2205	Practical Performance 1 (Audition Required)	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	<i>This course offers instrumental/vocal lessons, culminating in a 20-minute recital at the end of term 2. Students are given opportunity to perform for and critique one another in a variety of genres and setups. Seminar topics covered include performance theory, performance anxiety, practice methods, improvisation and concert production.</i>

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MU2213	Composition Portfolio (Co-Requisite: MU2001)	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	In this course you will create a mixed portfolio of compositions and develop skills in independent creative work. You will be encouraged to pursue your own individual approach to writing music with guidance from the course tutors alongside a series of group lectures.
MU2251	Practical and Creative Orchestration (Pre-requisite: completion of suitable music theory or composition course at your home university)	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	This course will introduce you to contemporary principles of orchestration, giving you the skills to orchestrate pieces of music for ensembles up to the size of a full symphony orchestra. The topics may cover instrumental projection and weight; instrumental timbre and solos; "colour" in orchestration; contrapuntal music and counter-melodies; orchestrating film and commercial music; drama and atmosphere; orchestrating rhythm; timing and pacing.
MU2338	Introduction to Jazz: Theory, Practice and Contexts	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	This course is a historical and theoretical introduction to Jazz. Coverage of its origins and stylistic metamorphosis in the United States, as well as its globalised practice around the world today will be featured alongside a basic improvisation workshop. Cultural context and debates on race discourse and the politics of 'fusion' genres will be covered.
MU2339	Popular Music and Musicians in Post-War Britain and North America	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	This module considers popular music in post-war British and North American culture. Through the lectures and readings students will also acquire knowledge of and familiarity with a range of methodologies and theoretical approaches for studying popular music.
MU2350	Korean Percussion Performance	½ unit	Terms 1 & 2 (September 2018)	This is a performance-based course involving the learning of Korean percussion traditions - largely of the neo-traditional samulnori style, but also of folk nong-ak and pungmul genres. Students will be required to acquire basic competence on all the samulnori instruments (the changgo, puk, jing and kwaeggari).

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Level Three:

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MU2230	<i>Musical Aesthetics</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>This course examines some key ideas in the aesthetics, meaning and philosophy of music over the last two hundred years. It is concerned with theories of the nature of music, its capacity for expression and representation, its political value, and its relation to the natural and social world.</i>
MU2253	<i>Mozart's Operas</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>Mozart's operas will be explored both individually and collectively – or, to put it another way, as works and also thematically. There will be considerable scope for students to follow and to nurture their own interests. I will explore how historical study might be combined with, amongst others, analytical, dramatic, and reception-based perspectives.</i>
MU2304	<i>Issues in Sound, Music and the Moving Image</i>	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	<i>Issues in Sound, Music and the Moving Image introduces analytical and critical approaches to the soundtracks of moving-image texts, including films (both silent and sound films, primarily from Hollywood and European traditions), television programmes, and video games.</i>
MU3400	<i>Music and Society in Purcell's London</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>This course will introduce students to a range of music by Purcell and other composers, studied in the context of London society & politics from 1660-1700. Specific works to be considered include Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, King Arthur and symphony anthems.</i>
MU3412	<i>Music, Power and Politics</i>	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	<i>This course examines a range of ways in which music holds power and importance in society and culture. It refers to musical genres, practices and cultures from across the world, involving familiar and unfamiliar territory, and aims to equip students with new approaches to looking at any kinds of music they are interested in.</i>
MU3413	<i>Ideas of German Music</i>	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	<i>What is it that was held to characterise German music in particular, and how convincing were the special claims made for it? This course will look at ideas of German music from c.1750 to c.2000. Certain key works will be considered, as well as composer's writings, attitudes of performing musicians, writers, philosophers and other artists.</i>

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MU3424	Music and Gender	½ unit	Term 2 (January 2019)	This course aims to give students a wide-ranging understanding of music, performing arts and gender in different historical periods and different parts of the world, including Europe. It aims to introduce theoretical approaches to the study of gender through richly comparative case studies, including musical cultures from different parts of the world.
MU3409	Music and Orientalism	½ unit	Term 1 (September 2018)	The course provides a framework within which students will be exposed to a number of ways that Orientalism can be linked to musical works and practices. Students will be guided and encouraged to explore their own case studies.

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