Welcome to Music at Oxford Brookes University!

BA (Hons) Music at Brookes develops students’ abilities in making music, thinking about music and working in music.

We hope you enjoy your day with us in the School of Arts. Our student helpers can show you around the Richard Hamilton Building, and you can also have a look around the campus. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask us.

Music students at Brookes become technologically informed, critically alert and contextually astute musicians, able to work across a range of genres from pop to classical. Students might be engaged with traditional as well as digital technologies through different media, be performers in a range of genres, and be keen to develop their intellectual potential for thinking critically and self-reflectively. The programme prepares graduates for a range of careers in composition, performance and music production, education and music teaching, arts administration and management, as well as postgraduate study and graduate careers beyond the music industry.

The programme covers music technology, composition, performance, music theory and the understanding of the context of music. These skills are then developed in a music business context through the Work Experience and International Field Trip modules.

Practical music making and an understanding of music technology is a key requirement for the 21st century musician, therefore the Music programme includes a series of live projects where sound-making and music technology form an integral part of the degree.

Why Choose This Course:

- Students will benefit from the development of a new £25 million building opening in 2020 featuring state of the art Music Studios and a Media Arts Theatre.
- An International Field Trip - included in the programme is the opportunity to engage with sound and music in a major European city
- Work experience and working in music are key elements of the Music programme
- Plenty of opportunity to be involved in live music events in the University and in the city
- You will be taught by academics who are active researchers in their fields (with the highest concentration of world-leading research in the University [REF 2014])

Finally, I hope you find this guide useful and you enjoy your day at Oxford Brookes.

With all best wishes

Dr Paul Dibley
Programme Lead for Media Arts and Principal Lecturer in Music
Programme Diagram

Year 1

- MUSC011: Public performance (15)
- MUSC012: Listening, Recording, and Composition (15)
- MUSC013: Songwriting, Film, and Media Composition (15)
- MUSC016: Critical Listening and Music Theory (15)
- MUSC017: Understanding Music on Screen (15)
- MUSC023: Music Analysis (15)
- MUSC020: Practical Musicianship Skills (15)
- MUSC015: Performance and Event Production (30)
- MUSC021: Music in Society (30)
- MUSC022: Music in Society (30)
- MUSC023: Music in Society (30)

Year 2

- MUSC024: Music Society and Experience (15)
- MUSC030: International Field Trip (15)
- MUSC031: Work Experience (15)

Year 3

- MUSC032: Independent Study (15)
- MUSC033: Music and the Dramatic Arts (15)
- MUSC034: Advanced Solo Performance (15)
- MUSC035: Advanced Ensemble Performance (15)
- MUSC036: Advanced Composition (30)
- MUSC037: Advanced Technology and Media (30)
- MUSC038: Professional Skills for the Portfolio  (15)
- MUSC039: Professional Skills for the Portfolio  (15)
- MUSC040: Music Journalism and Practice (15)
- MUSC041: Music Project (45)
Aims of the programme

• to equip students with a strong grounding in critical creativity reflective of the diversity of 21st century musical practices and thought.

• to create critical makers, writers, composers, producers and performers.

• to develop independence and autonomy, and a core sense of entrepreneurship and innovation, through work-based learning and assessment.

• to encourage intellectual curiosity and engagement with a wide and eclectic range of musics, that will inform students’ creative practice, critical and self reflective thinking, and making skills.

• to equip students for successful employment in the music industries and beyond, and to inculcate habits of independent thought and life-long learning.
How the Music Programme Works

We’ve designed the course to be as flexible as possible while still providing a strong grounding in the broad range of music and skills needed to be a creative musician in the 21st century. In this era of music streaming, any and all types of music are at our fingertips and this course reflects that by not offering modules that focus on one type of music to exclusion of another, instead looking at interactions or similarities between different musical genres, as well as considering their differences. Thus in the musicology modules, Western music history covers classical and popular music, and Music in Society considers how different types of music interact with broader culture over time. The composition, technology and performance modules also offer training across different genres. As the degree progresses there is opportunity to specialise in one genre or another, completing your assessments within modules focused on a particular music of your choice, or you can continue to mix and match throughout.

As our courses are reviewed regularly, the module list you choose from may vary from that shown here.

The First Year of the course is aimed at giving you a broad-based introduction to music-making:

- Performance Portfolio and Event Production
- Key moments in music past and present
- Critical Listening and Music Theory
- Understanding Music on Screen
- Listening: Recording: Composing
- Song writing, Film and Media Composition 1

Second and third year programme - you choose!

