

Programme Specification

Award and title: BA (Hons) Music

<i>School</i>	Arts
<i>Subject area</i>	Performance
<i>Entry from academic year:</i>	2027-28
<i>in the month(s) of:</i>	September
<i>Awarding institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Teaching institution:</i>	York St John University
<i>Delivery location:</i>	York Campus
<i>Programme/s accredited by:</i>	
<i>Exit awards:</i>	Certificate of Higher Education Music Diploma of Higher Education Music BA (Ord) Music
<i>UCAS code / GTTR / other:</i>	
<i>Joint Honours combinations:</i>	
<i>QAA subject benchmark statement(s):</i>	Music 2025
<i>Mode/s of study:</i>	Undergraduate periods of study ¹ for full time / part time
<i>Language of study:</i>	English
<i>Paired with Foundation Year</i>	No
<i>Study abroad opportunities:</i>	Yes
<i>Opt-in YSJU Placement Year opportunity:</i>	Yes
<i>Excluding a year-long placement/professional experience, are there placement/field trip/work experience(s) totalling 20 days or more?</i>	Yes

Introduction and special features

This unique Music programme places an emphasis on your growth as a holistic musician: one who can seize a wide range of professional opportunities with confidence and creativity. This programme will ignite creativity, inspire, and equip innovative, original and compassionate musicians of the future. To support this, the programme is designed around four key features that will support you towards achieving your professional goals:

Collaboration

We firmly believe that musicians learn best through working together in creative environments. Most notably, you will make music and collaborate on projects not only with musicians in your year, but also with musicians across the undergraduate course, staff members, postgraduate students, and doctoral researchers – not to mention people outside of your programme and the University itself. You will work with others to put on performances, devise new music, make recordings, and facilitate workshops.

¹ The standard period of study will apply unless otherwise stated; please refer to the Regulations for Undergraduate Awards <https://www.yorks.ac.uk/policies-and-documents/regulations/> for information on standard periods of study

Inclusion

We welcome students from all musical backgrounds. On the programme you are likely to be studying alongside musicians from classical, jazz, rock, folk, and pop backgrounds – and more! All of these traditions will enrich your learning and help you become an impactful, resourceful, and inspiring musician. Your personal identity *matters*: the musical community within the course will be significantly impacted by your experience, ideas, and passions. You have the freedom to create and write about the music you want.

Specialism

You will develop your own unique combination of professional skills through this degree. All students receive one-to-one vocal or instrumental tuition each year of the programme and have a choice of options to study. This includes the opportunity to split your one-to-one hours between two instruments (including voice). Levels 5 and 6 of the degree include specialist modules in composition and community music. Based on your interests and professional aspirations, you will be able to choose to focus on composition or community music, or even a blend of the two should that reflect your goals more accurately.

Opportunity

This degree is fundamentally designed to allow you to identify and pursue a wide range of opportunities in the music sector. Thus, you will develop as a holistic musician, prepared to work with across a range of instruments, genres, and contexts. All students perform in high-exposure events taking place in York Minster, within the wider city of York, and across the UK. Students specialising in composition will write music for internationally recognised soloists and ensembles and build extensive portfolios to demonstrate their work. Students specialising in community music will go on placements in a wide range of environments, potentially including schools, health contexts, and community groups.

Special Features

- The academics who teach on the programme are experienced musicians whose work illustrates the breadth of possibilities available within the music sector. They are all multifaceted artists whose professional work includes performing in concert halls and festivals, composing new music to be played around the world, facilitating community music workshops in a wide range of contexts, and sharing their musical research in books, journal articles, and international conferences.
- You will perform with the entire BA (Hons) Music students and academics at the YSJU graduation ceremonies in York Minster for an audience of approximately 21,000 people over the course of your programme. This includes a fanfare written by a student (maybe even you!), a choral anthem written by a music academic, and a drum circle arranged by a YSJU music graduate.
- Students are a significant driving force in the musical activity at the university. Over the course of your programme, you will play in a large number of ensembles with other students and staff members, and you will be supported in running your own ensembles in whichever genre you choose. You will take part in weekly public lunchtime concerts in the Auditorium and other venues on campus.

