Plymouth University

Faculty of Arts and Humanities

School of Humanities and Performing Arts

Programme Specification

BA (Hons) Music

Comprising the following exit awards:

BA (Hons) Music

BA (Hons) Music: Composition

BA (Hons) Music: Ethnomusicology

BA (Hons) Music: Performance

BA (Hons) Music: Technology

Approved by minor change 12/11/14
1. **BA (Hons) Music**  
   with optional exit awards:  
   - BA (Hons) Music  
   - BA (Hons) Music: Composition  
   - BA (Hons) Music: Ethnomusicology  
   - BA (Hons) Music: Performance  
   - BA (Hons) Music: Technology  
   
   Level 4 Intermediate award title(s): Certificate of HE in Music  
   
   Level 5 Intermediate award title(s): Diploma of HE in Music  
   
   **UCAS code: W300**  
   **JACS code: W300**

2. **Awarding Institution:** University of Plymouth  
   **Teaching institution(s):** University of Plymouth

3. **Accrediting body:** University of Plymouth

4. **Distinctive Features of the Programme and the Student Experience**

   The BA (Hons) Music degrees (with exit awards in Music, Composition, Ethnomusicology, Performance, and Music Technology) are three-year full-time programmes of study which offer students the opportunity to study a wide range of issues associated with music. They have distinct features that one might expect of subjects located in a School of Humanities and Performing Arts, in particular a synthesis between practice and reflection. Alongside practical aspects of musicianship and music production as relevant to today’s musical culture, students engage in critical and analytical reflection as to the role of music in human society, both historically and across cultures and the relationships between music and developing technologies of production and distribution. Ethnomusicology - the in-depth study of music across cultures - provides one of the key methodologies, with specialists in numerous musical cultures providing occasional inputs.

   Music students develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of music and its applications in a global society. Students will manipulate sound and learn along the way. They will become confident users of music and/or music technology and know how they and others are able to access musical activity. Through their musical learning they will come to understand the contexts for music in society.
Employability is a focus of our student experience, with the distinctive Plymouth University Professional Opportunities Scheme (PUPOS) available only to BA Music students. This service communicates creative work opportunities to students, provides a liaison with potential employers, and empowers students to identify and secure career-positive placements leading to independent working profiles. This function is complemented by our module in Vocational Studies and other final-year modules that bridge between the acquisition of specialist knowledge and its contribution in the community and marketplace.

We aim to attract a cohort of a manageable size, a cohort which includes musicians from a wide background, and which will responsibly develop a range of relevant skills and insights along with awareness of a professional context. We attract a number of students with A-level music and a post grade 8 standard of playing, but we equally recognise that there are many 'musical' people with alternative routes into creative and reflective practice. We strive to recognise the potential to succeed in promising musicians from any stylistic background, and we trust that the balance and synergy between our diverse student sub-cultures adds richness to the experience of each of them.

We offer two alternative third-year syllabus strands: one in general music studies (with options to specialise), and one in music technology, whose origins are in a top-up year for an HND / Foundation Degree programme. However, the flexibility of the programme is such that students can progress from partner colleges to do either of the third-year strands, while our Plymouth students moving through from Year 2 also progress smoothly to either outcome. The approach to music technology within the has developed so that technology is now an integral part of the wider music making process rather than a separate subject. Flowing from this will be a focus on technology from the practising musician's perspective. It is anticipated that this approach will give the music technology pathway a clear identity distinct from the offerings of other institutions.

The course offers a number of pathways for graduation, and the process of specialised choice begins in the second year. By the beginning of their honours year, students will have moved towards graduating via a pathway in either Music, Music:Performance, Music:Composition, Music: Ethnomusicology, or Music: Technology. Those students who choose the third-year strand in music technology will graduate in this subject, whilst students on the music strand who specialise in performance, composition, or ethnomusicology in their final year (to the value of 40 credits or more, along with their previous engagements in these disciplines) have the option of graduating with an exit award in that subject as an alternative to one in Music.

5. Relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Group(s)
Music

6. Programme Structure

Year 1:
- Performance 1
- Music Technology 1
- Western Music History
- Introduction to Music (60%)
- Composition 1
- Ethnomusicology 1

Year 2:
- Ethnomusicology 2 (option by exemption)
- Psychology of Music (compulsory)
- Aesthetics and Analysis (compulsory)
- Composition 2 (option)
- Music Technology 2 (option)
- Independent Study (option)
- Performance 2 (alternative option)

Music technology year 3:
- Dissertation / Practice-based dissertation (40 credit)
- The Sound of Music
- Sound and Vision (also available to Music strand)
- Interactive Sound Environments
- Collaborative and Contextual Practices
7. Programme Aims

a. To develop students’ knowledge and understanding of music as a discipline and as a cultural activity within human society as a whole;

b. To equip students with the ability to recognise and analyse musical organisation whether aurally or by studying the written score and respond to it critically;

c. To enable students to develop the coordinative skills, collaborative skills and technical skills necessary to the successful practice of music-making within a contemporary technological society;

d. To develop in students a capacity for the exercising of initiative and personal responsibility and the development of new skills within a structured and managed environment.
8. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

