

PROGRAMME SPECIFICATION

MASTER OF MUSIC in COMPOSITION, COMPOSITION AND PERFORMANCE, CONDUCTING, PERFORMANCE or POPULAR MUSIC

UCAS Codes: 701F/702F/801F/805F/807F/820F/823F
Awarding Institution: Royal Northern College of Music
Programme Leader: Prof David Horne, Head of Graduate School

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1. INTRODUCTORY PROGRAMME INFORMATION

Duration: 1 or 2 years, full-time only

Award

On successful completion of the programme, students will receive:

Master of Music in:

Conducting
Composition
Composition and Performance
Performance
Popular Music

The optional completion of 90 specified credits offers the additional named award of one of the following Specialisms:

Artistic Research
Composition Pedagogy
Instrumental Pedagogy
Music Education
Music Psychology
Musicology
Philosophy and Music
Practice and Research in Science and Music (PRISM)
Vocal Pedagogy

The specialism and principal study can be listed in any order chosen by the student.

For example, a Performance student completing 90 credits of study in Music Education could choose:

Master of Music in Performance and Music Education**Or****Master of Music in Music Education and Performance****Degree Classification Requirements:****Without Specialisation:**

A **Distinction** is awarded when the Principal Study mark is 70 or higher, and the average mark for all other modules is 60 or higher.

Otherwise, a **Pass** classification is awarded.

All modules must be passed for the degree, 50 is the pass mark.

With Specialisation:

A **Distinction** is awarded when the average mark for at least 90 credits of research modules is 70 or higher (with at least 60 credits in this range), and where the average for all other modules, including Principal Study, is 60 or higher.

The classification of Distinction in the degree does not mention whether it was awarded in Principal Study and/or the Specialisation.

As an example, a Composition student receiving a Principal Study mark of 62 (with the average of the Principal Study and optional module being above 60) and an average at 70 or above in a Music Education Specialisation will receive:

Master of Music in Composition and Music Education: Distinction

Teaching Institution: RNCM

Period of Registration: Minimum: 1 Year Maximum: 3 Years

Academic Year: September to July

OTHER POTENTIAL AWARDS: Programme levels and qualifications (Exit Awards)

Level/ Year of study	FHEQ* Level	Credits and Qualification For early departure or non-completion of studies.
Year 1 or 2	7	<p>Postgraduate Diploma: requires Principal Study at 60 credits and 60–90 credits from any other modules - no Specialism or Degree Classification can be included in the award</p> <p>Postgraduate Certificate: requires 60–90 credits from any modules which may or may not include Principal Study - no Specialism or Degree Classification can be included in the award</p>

* FHEQ: Framework for Higher Education Qualifications

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PROGRAMME AIMS

The Master of Music programme enables you to:

1	Enter professional life as a future musical ambassador capable of demonstrating compelling artistic identity, integrity and vision
2	Perform, create and/or research music as global citizens without boundaries, engaging meaningfully with audiences, the wider artistic community and society.
3	Demonstrate autonomy, entrepreneurship, originality, problem solving skills and resilience in artistic or research projects.
4	Creatively adapt to and lead a constantly evolving music industry through innovation, experimentation, healthy ambition, supportive, inspirational leadership and collaboration.
5	Promote inclusivity in your creativity, including embracing your own and others' original voices and cultural heritage in music-making or research.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME

A	Knowledge and Understanding - on successful completion of the programme you will be able to:
A1	Demonstrate a systematic understanding of current practices relevant to your discipline and, where applicable, specialism.
A2	Demonstrate sophisticated, original and thoughtful musicianship artistic decisions.
A3	Demonstrate expert technical and practical skills in the discipline, with the ability to critically reflect on these through healthy and holistic approaches to music making.
A4	Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the music relevant to the discipline and the capability to expand this through proactively inclusive programming and/or repertoire knowledge.
A5	Demonstrate critical awareness of the relationship between musical practice, theoretical study and research, leading to original insights and, where appropriate, the ability to create robust proposals for research-degree study.

B	Specialist Subject Skills - on successful completion of the programme you will be able to:
B1	Make music with a level of insight, critical maturity, individuality and technical assurance consistent with the ability to enter the profession in the chosen discipline.
B2	Demonstrate sophisticated interpretative skills, initiative, creativity and individuality, with the potential for experimentation and risk-taking.
B3	Demonstrate mastery in assimilating elements of musical language and expression relevant to the discipline, reflecting on these in performance or creation.
B4	Disseminate the knowledge of and insights into your musical practice to the widest range of audiences at an appropriately inclusive level.
B5	Demonstrate innovation, entrepreneurship, flexibility and resilience in deploying a range of relevant techniques and/or research methods applicable to your professional activities.