Study Abroad

You will have an opportunity to study abroad as part of the University exchange programme (Semester 1 of Level 5). In recent years students have gone on to exchange at the State University of New York Potsdam.

Field trips are a valuable part of your learning that ensures you are immersed in the real world of work. Please note that if you wish to attend field trips then you may be required to fund, or part fund your trip.

Transferable skills

The learning activities you will take part in during your time on the degree will also present the opportunity to accumulate a set of skills which are highly valuable to employers, such as creativity, critical thinking, teamwork, the ability to collaborate, contextual awareness, problem solving, independence, the ability to meet deadlines.

Admissions criteria

You must meet the minimum entry requirements which are published on the programme specific webpage. In addition, you must have:

- Practical experience in music, shown in personal statement and/or audition.

If your first language is not English, you need to take an IELTS test or an equivalent qualification accepted by the University (see <https://www.yorksj.ac.uk/international/how-to-apply/english-language-requirements/>).

If you do not have traditional qualifications, you may be eligible for entry on the basis of [Recognition of prior learning \(RPL\)](#). We also consider applications for entry with advanced standing.

Programme aim(s)

The music programme aims to provide you with

1. a holistic artistic education: one where you are challenged to engage in creative practice through methods that support a sustainable musical career with both your mind and body.
2. an authentic artistic education: one where your identity is central to not only your creative and professional development but also the wider musical community
3. a responsive artistic education: one which supports your ability to respond to emerging trends and opportunities within a wide range of music businesses.

Programme learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of the programme students will be able to:

Level 4

- 4.1 Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of musics in relation to broader societal contexts.
- 4.2 Analyse rudimentary musical materials with an awareness of appropriate language and formats.
- 4.3 Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the relationship between music and technology.
- 4.4 Contribute to creative and logistical aspects of collaborative projects.
- 4.5 Demonstrate fundamentals of reflective practice.
- 4.6 Demonstrate fundamental techniques and interpretation when presenting music with broad consideration of professional and cultural contexts.
- 4.7 Contribute to the creation and production of musical performances, compositions, or workshops.

Level 5

- 5.1 Demonstrate a nuanced understanding of musics with reference to societal context and other academic fields.
- 5.2 Analyse complex musical materials and articulate findings using appropriate language and formats.
- 5.3 Apply a working understanding of potential relationships between music and technology.
- 5.4 Contribute to complex creative and logistical planning of collaborative projects.
- 5.5 Apply reflective practices as part of professional development.
- 5.6 Demonstrate appropriate techniques and interpretation when presenting music with growing consideration of professional and cultural contexts.
- 5.7 Contribute to the creation and production of musical performances, compositions, or workshops with an understanding of their intended audiences.

Level 6

- 6.1 Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of musics, their societal contexts, and their relationship with other fields.
- 6.2 Research and analyse complex musical materials and articulate findings using appropriate language and formats.
- 6.3 Apply complex understandings of potential relationships between music and technology.
- 6.4 Manage and coordinate creative and logistical aspects of complex collaborative projects.
- 6.5 Apply critical and reflective practices as part of continuing professional development.
- 6.6 Demonstrate a command of technique and interpretation when presenting music with nuanced consideration of professional and cultural contexts.
- 6.7 Lead the creation and production of professional-quality musical performances, compositions, or workshops with an in-depth understanding of their intended audiences.

