

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

KEY FACTS

Programme name	MA Sound Practice and Composition
Award	MA
School	School of Arts
Department or equivalent	Music
Programme code	MUMAMUS01 [PSCOMP]
Type of study	Full Time or Part Time
Total UK credits	180
Total ECTS	90

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The MA Sound Practice and Composition programme develops your skills within the broad field of contemporary composition and sound practices, encompassing notated and digital music, sound arts, improvisation, and interdisciplinary practices. It also develops your understanding of related theories and concepts. You have opportunities to work with performers and/or other collaborators in creating music, and are encouraged to respond creatively to present day issues in contemporary composition and sound practices. The programme is focused and rigorous, and designed to enhance your creative imagination and technical skills as well as develop your thinking about the contexts of composition and sound practices. It provides ideal training for those wishing to proceed to a research degree, and prepares students for the professional world.

The MA programme provides exceptional training in sound practice and composition, as well as introducing you to the latest critical thinking in relation to creative practice, in a research-oriented environment externally validated as being one of the leading centres for musical research in the country. You receive training in fundamental research skills which are not only relevant to the MA programme, but also provide a strong platform to progress to doctoral study should you wish to do so. The programme also helps you understand and evaluate the traditions and trajectories of Music and Sound Studies as disciplines, and appreciate how our own perceptions and values in relation to musical sound are shaped by a wide range of contextual, historical and aesthetic influences.

The programme accords with City, University of London's declared aim to encourage research and enterprise activities which add to disciplinary understanding, while also providing a high standard of curricular content, particularly in providing academically-excellent education for the business and professions. It is informed by the School of Arts Learning and Teaching Strategy, as well as by external guidelines and frameworks, including the QAA 'Master's Degree Characteristics' (March 2010) and the framework for higher education qualifications. The MA is closely linked with the Music Department's research strategy, and the wide-ranging research and related professional activities of academic staff.

Exit Qualifications

Following successful completion of the Postgraduate Certificate, you will be able to examine theories related to, and have critical insights into, the broad area of music, sound and composition studies. You will be able to synthesize and apply these in your own scholarly and creative work. You will also have developed a range of skills to enable you to undertake appropriate scholarly work.

Following successful completion of the Postgraduate Diploma, in addition to the above you will be able to provide appropriate critiques of knowledge and techniques within the broad area of

music, sound and composition studies. You will be able to apply these reflectively to support your intellectual, creative and professional development and in order to broaden your expertise and skills

Following successful completion of the MA, you will be able to demonstrate a systematic and comprehensive understanding of advanced scholarship and a critical awareness of issues within the broad area of music, sound and composition studies. You will demonstrate originality in the application of knowledge, and an advanced understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline. You will be able to evaluate and critique research methodologies, deal with complex issues systematically and creatively, and communicate your conclusions to non-specialist audiences. You will demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems.

Aims

The aims of the programme are to:

- develop your creative imagination and technical skills to a professional level
- develop advanced thinking about issues related to the contexts of composition and sound practices
- provide the necessary training to pursue advanced research in an area related to your creative interests
- develop the talents and professional skills required to make informed, relevant and valuable contributions to contemporary intellectual and musical life

WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?

On successful completion of the MA programme, you will be expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding:

- Understand theories and contexts that inspire and inform musical and sound practice, in areas such as analysis, aesthetics, interpretation, cultural theory, literature and computer science.
- Know how coherent links can be established between practice-based research in music and sound and in other disciplines.
- Know how to contribute to practice-based research relevant to the current concerns of, and developments within, your discipline.
- Understand concepts, concerns and technical methods driving current musical practice, as evidenced in repertoires and theoretical writings.
- Understand the relationships between concept, form, material and temporal structure, and how these can be articulated effectively when creating music.
- Understand the cultural conventions and symbolic meanings associated with selected repertoires, styles, instruments and genres.
- Know how to apply methods and strategies relevant to interpretation and performance, and how these can be informed by historical and pedagogical understanding.