C	Generic and Graduate Skills - on successful completion of the programme you will be able to:
C1	Assimilate and synthesise current research and practice, deploying it theoretically and applying it within the relevant discipline.
C2	Command a range of relevant research and dissemination tools, employing appropriate media and technologies.
C3	Plan, research and realise individual projects at an advanced level, harnessing independent learning skills for personal career development.
C4	Work collaboratively to create a supportive and nurturing creative environment.
C5	Communicate verbally with confidence and insight.
C6	Work effectively and confidently within a global and culturally diverse environment.
C7	Employ a range of technological skills fluently and at an appropriate level of sophistication.

2. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION AND ENTRY

All applicants must pass an RNCM audition, and you are normally expected to hold a bachelor's degree or equivalent (FHEQ Level 6). While the undergraduate degree will normally be in music, it is not a requirement. Instead, you need to satisfy the College that you have achieved the appropriate standard in your main discipline area and have the potential to develop further towards a professional level.

In exceptional cases, joint principal study is possible, including between different Performance Schools. This requires the agreement of the relevant Heads of School and the Head of the Graduate School. In the case of joint principal study in School of Composition and Performance Schools the degree to be awarded would be MMus in Composition and Performance. You would need to demonstrate readiness for Level 7 study in both disciplines and the final Principal Study assessment would be weighted 50/50 in both.

If taking Joint Principal Study, you will meet with relevant Heads and Head of Graduate School at the start of the programme to ensure you are supported in terms of timetabling and module choices. Joint Principal Study students will normally only be accepted onto the 2-year Programme, but exceptions can be made in the case of exceptional performance at audition and/or UG Principal Study achievement. If you are on the 2-year programme there will be an opportunity after the mid-programme formative assessment to drop one discipline for the remainder of the degree. If you are a 1-year student, you will also be permitted to make this change but will likely have to retain the existing formula for Principal Study tuition due to staff contractual hours.

In joint principal study assessment, you are encouraged to perform one full-length recital in which you demonstrate both disciplines. This could involve, for example, performing on more than one type of instrument, or where one principal study discipline is composition, including performances of your own work. It is also possible to have two separate assessments, at 50% of the normal length of each. As an example, a student studying both composition and flute would be expected to perform a recital of 23 minutes and submit a portfolio of 15–20 minutes. As the nature of the Composition *and* Performance portfolio is flexible, it would be negotiated on an individual basis. The alternative performance/composition 'portfolio' options cited in the Principal Study module outlines are also permitted, again, in negotiation with relevant Heads of School/Graduate School. More information is given in the Performance Principal Study module outline.

For applicants whose first language is not English, an IELTS score of 6.0 (with at least 5.5 in each component, as required by the UKVI) is normally required, exceptions being at the discretion of David Horne as Course Leader, in consultation with Prof. Jean Ammar, Senior Tutor in English Language Support. Certain modules require a written IELTS of 6.5 or 7.0.

A 1,000-word sample of writing, normally on music (which may be an excerpt from an existing piece of work you have written), using references, is required if your undergraduate degree was not undertaken at the College.

Occasionally, students may wish to transfer onto another programme (including between the 1 and 2-Year MMus). To assess your suitability and eligibility, formal transfer applications must be made via the electronic form available from the Academic Services Office. **All applications for transfer should be submitted to David Horne for consideration no later than 30 November** of the academic year in which the transfer is to take effect.

The policies for Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) and Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) may be found in the Student Regulation Handbook. All the credits awarded through APL must be endorsed by the Board of Examiners

3. COURSE OVERVIEW

The MMus has Principal Study at its centre, and as students you can normally expect to devote a significant portion of your time in this area.

The degree requires the completion of 180 credits. The Principal Study module contains 60 credits, all other modules (apart from 60 credit Major Dissertation) have 30 credits. Module selection normally occurs in the week before the start of each academic year.

MMus students can choose to take 90 credits of study (2–3 modules) in a related Specialism preparing them for vocational work or research degree-level study. The specialisms currently offered are:

Artistic Research
Composition Pedagogy
Instrumental Pedagogy
Music Education
Music Psychology
Musicology
Philosophy and Music
Practice and Research in Science and Music (PRiSM)
Vocal Pedagogy

Apart from Principal Study, no modules are compulsory in the MMus. Fulfilling the QAA Statement Characteristics for Master's Degrees that they "involve training in research methods", all Master's students at the RNCM are required to take a research module from a choice of options, which offer flexibility both in delivery, content and assessment.