Programme structure

Code	Level	Semester	Title	Credits	Module status	
					Compulsory (C) or optional (O)	non-compensable (NC) or compensable (X)
MUS4009M	4	1	Composing, Arranging, and Producing	20	C	X
MUS4012M	4	1&2	Ensembles, Teamwork, and Facilitation	20	C	X
MUS4011M	4	1	Vox	20	C	X
MUS4010M	4	2	Perspectives on Music	20	C	X
MUS4013M	4	1&2	Sustainable Performance and Practices in Music	20	C	X
MUS4014M	4	2	Percussion	20	C	X
MUS5010M	5	1	Musical Exploration	20	C	X
MUS5011M	5	1	Composition Strategies*	20	O	X
MUS5012M	5	1	Community Music, Education, and Inclusive Practices*	20	O	X
MUS5013M	5	1&2	Performance in/and Contexts**	20	C	X
MUS5014M	5	1&2	Ensembles and Project Management**	20	C	X
MUS5015M	5	2	Research in Music	20	C	X
MUS5016M	5	2	Community Music, Wellbeing, and Social Justice*	20	O	X
MUS5017M	5	2	Songwriting Strategies*	20	O	X
MUS6012M	6	1	Presenting Your Research	20	C	X
MUS6013M	6	1&2	Collaborative Project	40	C	NC
MUS6014M	6	1&2	Professional Performance Practices	20	C	X
MUS6015M	6	1&2	Advanced Community Music*	20	O	X
MUS6016M	6	1&2	Advanced Composition*	20	O	X
MUS6017M	6	2	Entrepreneurship in Music	20	C	X

* Students who have not taken a Composition module (Composition Strategies and/or Songwriting Strategies) at Level 5 cannot opt for the Advanced Composition module at Level 6.

*Students who have not taken a Community module (Community Music, Education, and Inclusive Practices and/or Community Music, Wellbeing, and Social Justice) at Level 5 cannot opt for the Community module at Level 6.

**Students that study abroad for a semester (typically semester 1) in Level 5 will take MUS5018M Performance in/and Contexts (Study Abroad) and MUS5019M Ensembles and Project Management (Study Abroad) instead of MUS50013 and MUS50014

Please note that not all options may be available every year as they depend on student demand and staff availability.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the table above as non-compensable. A non-compensable module is one that must be passed at the relevant level with a mark of 40 in order to progress.

Learning, teaching and assessment

You will learn through experience: on the music programme this is achieved by direct engagement with practical activity in music, and through considered reflection on their experiences and the key theories which underpin that practice. It is important that your practical experience is rooted in current professional practices in the music sector, and thus our strategies for your learning, teaching and assessment is regularly updated to most accurately prepare you for work following your degree.

Teaching activities are student-centred, putting your needs of, and the quality of your, experience first. At Levels 5 and 6 there is an increased focus on the development of artistic specialisms, professional values, and on your employability when you graduate. This is very much *your* degree, with your musical interests, experience, and aspirations at its heart. The nature of the programme is shaped by our students, meaning that the music being played, composed, and facilitated is not determined exclusively by academic staff but in partnership with you.

All learning and teaching is integrated in current research and embedded in student activities is a critical understanding of how learning occurs in musical contexts. All of our academic staff actively research musical topics, bringing this first-hand experience into individual class sessions and the design of modules. All students have an academic tutor, and tutorial support is available in all modules. The programme supports peer learning, where students help each other in their studies and musical growth. Perhaps uniquely within the university, this does not exclusively happen from students at higher levels to lower levels; notably, students across all levels share their unique experience and specialisms in music within ensembles.

There are no formal examinations; assessment takes place through live events such as performances, presentations and placements and the submission of coursework, including essays, compositions, recordings and portfolios. You will have a large degree of choice in the exact content of your assessments. This includes choosing specific musical examples to analyse, the repertoire on your performances, the ensembles you illustrate in a professional portfolio, the instrumentation and type of compositions you write, and the topics of written research.

Progression and graduation requirements

The University's [regulations](#) for undergraduate awards apply to this programme.

Any modules that must be passed for progression or award are indicated in the Programme Structure section as non-compensable.

Internal and external reference points

This programme specification was formulated with reference to:

- [University Mission, Culture and Values](#)
- [University for Social Impact Strategy](#)
- [QAA subject benchmark statements](#)
- [Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications](#)

Date written / revised:

Programme originally approved: