

Choosing your first-year Music courses at Royal Holloway

The Music Department's first year features a flexible core. Courses are divided into five Lists, with each List representing one of the main areas of skills required in a Music degree. All courses provide a foundation for study in your 2nd and 3rd years.

You can choose to develop your existing strengths or explore areas new to you. In induction week you will receive further information on these courses, and your tutor will help you make your final choice.

BMus (Hons) Music single honours students choose eight courses, at least one from each List

BA (Hons) Music major ('Music with ...') students choose six courses, at least one from List A and no more than one from List E.

BA (Hons) Joint Honours ('Music and.../'...and Music') students choose four courses, at least one from List A, and no more than one from List E.

BSc/BA (Hons) Music minor ('...with Music') students choose two courses from Lists A to D.

<p>List A – Musicianship/Music Theory Theory and Analysis MU1110 Practical Musicianship MU1111</p>
<p>List B - Composition Creative Composition Techniques MU1112 Practical Composition Skills MU1113</p>
<p>List C - Music History A Very Short History of Music MU1114 Introduction to Historical Musicology MU1115</p>
<p>List D – Contemporary and Global Perspectives Introduction to World Music MU1116 Contemporary Debates in Music MU1117</p>
<p>List E - Performance Solo Performance MU1118 Creative Ensemble Performance MU1119</p>

Details of each course are given overleaf.

List A: Musicianship and Music Theory

Theory and Analysis MU1110

This course guides you through the harmonic, contrapuntal, melodic and formal elements of tonal music. Weekly lectures will be supplemented by group work in tutorials and private study of exercises from the textbook and companion website. Emphasis will be placed on putting analytical skills into practice, and using your understanding to enrich your activities in performance, composition and historical and critical studies of music. The course is designed to support those without extensive prior experience of music theory and analysis, but also to stretch those whose exposure has been greater.

Practical Musicianship MU1111

In this practical-based course, you will train yourself to hear and analyse the musical parameters of metre, rhythm, pitch, timbre, dynamics, expression and structure. You will undertake listening, singing and simple percussion exercises in self-study or small-group work. Musical examples will be examined across a range of genres and cultures.

List B: Composition

Creative Composition Techniques MU1112

This course is primarily focussed on the technical and theoretical aspects of composing. You will be introduced to a selection of contemporary compositional techniques, including: creating your own scales, building chords, creating interesting rhythmic material, and new approaches to form and texture. You will explore and develop your own creativity through the study of key works by a diverse range of composers which will be used as springboards for your own musical invention. You will create two portfolios of technical exercises and a short composition written in response to a given brief.

Practical Composition Skills MU1113

This course offers practical, hands-on opportunities to 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. You will create two works, one for solo instrument or voice with accompaniment, and a string quartet, which will receive a professional workshop in the second term.

List C: Music History

A Very Short History of Music MU1114

This course, taught via a weekly lecture plus weekly tutorial (small group) session, will equip you with a mental map of all the major musical styles, composers and practices from the Middle Ages to the present day. You will learn to contextualise your previous knowledge of specific musical periods and repertoires, and consider the significant historical and social factors that have influenced processes of musical creation and change across the centuries. You will gain familiarity not only with crucial musical works, but also with the historical circumstances which gave rise to them. Through this course, you will also develop and extend your skills in researching and writing about music history.

Introduction to Historical Musicology MU1115

A more informal name for this course would be 'How to Do Music History'. Quite simply, it aims to help you understand and critique the music history texts you read, and to become better at researching and putting together the history assignments you write. You will study how we categorise the past, how and why our musical values change over time, and how studying music relates to studying musical life.

List D: Contemporary and Global Perspectives

Introduction to World Music MU1116

This course introduces you to a range of musical cultures from around the world, including aspects of their contexts, functions, philosophies, techniques, and organising principles. The case studies usually feature musical traditions from at least three continents and certain sessions may include hands-on performance opportunities. You will learn about many fascinating and unfamiliar repertoires, and you will be challenged to reflect on or even rethink certain fundamental musical assumptions and values. In turn, this may lead you to appreciate your own musical practices and values from a more global perspective, a process which sometimes proves immensely liberating.

Contemporary Debates in Music MU1117

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 twentieth century in particular has seen a transformation of musical cultures across the world, and this course looks at a range of the issues and controversies that have emerged as a result. The study of music has broadened to include many more social, cultural and political perspectives. This course will introduce students to truly contemporary ways of studying music, combining approaches and issues traditionally associated with musicology, ethnomusicology and popular music studies, divisions which are becoming increasingly blurred.

List E: Performance

Solo Performance MU1118

If you are ABRSM Grade 8 standard or above and looking to continue your vocal or instrumental lessons, this is the course for you. In preparation for a 15-minute solo recital given at the end of the spring term, it offers 20 individual lessons of 45 minutes, supplemented by lectures on practical aspects of recital preparation, and opportunities to perform to and receive feedback from the class.

Creative Ensemble Performance MU1119

In this course you form your own ensemble with other first-year students, working in any genre (chamber, jazz, rock, early music etc.) alongside staff-led workshops and coaching sessions. You may experiment with different groups in the autumn term, but in the spring term you must commit to a single ensemble, supervised by a staff member. Your ensemble will be examined at the end of the spring term in an informal concert. In contrast with the usual expectations of solo performance, this course stresses teamwork, initiative and creativity and process. **Please note that this course does not entitle you to individual vocal / instrumental lessons.**