The MMus is fulltime, and available either as a 1- or 2-year programme. Students opting for either the 1- or 2-year programme take into consideration the time they can devote to practical training in their Principal Study, balanced with other factors such as cost, and career aims.

Conductors may normally only take the 2-year Master's, due to the demands of the Conducting programme and structure of the learning opportunities.

BENCHMARKING

Programmes are based on national standards for degrees in music through external scrutiny of the programme during development by both academics and professional musicians and by reference to nationally agreed standards; OfS Conditions, Sector Recognised Standards and QAA Benchmarks

MODULE MAP

Students on the 1-year MMus will complete all their modules within the year. If you are not taking the Major Dissertation, you will select 4 modules in addition to their Principal Study, one of which needs to be a research module.

Students on the 2-year programme will normally take 2 modules each year, in addition to their Principal Study, which is spread over two years. The Major Dissertation may be taken over 2 years. Given the nature of performance opportunities available, it is permissible to take the portfolio option for Principal Study in year 1, with the agreement of both the relevant Head of School and David Horne.

The teaching in most modules is delivered over two semesters. **Timetable information** is available from early September in each academic year, which informs your choices when selecting modules. Assessments are spread over the year to avoid conflicts where practical, with the large majority taking place from April to June. Mid-May to early June is the Principal Study assessment period, and other assessments are largely avoided during this period.

Work placements are not compulsory, but you can choose to take the Professional Placement module, normally involving various placements in the local area. As a performer, you can also normally apply for the various Professional Experience Schemes (PES) through the College, typically involving professional partners in Manchester and Northwest England, and occasionally other national and international partners. Students involved in PES may opt to use this placement for credit in the Professional Placement or Artistic Project module, but it is not a requirement to do so.

Core modules:

The 60-credit Principal Study module is compulsory.

Choice of research modules:

You must choose at least one of the Research modules below:

Dalcroze in Context	(30)
Dissertation (minor/major)	(30/60)
Research Methods: Artistic Research, Musicology, Music Education, Music Psychology, Philosophy and Music, Practice and Research in Science and Music (PRiSM)	(30)
Research Lecture Recital	(30)
Repertoire Project	(30)

If taking only one research module, this may be taken in either year of the 2-year MMus. A Major Dissertation is normally taken over both years of the 2-year MMus with credits awarded in the second year, so that in years 1 and 2 only one other 30-credit module will be selected.

If you have undertaken level-7 research methods training previously you can exceptionally be exempted from the requirement to take a research module, if evidence (e.g., a thesis) is provided. This would be at the discretion of David Horne, following discussion with Simon Clarke. This does not follow the formal APL procedure so you would choose another module to make up the required 180 credits.

Principles of Specialisms

The MMus offers you the opportunity to take a Specialism alongside your Principal Study. A Specialism requires a minimum of 90 credits in specified modules.

Research Specialisms

A Research Specialism requires the associated Research Methods module (30 credits).

It is normally complemented by a Major Dissertation (60) but practice-led research modules may be complemented instead by Research Lecture Recital (30) and a Minor (30) or Major (60) dissertation. Music Education may be complemented by Practical Pedagogy (30) and a Minor (30) or Major (60) dissertation.

Artistic Research

Research Methods: Artistic Research (30)

Minor or Major Dissertation (30/60)

Research Lecture Recital (30) may be taken instead of Major Dissertation

Music Education

Research Methods: Music Education (30)

Minor Dissertation (30) (Major Dissertation is permissible in lieu of 30 credits from optional modules)

Practical Pedagogy (30)

Music Psychology

Research Methods: Music Psychology (30)

Major Dissertation (60)

Musicology

Research Methods: Musicology (30)

Major Dissertation (60)

Philosophy and Music

Research Methods: Philosophy and Music (30)

Major Dissertation (60)

Practice and Research in Science and Music

Research Methods: Practice and Research in Science and Music (30)

Minor or Major Dissertation (30/60)

Research Lecture Recital (30) may be taken instead of Major Dissertation

Note: in exceptional cases, with the agreement of David Horne and other relevant research pathway leads, you may be able to change your named specialism despite having completed modules required for another. This is to offer flexibility and to acknowledge the evolving nature of research projects and interests.

Vocational Specialisms

A Vocational Specialism requires an associated vocational module (normally 30 credits).

It can be complemented by a Major Dissertation (60) or Research Lecture Recital (30) and a Minor dissertation (30)

Composition Pedagogy

Practical Pedagogy (30)

Minor or Major Dissertation (30/60)

Research Lecture Recital (30) may be taken instead of Major Dissertation

Instrumental Pedagogy

Practical Pedagogy (30)

Minor or Major Dissertation (30/60)

Research Lecture Recital (30) may be taken instead of Major Dissertation

Vocal Pedagogy

Practical Pedagogy (30)

Minor or Major Dissertation (30/60)

Research Lecture Recital (30) may be taken instead of Major Dissertation

Optional Modules

You can select from the practical and vocational 30-credit modules below:

Accompaniment	Freelance Musician
Arrangement	Music & Environment
Artistic Project	Musicianship for Vocalists: Consort Singing
Cross-Cultural Approaches to Musicianship	Practical Pedagogy
Composition Elective	Presenting Research
Conducting Elective	Professional Audition
Contemporary Songwriting	Professional Placement
Dalcroze Eurhythmics and Dynamic	Small Ensemble Performance
Rehearsal	Underrepresented Music and Musicians
Electronic Experimental Ensemble	

MMus programme route diagrams

MMus without Specialism

MMus

Principal Study (60)

Research Module Choice (30–60)

Choice of 2-3 Modules (60–90)

MMus with Research Specialism

MMus with Research Specialism

Principal Study (60)

Associated Research Methods (30)

Dissertation (60)
Compulsory for:
Music Psychology
Musicology
Philosophy and Music

For other specialisms,
may be chosen instead
of Major Dissertation:

Dissertation (30–60)
Research Lecture Recital (30)
for:
Artistic Research
PRISM

Dissertation (30–60)
Practical Pedgaogy (30)
for:
Music Education

Optional 30-credit module (if credits remain)

MMus with Vocational Specialism

MMus with Vocational Specialism

Principal Study (60)

Associated Vocational Module (30)

Major Dissertation (60)

or

Minor/Major Dissertation (30–60)
Research Lecture Recital (30)

Optional 30-credit module (if credits remain)

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

The Graduate School promotes a diverse, innovative and student-centred approach to learning, with the learning and teaching methods used in the delivery of the programmes designed to reflect the diversity of student experience and to meet individual learning needs. Responding positively to the Office for Students' most recent guidance on improving access and participation, the Graduate School meets the needs of students with non-traditional qualifications and/or from overseas by providing a not-for-credit module which supports and updates students' theoretical knowledge of music. Prof. Jean Ammar, Senior Tutor (Language Support) offers seminar-based and individual support throughout the academic year across the full range of modules and a pre-session course offers incoming students an opportunity to develop the necessary language skills for successful postgraduate study. The Student Disability and Wellbeing Advisors assist students through the design of bespoke learning plans where appropriate, gives individual guidance and further advises the Graduate School on any necessary accommodation for disabled students ensuring that all reasonable adjustments be made in accordance with the 2010 Equality Act. The Graduate School programmes are designed wherever possible to offer flexible routes in learning and teaching, including assessment. The flexible modes of delivery in various modules promote student choice and control over their scheduled commitments.

You will typically have one individual principal study lesson each week during teaching weeks, in addition to school-specific classes and activities. Other modules have various modes of delivery, ranging from those that meet on a regular timetabled schedule, normally every 1 or 2 weeks, to others (e.g., Major Dissertation) where you are expected to arrange periodic meetings with your supervisor. Class sizes will vary depending on the module. In taught modules, minimum cohorts are specified where appropriate and some have upper limits to ensure quality of the student experience. Normally, you will be able to take the modules you have requested and the teaching timetable is arranged to avoid any module conflicts. Exceptions will apply in modules (e.g., Conducting) that have entrance or audition requirements.

1 credit is normally equal to 10 hours of study; however, you may find that it is necessary to devote more time to certain modules depending on the assessment schedule and other factors. In the induction meetings you will have an opportunity to ask questions about modules, and to consider the overall timetable (including assessments) when making your module selections.

In addition to cohort induction meetings which introduce the specialisms there will be an extra meeting timetabled during the induction week (currently called Welcome Week) which discusses the Research and Vocational specialisms in more detail. Additionally, David Horne and Simon Clarke will be available to meet with you during this period on an individual basis if you would like to select modules to form a Specialism. At the end of the first Semester, further meetings will be arranged with you if undertaking Specialisms to ensure that you are fully supported in your educational choices.

The following learning and teaching methods are used throughout your programme, although they will vary according to the module choice. Module outlines indicate which apply.

- **Individual lessons in Principal Study** offer advanced and specifically customised training. You will negotiate with your specialist tutor(s) the content and style of the Principal Study learning and assessments. Lessons provide a forum for you to enhance key technical and musical skills as well as making informed choices regarding repertoire and format for recital presentations and/or creative portfolios, preparing for the professional application of your musical training.
- **Specialist Classes and Workshops** involve formative feedback on practical aspects of performance and/or creative work and often an opportunity to give and receive feedback from fellow students as well as tutors.
- **Masterclasses** with visiting national and international tutors offer additional expert insights and perspectives on issues related to Principal Study activities.
- **Lectures** involve discussion of concepts relevant to the module and invite your

participation.

- **Seminars** or other forms of group discussion involve individual or group presentations to develop oral presentation and communication skills, providing opportunities for you to work collaboratively with your peers, under staff supervision.
- **One-to-One Supervision** on various projects is delivered by tutors with expertise in the general subject area.
- **Mentoring** includes personalised guidance, sharing expertise and fosters critical thinking,
- **Placements** offer real-world practical experience, industry insights, networking, and time-management, bridging the gap between theory, practice and the application of your skills.
- **Essay-Writing** develops specific research techniques, acquiring knowledge and presenting ideas and arguments in written form, from short reports on performance events to major research dissertations.
- **Reflective Writing** promotes your development through analysing your experiences, enhancing creativity and deepening self-awareness.

INDEPENDENT LEARNING

When not in classes, you will typically be involved in many extra-curricular activities, including rehearsals and public concerts, including externally. Where possible, you have various options for receiving credit for such activities, in modules such as Artistic Project and, where applicable, Professional Placement. You are also encouraged to consider whether your own College-initiated or self-directed projects are eligible for Principal Study credit (see the Principal Study module outlines for more information).

4. ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment and feedback underpin the Principal Study 1-2-1 model, with students receiving feedback from their tutors on a weekly basis.

Throughout the programme opportunities for formative feedback arise in the practically orientated modules, and through individual supervision in the research modules. Formative feedback is given in support of your learning across the programme, seeking to integrate your practical proficiency with your aptitude and motivation for research-informed music-making.

Mid-course Formative Assessment

Towards the end of the first year of the two-year programme, or at the beginning of term 2 of one-year award, you are assessed through a formative mid-course performance or equivalent.

School of Strings, School of Wind, Brass and Percussion, School of Vocal Studies and Opera:

15–20 minutes

School of Keyboard Studies

20 minutes (from a submitted programme of 30 minutes)

The rationale for this is due to the longer length of keyboard recitals.

School of Conducting:

A selected performance event in the first year, normally 35-40 minutes.

School of Composition:

Composers will submit a portfolio of 2 works, one of which can be in progress and undertake a viva of around 15 minutes.

School of Popular Music:

Students will perform for 20 minutes, and composition/production will be assessed through submission of a portfolio, normally 10–15 minutes and undertake a viva of around 15 minutes.

These are timetabled assessments, intended to reflect the experience of your Principal Study summative assessments, and you receive written feedback.

Formative mid-course assessments are marked by a panel of two internal staff members; no Specialist External Assessor is involved. There is no requirement to pass the formative mid-course assessment, which is instead intended to offer you an opportunity to take stock of progress and to receive formative feedback in written form. While no mark is given you will be notified of the outcome, 'pass proceed' or 'pass with caution'. Where concerns are raised on progress through a 'pass with caution' outcome, this is discussed initially with the Principal Study tutor(s) by the Head of School and/or Deputy, and subsequently in tutorials with the tutor(s) and you. The tutors are expected to report back on progress to the Head of School, normally within two months of the initial report. In exceptional cases a further formative assessment may be arranged. David Horne is kept informed throughout the process.

Summative Assessment:

Assessment modes vary by module and aim to promote inclusive approaches to teaching and learning. Many modules have mixed forms of assessment, for example a live or recorded performance/creative portfolio plus written work and/or a viva voce. If you have particular learning needs these can also be accommodated through offering alternative forms of assessments. Module outlines indicate which types of assessment apply in each case and can help you in your selection of modules. Modules normally have one summative assessment point (deadline) at the end of the teaching period. Where there are other assessments required (e.g., viva voce) these are made clear in the module outlines which can be found in Section 8 of this handbook.

