Subject Benchmark Statement

Music

October 2016

Contents

How can I use this document?

This document is a Subject Benchmark Statement for Music that defines what can be expected of a graduate in the subject, in terms of what they might know, do and understand at the end of their studies.

You may want to read this document if you are:

- involved in the design, delivery and review of programmes of study in Music or related subjects
- a prospective student thinking about studying Music, or a current student of the subject, to find out what may be involved
- an employer, to find out about the knowledge and skills generally expected of a graduate in Music.

Explanations of unfamiliar terms used in this Subject Benchmark Statement can be found in the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education's (QAA's) glossary.[1]

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[1] The QAA glossary is available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/about-us/glossary.

About Subject Benchmark Statements

Subject Benchmark Statements form part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (Quality Code) which sets out the Expectations that all providers of UK higher education reviewed by QAA are required to meet.[2] They are a component of Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, which includes the Expectation that higher education providers 'consider and take account of relevant Subject Benchmark Statements' in order to secure threshold academic standards.[3]

Subject Benchmark Statements describe the nature of study and the academic standards expected of graduates in specific subject areas, and in respect of particular qualifications. They provide a picture of what graduates in a particular subject might reasonably be expected to know, do and understand at the end of their programme of study.

Subject Benchmark Statements are used as reference points in the design, delivery and review of academic programmes. They provide general guidance for articulating the learning outcomes associated with the programme but are not intended to represent a national curriculum in a subject or to prescribe set approaches to teaching, learning or assessment. Instead, they allow for flexibility and innovation in programme design within a framework agreed by the subject community. Further guidance about programme design, development and approval, learning and teaching, assessment of students, and programme monitoring and review is available in Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality of the Quality Code in the following chapters:[4]

- *Chapter B1: Programme Design, Development and Approval*
- *Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching*
- *Chapter B6: Assessment of Students and the Recognition of Prior Learning*
- *Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring and Review*.

For some subject areas, higher education providers may need to consider other reference points in addition to the Subject Benchmark Statement in designing, delivering and reviewing programmes. These may include requirements set out by professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, national occupational standards and industry or employer expectations. In such cases, the Subject Benchmark Statement may provide additional guidance around academic standards not covered by these requirements.[5] The relationship between academic and professional or regulatory requirements is made clear within individual statements, but it is the responsibility of individual higher education providers to decide how they use this information. The responsibility for academic standards remains with the higher education provider who awards the degree.

Subject Benchmark Statements are written and maintained by subject specialists drawn from and acting on behalf of the subject community. The process is facilitated by QAA. In order to ensure the continuing currency of Subject Benchmark Statements, QAA initiates regular reviews of their content, five years after first publication, and every seven years subsequently.

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[2] The Quality Code, available at www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code, aligns with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area*, available at: www.enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/ESG_endorsed-with-changed-foreword.pdf.
[3] Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-a.
[4] Individual chapters are available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b.
[5] See also further Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-a.

Relationship to legislation

Higher education providers are responsible for meeting the requirements of legislation and any other regulatory requirements placed upon them, for example by funding bodies. The Quality Code does not interpret legislation nor does it incorporate statutory or regulatory requirements. Sources of information about other requirements and examples of guidance and good practice are signposted within the Subject Benchmark Statement where appropriate. Higher education providers are responsible for how they use these resources.[6]

Equality and diversity

The Quality Code embeds consideration of equality and diversity matters throughout. Promoting equality involves treating everyone with equal dignity and worth, while also raising aspirations and supporting achievement for people with diverse requirements, entitlements and backgrounds. An inclusive environment for learning anticipates the varied requirements of learners, and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities. Higher education providers, staff and students all have a role in, and a responsibility for, promoting equality.

Equality of opportunity involves enabling access for people who have differing individual requirements as well as eliminating arbitrary and unnecessary barriers to learning. In addition, disabled students and non-disabled students are offered learning opportunities that are equally accessible to them, by means of inclusive design wherever possible and by means of reasonable individual adjustments wherever necessary.

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[6] See further the *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: General Introduction*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=181.

About this Subject Benchmark Statement

This Subject Benchmark Statement refers to bachelor's degrees with honours in Music.[7]

This version of the statement forms its third edition, following initial publication of the Subject Benchmark Statement in 2002 and review and revision in 2008.[8]

Note on alignment with higher education sector coding systems

Programmes of study which use this Subject Benchmark Statement as a reference point are generally classified under the following codes in the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS).[9]

W300   (Music)
W310   (Musicianship/performance studies)
W311   (Instrumental or vocal performance)
W312   (Musical theatre)
W313   (Conducting)
W314   (Jazz performance)
W315   (Popular music performance)
W316   (Electronic/electro-acoustic music performance)
W317   (Historical performance practice)
W320   (Music education/teaching)
W330   (History of music)
W340   (Types of music)
W341   (Popular music)
W342   (Film music/screen music)
W343   (Jazz)
W344   (Folk music)
W345   (Opera)
W346   (Sacred music)
W350   (Musicology)
W351   (Ethnomusicology/world music)
W352   (Community music)
W353   (Music & gender)
W354   (Philosophy, aesthetics & criticism of music)
W355   (Music psychology)
W356   (Music theory & analysis)
W357   (Sociology of music)
W360   (Musical instrument history)
W370   (Music technology & industry)
W371   (Sound design/commercial music recording)
W372   (Creative music technology)
W373   (Electro-acoustic studies)
W374   (Music production)
W375   (Music management/music industry management/arts management)

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[7] Bachelor's degrees are at level 6 in *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* and level 10 in *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland*, as published in *The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/qualifications.