The second and third year programme is where you can select a more personalised programme, either choosing to specialize in one or more musical genres through your assessment choices, or choosing to focus more on the composition, technology, performance or musicology route. In the second year, all students take the International Field Trip, Music in Society and Work Experience modules. The rest is up to you. Here are some example routes through the programme:
EXAMPLE OF A MUSIC TECHNOLOGY ROUTE THROUGH THE MUSIC DEGREE

Music International Field Trip
Work Experience
Music in Society
Song writing, Film and Media Composition 2
Recording Studio Practice
Group Performance in the City
Music Project - technology project
Professional skills for the portfolio musician
Music Technology: Editing and Mixing
Advanced Composition

EXAMPLE OF A MUSICOLOGY ROUTE THROUGH THE MUSIC DEGREE

Music International Field Trip
Work Experience
Music in Society
Music Analysis
Practical Musicianship Skills
Group Performance in the City
Music Project - written musicology dissertation
Professional skills for the portfolio musician
Music journalism: history and practice
Advanced Musicology
Music and the dramatic arts

EXAMPLE OF A PERFORMANCE ROUTE THROUGH THE MUSIC DEGREE

Music International Field Trip
Work Experience
Music in Society
Practical Musicianship Skills
Group Performance in the City
Music Independent Study – solo performance
Music Project – musicology, but with reference to performance practice
Professional skills for the portfolio musician
Advanced Musicology
Music and the dramatic arts
Advanced solo performance
EXAMPLE OF A COMPOSITION ROUTE THROUGH THE MUSIC DEGREE

Music International Field Trip
Work Experience
Music in Society
Practical Musicianship Skills
Song writing, Film and Media Composition 2
Recording Studio Practice
Music Independent Study - composition
Music Project - composition project
Professional skills for the portfolio musician
Music Technology: Editing and Mixing
Advanced Composition
Here’s a list of the Music modules:

Module Descriptions

First Year Modules

Listening: Recording: Composing
Module leader: Prof Paul Whitty

This module investigates contemporary practices in composition, sound arts, field recording, phonography, listening and sound studies and engages with our everyday experiences of sound and how that sound makes meaning. Students are introduced to the contemporary culture of sound arts and creative sound practice and participate in the activities of the module both as makers and theorists. The key concepts that the students will engage with will act as foundational knowledge to support future making projects including practices in composition and sound arts. The module focuses on the core activities of the creative sound arts practitioner: composing, listening and recording. A range of ‘texts’ will be explored and will act as case studies in each area.

Songwriting, Film and Media Composition 1
Module leader: Prof Paul Whitty

This module investigates contemporary practices in songwriting and composition for film and media. Students are introduced to core practices in songwriting; fundamentals of film composition and the creation of film soundtracks; and to key concepts in the creation and development of sound and music for media including computer games. Students will participate in the activities of the module both as makers and theorists. The key concepts that the students will engage with will act as foundational knowledge to support future making projects in songwriting and media composition. The module encourages students to listen and view media texts critically and then use these analyses to instigate their own practices.

Key moments in music past and present
Module leader: Dr Barbara Eichner

The main aim of the module is to introduce students to thinking historically and critically about music, musicians and musical institutions, past and present. The module focuses on ten distinct “key moments” from the history of Western music, which have been selected for their different locations, functions, genres and reception. Students will develop historical, stylistic and critical awareness of a variety of classical and pop repertoires. They will also learn to work with historical sources as well as contemporary research literature, they will develop an understanding of the basics of (music) historiography and they will practice fundamental academic skills.

Performance Portfolio and Event Production
Module leader: Craig Prosser
This module prepares students to produce a portfolio of musical performances and organise a final performance project, presented in the form of a mini music festival. The module progressively develops instrumental or vocal techniques and musical performance skills, by receiving individual lessons with a specialist tutor, in preparation for two short recitals; one closed and one open to the public.

Students are expected to undertake independent instrumental or vocal practice for a minimum of one hour per day with occasional rest days.

As committed music-makers, students are expected to attend University Choir and/or orchestra to further develop their aural skills. As part of this module, students will be required to self-record a portfolio of their own playing; experimenting with microphone choice and technique to find the best way to record their own instrument or voice. Students will also gain event management skills through the organisation of a mini music festival at which all students will perform their prepared musical pieces.

**Critical Listening and Music Theory**  
Module Leader: Dr Dai Griffiths

This module sets out central principles in music theory, either as introduction for students or as a critical review of students’ prior learning. Students will learn to identify selected theoretical categories in a score-based musical work, tied to aural perception of the work through listening to recordings of the work.