Some dissertation projects have pre- or co- requisites. This means you must normally take another module either before or alongside the other. These apply to the following dissertation topics:

Music Education – requires Research Methods: Music Education

Music Psychology – requires Research Methods: Music Psychology

The following dissertation topics require Practical Pedagogy:

Composition Pedagogy

Instrumental Pedagogy

Vocal Pedagogy

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

The Graduate School Assessment Strategy is underpinned by the following concepts:

- The purpose of assessment is to enable you to demonstrate that you have achieved the intended learning outcomes of the programme at the appropriate standard set for the award.
- Assessment must promote and support learning and therefore occurs in both formative and summative contexts.
- Assessment in the Graduate School should seek to promote independence and innovation among students, preparing them for the demands of the profession.
- Assessment is intended to provide an indication of the level of learning for students, staff, external scrutinisers, Higher Education authorities, professional bodies and other external organisations.

The assessment strategy is designed to emphasise assessment for learning. You are expected to play a significant role in the determination of your own assessment (for example, determining the type of performance/composition assessment to be undertaken), and therefore it is essential that tutors and

students are aware of the criteria by which marks are differentiated, the learning outcomes that these assessments measure and the potential for achieving the highest marks by creative enterprise, initiative and commitment to the chosen course of study.

Summative assessment is designed to meet the needs of your real-world professional skills: in each case you should understand the relevance of the assessment activity to your career aspirations. Despite the flexibility at the core of the programme, the equity of assessment is assured by a rigorous process involving Principal Study panels (three examiners 'blind marking' and arriving at a mark agreed by all, one to be a specialist external), moderators (module co-ordinators), External Examiners (who observe the marking process and sample work across the programme of study) and appropriate observance of the College's Assessment Regulations.

The Graduate School will adopt a variety of different methods of assessment consistent with and appropriate to its variety of modes of learning and teaching. The purpose of using a range of methods is to:

Provide the most appropriate and direct means of measuring the extent to which you achieve the intended learning outcomes of the programme and its constituent modules.

Allow you to demonstrate your strengths, considering the varied nature of your prior learning experiences and individual learning needs.

Promote, support, and develop different learning experiences and ensure that you have fair and inclusive access to the College's PGT programmes.

Encourage recognition of a range of cultural and musical values. Avoid excessive/inappropriate formal examinations.

In addition, the programme assessment strategy aims to:

Encourage the development of fair, innovative and rigorous approaches to assessing your work, considering the need for innovation to be underpinned by the concepts listed above.

Ensure consistency and parity of assessment standards through marking, moderation, and standardisation procedures, as well as the involvement of specialist external assessors and external examiners.

Engage in regular reviews of assessment procedures through the mechanism of Continuous Monitoring and the Postgraduate Taught Degrees Committee

Provide regular staff training for those involved in the assessment of the programme.

Allow your views on assessment to be articulated and considered by the Programme Team. Offer appropriate training for students in any non-standard modes of assessment. Employ assessment for diagnostic purposes, e.g., at the audition stage, to ensure that the programme accommodates the needs of students with a diversity of needs and backgrounds.

The MMus assessment methods have been designed so that they will relate explicitly to the intended learning outcomes, levels, and learning and teaching methods in the modules. They aim to be inclusive, acknowledging those who are returning to formal study after a break and those who may have challenges in the area of study skills by providing creative alternative methods of presenting work wherever possible.

Each module relates to a series of generic descriptive marking guidelines, which are summarised below. The use of marking guidelines is intended to ensure comparability of standards internally within the RNCM, to demonstrate these standards externally and to promote transparency to the student body. Full Marking Guidelines can be found in Section 9 of this Postgraduate Student Handbook.

PROGRESSION

You must pass all modules you select for credit and 180 credits are required for the MMus. If you do not pass a module on the first attempt, the Board of Examiners will normally give you a resit opportunity. No further resits are permitted. If you are on the 2-year MMus and fail a module (after resit) in the first year, you will be given the option to complete the 2nd year of your studies and take all other modules/assessments, but you will not have enough credits for the MMus. Please see Section 1 for details of 'exit awards' that are available.

ACADEMIC MALPRACTICE

You are encouraged to take ownership of your studies given flexibility, so that you can choose topics that are of direct interest to you and support you in your career aspirations. It is important that the work you present for assessment is your own, this upholds fairness and maintains academic integrity for all students. If you are found by the Academic Malpractice Committee to have failed to submit original work, this can have serious consequences, including the loss of your degree or studentship. More information on Academic Malpractice policies is contained in the Student Regulations Handbook.