8.1. Knowledge and understanding
On successful completion graduates should have developed knowledge and understanding of:

a. The range and diversity of musical activity within western culture and also a broad appreciation of the diversity of music-making worldwide

b. The workings of music both as a theoretical form of knowledge and as an artistic practice

c. The scientific study and technological manipulation of both live performance and recorded sound

d. The methodology of arts research as it pertains to music in a variety of contexts

e. Factors which influence the development of particular musical practices including social, cultural, economic, technological and historical forces; the psychological drives and expressive needs which underlie music-making

8.2. Cognitive and intellectual skills
On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:

a. Reason critically, creatively and playfully

b. Reflect on their own aesthetic stance, musical practice and development as artists

c. Apply knowledge of theory in interpretation of experience, and use experience to make sense of theory and to interrogate assumptions underpinning theory and research

d. Identify, discuss, and tackle different kinds of problems

e. Demonstrate and exercise independence of mind and thought informed by awareness of the conventions of musical communication.

f. Be able to frame musical problems in terms of structured logical systems.

8.3. Key and transferable skills
On successful completion graduates should have developed the ability to:
a. Assimilate information and synthesise and organise relevant outputs

b. Develop ideas and construct arguments and evaluate such ideas and arguments critically

c. Demonstrate competence in the practical skills traditionally associated with music

d. Work independently, show self-motivation and critical self-awareness

e. Continue in lives of intellectual curiosity and creative practice.

f. Demonstrate an awareness of the musical application of advanced technologies and be able to use it where appropriate.

### 8.4. Employment related skills

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

a. The ability to present work in an accessible form intelligible to expert and non-expert audiences

b. Understanding of and practice in how to tailor their creative explorations to a given brief

c. Collaborative skills suitable for the workplace

d. A constructive and wide-ranging approach to problem-solving that draws on a variety of perspectives

e. IT skills necessary to support their professional lives

f. Confidence that musical training provides a range of physical, cognitive, and personal skills useful in a variety of workplaces, and the ability to articulate and present these to potential employers

### 8.5. Practical skills

On successful completion graduates should have developed:

a. Mastery of their own instrument and/or technological resources as appropriate to their own musical practice

b. The capacity to imagine, articulate and organise the presentation of a musical work in several voices

c. The ability to demonstrate musical understanding through musical activity
d. A facility with the essential components of musical language

9. Admissions Criteria, including APCL, APEL and DAS arrangements

All applicants must have GCSE (or equivalent) Maths and English at Grade C or above.

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<tr>
<th>Entry Requirements for Music</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A-level/AS-level</strong></td>
<td>260 points, BCC or equivalent, from a minimum of 2 A Levels, including grade C or above in Music, General Studies accepted as an A level. If a student is not studying A level Music but indicates that they have the ability to play at Grade 6 or above then the admissions tutor will accept with alternative A-levels.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BTEC National Diploma/QCF Extended Diploma</strong></td>
<td>Pass DMM in a Music-related subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Access to Higher Education at level 3</strong></td>
<td>Pass a named Access to HE Diploma (preferably Music or Combined), (including GCSE English and Maths grade C or above or equivalent) with at least 33 credits at Merit and to include at least 12 credits in Music related units with Merits. If not studying music units please ask the student whether they can evidence the ability to play at Grade 6 and refer to the admissions tutor.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Welsh Baccalaureate</strong></td>
<td>ok to accept as add on points of 120 but also to have the 2 A Levels including grade C in Music as above or equivalent</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Scottish Qualifications Authority</strong></td>
<td>CCCC from a combination of Highers and at least two Advanced Highers, including grade C or above in Music at either level. If a student is not studying Music but indicates that they have the ability to play at Grade 6 or above then the admissions tutor will accept with alternative subjects.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Irish Highers</strong></td>
<td>CCCCC @ Highers including Music. Irish Leaving Cert Ordinary Level Grade C or above for English and Maths. If a student is not studying Music but indicates that they have the ability to play at Grade 6 or above then the admissions tutor will accept with alternative subjects.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>International Baccalaureate</strong></td>
<td>26 overall to include grade 4 in Music at Higher Level plus a second subject at Higher Level. Note if a student not studying Higher Level Music but indicates that they have the ability to play at Grade 6 or above then the admissions tutor will accept with alternative subjects. If overseas and not studying English within IB, must have IELTS 6.0 overall with 5.5 in all other elements.</td>
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10. Progression criteria for Final and Intermediate Awards

Student progress onto Level 6 of the programme if they satisfactorily complete Level 5, or according to the University’s regulations for progression. Likewise their progression onto Level 5 requires completion of Level 4 of equivalent in the
University’s protocol. Final awards (the BA (Hons) Music et al) require satisfactory attainment at levels 4, 5, and 6; intermediate awards at levels 4 and 5 (for Diploma) or level 4 (the Certificate) as appropriate.

11. Exceptions to Regulations

Students may progress into Level 6 (Stage 3) without having completed Levels 4 and 5 of the programme if they satisfactorily pass a Foundation Degree at one of our recognised partner colleges.

12. Transitional Arrangements

For transition into the new programme, we will require a bigger room in which to teach the module Aesthetics and Analysis, as for one year only it will recruit from both second-year and third-year Music students.

13. Mapping and Appendices

Please see Programme Spec Supplement document for mapping of modules with skills and intended learning outcomes.