**Understanding Music on Screen**  
Module Leader: Dr Jan Butler

This module explores the use of music on screen, both from an aesthetic and cultural perspective. Students will be introduced to key concepts in film music theory, including the relationship of music to the diegesis, the role and use of pre-existing music and the synergistic relationship between music and visual media. A range of relevant multimedia 'texts' will be explored against the background of these concepts, with students being introduced to a range of techniques suitable for the textual analysis of music on screen.
Second Year Modules

Music International Field Trip
Module leader: Dr Paul Dibley

This module aims to enhance students' learning experience by presenting them with the opportunity to engage with sound and music in a major European city. This is an opportunity for the entire year-group to come together as they explore (led by staff with different expertise and interests) a series of musical events and locations.

The experience will inform students’ musical practice and develop research skills, for example by examining primary sources and experiencing music in a different culture. The module will strengthen students’ reflective capabilities as they compare and contrast different events and locations and help them to identify a sense of their own position in the music world to help them understand their potential audiences.

Work Experience
Module leader: Craig Prosser

This module enables students to prepare for work within the music industry by undertaking a period of work experience and reflecting critically upon it. With guidance from Brookes’ Careers Service and presentations from professionals from a variety of music related roles, students will identify and put into practice a range of transferable skills, competencies and attitudes employers expect graduates to possess. Students will undertake the period of work experience during the semester or optionally during the summer between year 2 and 3 of study; this enables the work experience to be done at summer events and festivals which may not occur during the academic teaching year.

Music in Society
Module leader: Prof. Alexandra Wilson

This module aims to develop a critical understanding of music in its historical and contemporary contexts. Students will be introduced to key concepts in (music) historiography and cultural theory through the close engagement with relevant literature, and will examine a range of musical 'texts', events and institutions against the background of these terms. The content of the module embraces a wide range of different genres, styles and periods, intentionally interrogating the lines between “classical” and “popular” repertoires, and the case studies exemplifying the different topics and approaches reflect the current research specialisms of staff.

Music Analysis
Module leader: Dr Barbara Eichner

This module focuses on the analysis of musical works, by a combination of close listening and the study of musical scores. The repertory is centred on Western music in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with some reference to twentieth and twenty-first century responses to
their legacy; instrumental music is prioritized but song form is also encountered. An emphasis is made on form and genre with the expectation that students develop as listeners and readers familiar with ‘textbook’ norms (e.g. sonata form, rondo, binary) as well as with forms less easily categorized (e.g. slow movements, fantasy, ballade) as well as with adaptations and responses to these models using different musical languages.

**Song writing, Film and Media Composition 2**  
Module leader: Dr Paul Dibley

This creative module builds on the proficiencies developed in Song writing, Film and Media Composition 1 and enables students to investigate the process of composition for television, film, advertising media, mobile apps and computer games by composing for a variety of instrumental, electronic and vocal resources. Composition for visual media forms an important role in today’s music industry. Students will work to a written brief, develop creative strategies and learn to use recording, editing and composition software along with the music studio as a song writing, compositional and notational tool.

**Group Performance in the City**  
Module leader: Craig Prosser

This module allows students to form a group of between three and seven music-makers to prepare for performances in informal and formal settings (for example a club, school, theatre, atrium, hospital, concert venue, community centre, media arts theatre etc.). In consultation with professional musicians, students will develop and rehearse an appropriate selection of music for their band or ensemble with the aim to produce a suitable 25-minute performance within the community.

**Practical Musicianship Skills**  
Module leader: Mr Craig Prosser

This module aims to develop students’ practical musicianship skills, which may be applied in a vocational context (for example school teaching or ensemble leadership). In the first part of the module, students will explore instrumentation, orchestration and arrangement to successfully produce a reduction of a piece for a set ensemble. The second half will focus on the art of instrumental conducting and learn to lead a small ensemble.

**Recording Studio Practice**  
Module leader: David Carugo

The recording and production of music is a specialisation that brings together aspects of technology and creativity. This module is an introduction to the tools and practice of music and studio recording using analogue and digital technology, involving creative analytical listening and technical operations of the recording studio facility.
In order to better understand the process of recording, the nature of sound and acoustics will be introduced as part of this module.

Students will take part in making sound recordings using a variety of techniques, which are explored in lectures, with the aim of introducing them to the tools and practice of recording music and sound. Students produce a number of individual and group recordings in the studio environment, with the opportunity to critically listen to and evaluate their work.