FEEDBACK

Feedback and marks are normally returned to students three weeks after the deadline for assessment submissions. Exceptions to this include when there is a longer assessment period, for example, for final recitals/portfolios, and/or when viva voces are part of the assessment. Feedback deadlines are published annually in the handbook.

All assessment is either double marked, or single marked with moderation. Principal Study final recitals are marked by a panel of three. The panel initially submits blind marks and subsequently enters discussion to reach a final agreed mark.

Final recitals and portfolios involve a specialist external assessor in the marking process. All marking is scrutinised by an External Examiner who samples work and monitors the examination process while visiting College.

6. STUDENT SUPPORT, DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING

You will receive an induction programme in the Welcome Week activities, a week before the start of the academic year. These activities include:

- Advice on learning support
- An induction into the Library and IT facilities
- Guidance on course structures, credit framework and module options
- Guidance on Wellbeing and Personal Safety, Hearing Conservation, Counselling Services, introduction to Alexander Technique
- International Student meetings
- Guidance on performance opportunities

When you arrive at the RNCM you will have an opportunity to meet with David Horne, Simon Clarke or Cath Yates, depending on your programme of study. For the MMus, MPerf and PGDipAS these meetings will answer further questions you may have about modules, and to help you in your choices. If you are considering a Specialism on the MMus you will be able to discuss this in more detail. Pastoral/Health Care: The College has a Counselling Service the RNCM Wellbeing team, devoted to the welfare and wellbeing of students. Jane Gray is the Head of Student Disability and Wellbeing.

Induction of International students:

International students are included in all general Welcome Week events, and Student Services provide any extra support you might need, for example on visa questions.

If you require it as an International Student, you are offered further support throughout the academic year in *Engagement with Learning*, a series of non-credit bearing classes, taught by Dr Amanda Babington.

RNCM English Pre-Sessional Course:

To provide further support for international students on PGT programmes whose first language is not English, the RNCM offers a pre-sessional 'summer school' (see website for current fees). The course is aimed at students who have been offered a place but whose language skills fall marginally below the minimum entry requirement for the programme, typically by 0.5 IELTS points. The course starts in late July and runs for six weeks. Places are offered on a first-come-first-served basis and may be limited. The course develops research and presentation skills that will be useful in many of your module choices.

Supplementary Music Theory Provision:

Given the varying backgrounds of students on PGT programmes, the College offers a range of optional, non-credit bearing theory and musicianship tutorials through the academic year. This provision starts with fundamental content and progresses to more sophisticated approaches in support of the full range of your learning activities. A further primary purpose of these sessions is to help familiarise international students with English analytical conventions and terminology.

Further details may be found in the RNCM Student Regulation Handbook on the College Website – see References and Further Information in Annex 1.

STUDENT VOICE

Students are represented at every level of the College's deliberative structure, except for those committees (for example the Board of Examiners, Extenuating Circumstances Committee) in which confidential student data is discussed and/or evaluated.

Postgraduate Taught Degrees Committee (PTDC)

A representative for each programme, and for each year/ level of the programme(s) is included in the membership of the Postgraduate Programme Board. Representatives report to the PTDC on matters affecting their cohort, with particular emphasis on providing feedback to staff on the programme.

Students have further opportunities to provide feedback through an annual internal Postgraduate student survey, in which they evaluate their learning experiences. Students are invited to provide feedback in meetings with Heads of Schools (School meetings) and the Head of Graduate School preparatory to revalidation.

Student Experience Forum (SEF)

The Student Experience Forum meets once a term, with student representatives being allocated according to Schools rather than programmes. The committee operates as a discussion forum between students and staff representing key College services and functions on any matters not relating to academic programmes

Students' Union

The RNCM Students' Union (RNCM SU) exists to promote your interests through representation on most College committees and by providing an extensive welfare and advice service. The RNCM SU integrates the social and academic areas of student life through the organisation of various events throughout the academic year and works in collaboration with senior academic members of staff to ensure that the student voice informs strategic decision making at the College. The Union is affiliated to the National Union of Students, subject to annual confirmation by the membership.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The following network of academic support is available to students:

- Director of Programmes: Prof Jennie Henley is responsible for the overall education and training of students at the RNCM.
- Head of the Graduate School, Prof David Horne, supported by the Deputy Head, Dr Simon

Clarke: responsible for all aspects of curriculum development within PGT programmes, as well as developing and co-ordinating the management of the students' learning experience within and across their programmes.