Skills:

- Employ a wide range of imaginative strategies in the production of creative work, through experiment, speculation and rigorous investigation
- Apply contemporary techniques in the creation of new work, which may reference pitch/rhythmic organisation, instrumentation, computer-based sound manipulation, performance interaction and recording techniques.
- Design and execute a series of independent creative projects, imaginatively and expertly, using appropriate methods, opportunities and resources.
- Work within a variety of narrative, non-narrative and/or collaborative contexts.

- Identify and solve complex technical and interpretative problems with flexibility and resourcefulness.
- Demonstrate self-motivation and initiative in planning and implementing tasks, and organisation and management of a personal schedule of learning.
- Demonstrate the ability to self-evaluate and analyse critically, and exercise independence of thought.
- Demonstrate the ability to work cooperatively, effectively and creatively with your peers and other professionals, employing social skills in the conduct of research when appropriate, and develop skills of communication and persuasion.

Values and attitudes:

- Respect and acknowledge the ideas and work of others
- Conduct research which is sensitive to the cultural and ethical implications of musical practice.
- Exercise a professional attitude to composition.

HOW WILL I LEARN?

The educational aims are achieved through a combination of lectures, interactive sessions, practical workshops and one to one tutorials, and are further supported by a personal tutorial system. Learners are encouraged to undertake extensive reading and listening in order to understand the topics covered in lectures and classes and to broaden and deepen their knowledge of the subject. The works contributing to the final creative practice portfolio submission are developed throughout the programme.

WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?

Assessment and Assessment Criteria

Summative assessment of the programme outcomes occurs across the coursework modules and the 90 credit dissertation/major project component. Individual modules deploy the most effective and appropriate assessment method according to the topic, and context within the programme.

The methods are either:

- 1) a project portfolio that demonstrates ability to undertake and analyse/evaluate an assessed practical task (e.g. a performance, an interview, a transcription, a series of notated or studio-based compositions or sound practice projects) and write a critical evaluation
- 2) a portfolio of compositions or sound practice projects, normally three substantial creative works, or equivalent. Collaborative work is permitted in agreement with your supervisor. A critical self-evaluative commentary (c.3,000 words), and other forms of documentation as appropriate.
- 3) a creative research project (e.g. extended composition, improvisation-based project, sound recording project, film scoring) and a closely related research essay of c.7,500 words accompanied by other forms of documentation as appropriate. A collaborative element may be permitted in the agreement with your supervisor.

Formative assessment occurs in class discussion of tasks set, tutorial review of your progress as well as written and oral feedback.

Assessment Criteria are descriptions, based on the intended learning outcomes, of the skills, knowledge or attitudes that you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured.

Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the level of skills, knowledge or attributes that you need to demonstrate in order to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment, providing a mechanism by which the quality of an assessment can be measured and placed within the overall set of marks. Assessment Criteria and Grade-Related Criteria will be made available to you to support you in completing assessments. These may be provided in programme handbooks, module specifications, on the virtual learning environment or attached to a specific assessment task.

Feedback on assessment

Feedback will be provided in line with our Assessment and Feedback Policy. In particular, you will normally be provided with feedback within three weeks of the submission deadline or assessment date. This would normally include a provisional grade or mark. For end of module examinations or an equivalent significant task (e.g. an end of module project), feedback will normally be provided within four weeks. The timescale for feedback on final year projects or dissertations may be longer. The full policy can be found at:

https://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/365292/Assessment-and-Feedback-Policy-Senate-October-2016-2.pdf

Assessment Regulations

In order to pass your Programme, you should complete successfully or be exempted from the relevant modules and assessments and will therefore acquire the required number of credits.

The Pass mark for each module is 50%. If you fail an assessment component or a module you will normally be offered one resit attempt. However, if you did not participate in the first assessment and have no extenuating circumstances, you may not be offered a resit.