**Music Independent Study**
Module leader: Dr Paul Dibley

This module gives students the opportunity to explore an aspect of music that may be an extension of the taught modules, or where students show particular aptitude for or interest in types of music or musical activities not covered otherwise on the curriculum. The focus of the independent study project is suggested and developed by the student and supervised by a member of staff with the appropriate experience and specialism. The project can follow different pathways and consist of:

- a portfolio of musical compositions
- a performance project
- an extended piece of written work in any field of music
Third Year Modules

Music Project
Module leader: Dr Paul Dibley

This module acts as a focus of the accumulated knowledge and practical expertise of music students in the final year of their programme, consisting of a student-directed project in the fields of musicology, composition or music technology/production. The main outcome will be an extended piece of writing (dissertation), a portfolio of compositions, a complete recorded production (e.g. album or radio play) or a music technology artefact (e.g. a synthesiser patch or plug-in). A final symposium will give students the opportunity to showcase their work to their peers, the university community and the wider public. The project is selected by the student in consultation with (and subject to the approval of) Music staff through a proposal process. As an honours module this module encourages students to make connections between material and ideas encountered on earlier modules, so as to develop an informed and critical overview of and engagement with the field of music in academia.

Professional skills for the portfolio musician
Module leader: Mr Craig Prosser

This module is based on experiential learning through use of a scenario-based event simulation and or real events. Students develop the skills, strategies and networking skills for the portfolio career that many musicians pursue.

Music Journalism: History and Practice
Module leader: Prof. Alexandra Wilson

This module examines music journalism from both historical and practical perspectives. In the first part of the module, students will examine British music journalism in cultural and social contexts from the nineteenth century to the present. They will learn how to use historical press databases effectively in order to find historical sources and will analyse different types of journalistic writing covering a variety of different musical genres. They will learn about interactions between critics and composers/performers; the ways in which music journalism has shaped debates about music; the development of music broadcasting; and challenges and opportunities for music journalism in the digital age. In the second, practical, part of the module, students have the opportunity to develop skills as music journalists themselves. Training will be provided in how to write effectively about music for different types of print, broadcast and online media. Staff will draw upon their practical experience of writing for national newspapers, magazines and radio stations, and the module may also feature guest lectures by industry speakers.
Music and the Dramatic Arts
Module leader: Dr Barbara Eichner

The module “Music and the dramatic arts” investigates the role of music on stage and its contribution to dramatic story-telling. It revolves around the conception, performance and reception of selected key works which may be drawn from different musico-dramatic genres, such as opera, operetta, musical theatre, film musical and incidental music. The module addresses issues such as the relationship of language, text and performance; music and its sister arts; dramaturgy; adaptations and transformations; politics; “high” and popular culture; gender and the body; stage technologies; spaces real and imagined. The module aims to develop skills of argument and critical debate and an awareness of the cultural contexts of music theatre understood in the broadest sense. It expects students to immerse themselves in current scholarly and public debates about the position of music theatre in society both historical and contemporary, and to reflect on the expression and representation of human action and emotion on stage.

Advanced Solo Performance
Module leader: Craig Prosser

Building on work developed in Music Independent Study in solo performance, this module allows students the opportunity to explore solo performance at an advanced level. The module consists of individual instrumental/vocal lessons, performance workshops, and individual practice. In consultation with a specialised tutor, students will develop and rehearse an appropriate repertoire with the aim to produce a 40 minute public concert.

Music Technology: Editing and Mixing.
Module leader: David Carugo

This module covers a variety of professionally relevant knowledge and skills in modern music technology, including MIDI and music production software, mixing music in a studio or workstation environment, and sound and music production techniques based around digital recording software such as ProTools.

These skills can be used in a range of production contexts including music recording, sound for radio or the moving image, or even live music mixing.

Students on this module undertake assignments in editing music using software systems, recording techniques and mixing music.

Advanced Composition
Module leader: Prof. Paul Whitty
This module provides students with the opportunity to engage with advanced making practices in composition, sound arts, field recording, phonography, listening and sound studies. Students will be able to curate a creative project for the sound arts festival audiograft; engage with the making practices of one or more creative practitioners through close-reading of their work and direct interview; and develop new work through collaborative engagement with a professional musician or sound-maker. The concepts that the students will engage with will prepare them for professional level practice in the contemporary arts.

**Advanced Musicology**  
Module leader: Prof. Alexandra Wilson

This module allows students to examine a musical topic, repertory (historical or contemporary), and/or field of critical musical debate in detail and at an advanced level of critical engagement. Topics will change from year to year and be guided by staff research interests and expertise. Students will have an opportunity to expand their repertorial knowledge and will be encouraged to engage with the topic in question from interdisciplinary perspectives. A spirit of enquiry and willingness to embrace previously unfamiliar ideas and repertories is key to the values of the module. The module aims to support students' development as independent, critically-minded researchers, to familiarise them with important disciplinary debates, and to give them an understanding of the professional practices of the musicological discipline.
PERFORMANCE AT BROOKES
FAQS

*Does Music at Brookes offer instrumental/vocal lessons?*

Yes, we do. Performance is compulsory for Music students in the first year and the university will pay for a set number of one-to-one lessons on their principal instrument or voice.