- Heads of Principal Study Schools: responsible for the education of discipline-specific training of students in Principal Study.
- Principal Study Professors: providing contact teaching and learning support in much of the programme.
- Module Co-ordinators and Lecturers: responsible for the maintenance of individual modules.
- Senior Tutor (English Language Support): Prof Jean Ammar is responsible for providing support to students whose first language is not English.
- Library staff: during induction and other advertised times in the academic year, Library staff offer assistance and training on deploying the resources offered. All Library staff are expert in assisting with students' musical (and other) queries and David Horne works with the Head of Library Services, Sarah d'Ardenne and other staff to ensure that students' needs for resources can be met, and to identify any enhancement of provision.

Recognising the diversity of students' learning backgrounds, the Graduate School offers a non-credit bearing series of classes annually called *Introduction to Music Theory for Postgraduate Students*. This allows students to revise and build on their existing theoretical knowledge in a seminar format. This provision starts with fundamental content and progresses to more sophisticated approaches in support of the full range of your learning activities. A further primary purpose of these sessions is to help familiarise international students with English analytical conventions and terminology.

Personal Support

Students experiencing personal difficulties that are affecting their ability to fulfil the requirements of their degree programme should contact the Student Wellbeing Advisors, Wellbeing@rncm.ac.uk, who will direct them to the appropriate service.

Full details of Student Services can be found in Section 6 of the Student Regulation Handbook.

Disability

It is your responsibility to consider whether to disclose a disability or not; the College will only consider whether reasonable adjustments are required from the point of disclosure by you and adjustments cannot be made retrospectively, e.g. following assessments or at the end of the academic year.

7. EMPLOYMENT

The provision of Careers Advice at the RNCM is distributed among several areas. You receive careers guidance from your Principal Study professors and all other members of academic staff with whom you work closely, including your Head of School and Deputy, Course Leader, members of the RNCM's Professional Engagements Team and Orchestras Office staff. All these are a crucial component in the network of contacts which students will make during their period of study.

In addition, the RNCM Library has a section pertaining to advice on careers within music, including books and manuals dealing with such aspects as business skills, overviews of careers available to music graduates and postgraduates, and preparation for auditioning. In the PGT programmes with vocational modules such as Freelance Musician and Professional Placement, there is an opportunity to develop projects that will be valuable after graduation.

Most students graduating from the college's PGT programmes undertake employment (part or full-time) and/or further education. Of those students who are employed the majority work in the music industry.

8. COURSE COSTS AND SOURCES OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Details of fees, and potential funding sources, including bursaries and scholarships, may be found on our website: [FEES](#)

9. THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

RNCM Library:

The RNCM Library has a wide range of materials to support learning, research, and performance, and is a key resource for all areas of the degree programme. Our knowledgeable library staff have vast musical expertise and will help students to make the best use of the resources available. You have access to over 90,000 catalogued items of books and printed music, 96 current journal titles, a significant collection of CDs and DVDs and the College's own archive of recordings. You also have online access to e-books, databases, selected journals, and audio-visual streaming services, as well as the use of PCs with music software, listening stations and a viewing area. You are encouraged to make use of the library's archives and special collections: the RNCM Archives are of international importance, and the RNCM Collection of Historic Musical Instruments consists of over 300 instruments, bows and miscellaneous items dating from the 16th to the 20th century.

10 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND DIVERSITY

In keeping with the RNCM's commitment to, and policy on, equal opportunities, our PGT programmes:

- are offered to all students with no discrimination in terms of race, age, gender, sexual orientation or family circumstances (where possible every effort is made to accommodate students with special needs as a result of disability or socio-economic disadvantage);
- will, where appropriate, cover issues of equality of opportunity within the curriculum;
- use a range of learning and teaching methods in recognition of the diversity of students' preferred learning methods and communicative skill strengths;
- use a range of assessment methods with due care to the needs of different groups. If you are unable to take part in particular activities or modes of assessment due to individual circumstances, special arrangements will be made where possible to accommodate your needs fairly;
- aims to ensure that every effort is made to provide learning spaces accessible to students with disabilities and to support them throughout their programme.

All Course Leaders and other relevant staff ensure that all teaching, including assessments, is available to all students, regardless of disability or socio-economic disadvantage. Where necessary, alternative forms of assessment will be offered, while ensuring that there is parity of assessment and that all students continue to meet the learning aims and outcomes.

Further details of the RNCM Equality and Diversity Policy and Ethics Framework may be found, under 'Institutional' policies, on the 'RNCM Policies' website.

11. REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION:

Available on the College website: :

[RNCM Policies](#)

Academic Regulations

College Policies