If you are successful in the resit, you shall be awarded the credit for that module. The mark used for the purpose of calculation towards your Award shall be calculated from the original marks for the component(s) that you passed at first attempt and the minimum pass mark for the component(s) for which you took a resit.

If you do not satisfy your resit by the date specified you will not progress and the Assessment Board shall require that you withdraw from the Programme.

If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme, but satisfy the requirements for a lower-level Award, then a lower qualification may be awarded as per the table below. If you fail to meet the requirements for the Programme and are not eligible for the award of a lower level qualification, the Assessment Board shall require that you withdraw from the Programme.

If you would like to know more about the way in which assessment works at City, please see the full version of the Assessment Regulations at:

http://www.city.ac.uk/_data/assets/word_doc/0003/69249/s19.doc

WHAT AWARD CAN I GET?

Master's Degree:

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)	Class	% required
Dissertation	7	90	50	With Distinction	70
Taught	7	90	50	With Merit	60
				With Pass	50

Postgraduate Diploma:

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	120	100

Class **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
With Pass	50

Postgraduate Certificate:

	HE Level	Credits	Weighting (%)
Taught	7	60	100

Class **% required**

With Distinction	70
With Merit	60
With Pass	50

WHAT WILL I STUDY?

Taught component

CORE MODULES

MUM114 Sound Materials and Techniques (30 credits)

MUM116 Interdisciplinarity and Collaborative Process (30 credits)

MUM117 Contexts of Sound Practice and Composition (30 credits)

MUM122 Sound Practice and Composition Portfolio (90 credits)

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Can be Compensated?	Level
Sound Materials and Techniques	MUM114	30	C	N	7
Interdisciplinarity and Collaborative Process	MUM116	30	C	N	7
Contexts of Sound Practice and Composition	MUM117	30	C	N	7

Module Title	SITS Code	Module Credits	Core/ Elective	Can be Compensated?	Level
Sound Practice and Composition Portfolio	MUM122	90	C	N	7

You are normally required to complete all the taught modules successfully before progressing to the portfolio.

TO WHAT KIND OF CAREER MIGHT I GO ON?

Music MA alumni have gone on to compose and perform music in a wide variety of settings, and are also employed in music publishing, teaching, broadcasting, music management, arts administration, music retailing and further musical study at MPhil or PhD level.

If you would like more information on the Careers support available at City, please go to:

<http://www.city.ac.uk/careers/for-students-and-recent-graduates>.

WHAT STUDY ABROAD OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE?

N/A

WHAT PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES ARE AVAILABLE?

N/A

HOW DO I ENTER THE PROGRAMME?

Applicants should normally have a first or upper second class honours degree in music or cognate discipline. A high standard of creative or performance skills will also be expected for the relevant pathways. An equivalent qualification from an overseas university or relevant professional experience will be considered.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT For students whose first language is not English, the following qualifications will meet the English language requirement for entry to a postgraduate course of study:

- * A first degree from a UK university or from the CNA.
- * A first degree from an overseas institution recognised by the University as providing adequate evidence of proficiency in the English language, for example, from institutions in Australia or the USA.
- * GCE O-level/GCSE English language or English literature, grade C minimum.
- * Cambridge ESOL CPE (Certificate of Proficiency in English) at grade C or above.
- * An overall score of 6.5 in the English Language Testing System (IELTS) with a minimum of 6.0 for each subtest.
- * Satisfactory standard in the verbal section of the Princeton Test (GMAT).
- * US SAT with 500 in verbal performance.
- * Warwick English Language Test (WELT) with pass grades of BBC minimum.
- * Other evidence of proficiency in the English language which satisfies the board of studies concerned.

OVERSEAS QUALIFICATIONS Equivalent qualifications from an overseas university will be considered.

IT SKILLS All students are expected to be computer literate.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES The Programme is committed to equal opportunities. The admissions decision will rest on the qualifications, needs and aspirations of the applicant.

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