The performance module runs over two semesters and one-to-one lessons are scheduled once every two weeks. This will give you time to prepare your pieces or songs for the next lesson and to concentrate on the workload for your other modules.

**Bursary** - We award performance bursaries for the top two performance marks in Year 1. These bursaries will pay for instrumental/vocal lessons in the Year 2.

*Can I continue performing in the second and third year?*

Instrumental tuition is also provided in the second and third years if you continue to take performance modules, which are subject to audition. Options include Group Performance in the City, which encourages you to form your own ensemble, e.g. a laptop orchestra, a string quartet, a folk band or a jazz quintet, and perform in a variety of performance spaces, such as clubs, hospitals, schools, or local venues. You can also continue to hone your skills as a solo performer through the intermediate and advanced Solo Performance options, subject to a successful audition.

*Can I have lessons on a second instrument or learn a new instrument?*

Unfortunately, Music at Brookes does not offer lessons on a second instrument, but we can put you in contact with a suitable tutor.

**Where can I store my instrument or amp?**

There is a secure Store Room designated to store students’ instruments and amps.

**Are there any music societies or ensembles I can join?**

There is something for everyone at Brookes, from Early Music to Rock. The following list is just a selection. If you want to start up a new
ensemble, we will encourage and guide you with the process.

Music Industry Society  Pop Choir
University and Community Choir  Folk Music Society
University Orchestra  Early Music Society
Jazz Society  Chamber Choir (auditioned)
The Fortune Players (Musical Theatre)  The Fortune Singers (Musical Theatre Choir)

Where do we perform?

We perform in a variety of venues in and around Oxford:

- The Union Hall, Gipsy Lane Campus
- Jericho Tavern
- The Bullingdon
- The Cape of Good Hope
- The Green Room, Headington Hill Hall
- The Holywell Music Room
- The Jacqueline du Pré Music Building
- The Oxford Playhouse
- Westminster Chapel, Harcourt Hill Campus

For more information contact musicperformance@brookes.ac.uk, follow us on Twitter @musicatbrookes or Like us on Facebook: Oxford Brookes Music
BEYOND BROOKES: AFTER GRADUATION

Examples of what some of our graduates are now doing:

• Sound Engineering (Tim Hand: freelance sound engineer / tour manager)
• Media (Will Drysdale: Senior Digital Content Producer, BBC Radio)
• Teaching (Ben Judson: Music Teacher, North Oxfordshire Academy)
• XYZ Studio and Music Academy (Duncan Lee)
• Performance (Rebecca Afonwy-Jones, mezzo: principal, Welsh National Opera)
• Arts administration (Laura Hall: ABRSM)
• Fundraising (Katherine Cox: Sponsorship Manager, Royal Opera House)
• Postgraduate study (Niketha Sheth, PhD Birmingham)
How to Apply

**UCAS Tariff points:** 104

**A-Level:** BCC or equivalent (A-level Music welcome, but not essential)

Wherever possible we make our conditional offers using the UCAS Tariff. This combination of A-level grades would be just one way of achieving the UCAS Tariff points for this course.

**IB Diploma:** 29 points

**BTEC:** DMM

Offers can also include music qualifications that attract UCAS Tariff Points (e.g. ABRSM, Trinity / Guildhall, Rocks school etc).

We encourage prospective students with non-traditional qualifications to apply. There is no requirement or preference for A-level Music or music grade exams.

**Specific entry requirements**

We welcome applicants with a wide range of experiences and expertise in music.

Please also see the University's [general entry requirements](#).

**Selection process**

Applicants will be invited to demonstrate their ability through a portfolio and interview.

You will be asked to provide a portfolio comprising:

- a sample of your creative work (for example, a composition, song writing or producing)
- a video or sound recording of you performing (can be from any style of music. For example, you might sing and play guitar, perform a DJ set, play your own composition, or play a classical piece [grade 6 and above])
- a short piece of your written work, up to 1000 words

We will invite you for an interview with a member of the music team, using Skype, by phone or in person, so that we get to know you and your creative work. More importantly, this is also an opportunity for you to talk about your musical experiences, your expectations from the course and your plans for the future.

Once you have received an offer to study Music at Oxford Brookes, you will be invited to an Applicant Day in March.