[8] Further information is available in the *Recognition scheme for Subject Benchmark Statements*, available at: www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication?PubID=190.

[9] Further information about JACS is available at: www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/1776/649.

W376   (Music marketing)
W380   (Composition)
W381   (Electroacoustic composition/acousmatic composition)
W382   (Sonic arts)
W383   (Electronic music)
W384   (Applied music/musicianship)
W385   (Commercial music composition)
W386   (Multimedia music composition)
W387   (Jazz composition)
W388   (Popular music composition)
W390   (Music not elsewhere classified).

Summary of changes from the previous Subject Benchmark Statement (2008)

This revised statement aims to capture the basic attributes expected of a Music student, while being open to different interpretations according to context. It has been reorganised and slightly condensed to make connections between sections easier to follow. The content of the Statement has been edited, and some sections have been redrafted, in order to respond to changes in the sector and the increasing diversity of provision. Following consultation, particular reference has been made to the importance of entrepreneurial skills for musicians and developments in areas of music technology. The role of music in culture and society has also been given strong emphasis reflecting the breadth of many Music degree programmes.

1   Introduction

1.1   Music is a universal mode of human expression and a core artistic and social activity for many people. Understanding another person through their music is a unique way of knowing them. Music has an extraordinary position as a multifaceted discipline, with highly-developed systems of non-verbal, physical, intellectual and emotional communication. It connects powerfully at many levels with social and cultural life and, through the creative industries, it contributes significantly to the UK and global economies. It is thus an essential subject at the higher education level.

1.2   An honours degree in Music gives a student a broad base of skills, vocabularies and practices, while drawing on links with the other arts and the humanities, social sciences and physical sciences. The study of music in its practical, creative and cultural dimensions develops a wide spectrum of cognitive, intellectual, critical, practical, technical and contextual skills, knowledge and understanding. A Music student engages with the creative and expressive aspects of music, with the aural phenomenon of music, and with its meaning and significance for people across different historical, social and cultural contexts.
The range of programmes in Music offered by UK higher education providers encourages well-informed, reflective, versatile, innovative and open-minded individuals. Music graduates develop transferable skills of analytical thinking, problem solving, leadership, cooperation and communication.

1.3   Music at degree level gives students opportunities to imagine and communicate in sound, and to engage with music as sound, behaviours and ideas; it also challenges students to consider their self-identity. That this engagement may not be easily expressed through verbal discourse is one of the fundamental challenges of the academic study of music. Students of music, in whatever context, are required to engage with their own experience of musical materials and objects, and to develop their own understanding of how theory and practice come together, while also opening themselves up to the full range of critical opinion. Understanding and promoting the differences between their own and others' musical creations and activities is fundamental to the study of Music.

1.4   Musical study focuses on developing high levels of skill and knowledge associated with particular musical activities and disciplines, as well as developing graduate skills in employability and entrepreneurship. Many programmes offer specific training linked to career interests in performing, composing, music technology, musicology or music education. At the same time, musical study challenges students to question what we know about music, and to explore their reactions to the familiar and the new. This process continues to challenge the boundaries of the subject, and to encourage new definitions of musical materials, musical repertoires and the nature of musical experience itself.

2 Nature and extent of Music

2.1 To take a degree in Music is to explore a rich field of study. Music is intrinsically interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary, global and multicultural. The craft of musical production is both creative and technical. The study of Music is aesthetic, analytical, sociological and historical.

2.2 Broadly defined, a Music degree involves the following:

- creative practice (composition, performance, improvisation, production)
- study of music as text (as sound and/or notated)
- study of the cultural and social contexts of music (historical and/or contemporary)
- the application of music in other fields (for example in film, or in health and well-being).

Though each programme will privilege these fields of activity differently, most will be present in every Music degree. Furthermore, it is a distinctive feature of musical study that these areas overlap, and there is also potential for additional overlap with other non-musical disciplines.

2.3 A more detailed definition of the content of a Music degree must of necessity be indicative rather than prescriptive. Programmes of study may involve reference to the following areas:

- Acoustics
- Aesthetics
- Analysis
- Community music
- Composition
- Cultural policy
- Editorial musicology and philology
- Ethnomusicology
- Historical musicology
- Improvisation
- Music and media (including digital media)
- Music and religion
- Music as business
- Music education
- Music in health and well-being
- Music production
- Music psychology
- Music technology
- Music theory
- Music therapy
- Organology
- Performance
- Sociology of music
- Song writing.

This list is not exhaustive, and any omissions should not be taken to exclude or devalue other areas of study. Furthermore, no single programme could be expected to include every area on this list.

2.4   A Music degree programme may also include complementary non-musical study, for example, Anthropology, Business Studies, Engineering, Healthcare, History, Languages, Linguistics, Literature, Philosophy, Physics, Psychology, Sociology, and Technology.

2.5   The most common titles for an honours degree in Music are BA and BMus, but MusB, BSc and BEng are also found. Some Scottish institutions offer an MA alongside BMus courses, and a number of institutions across the UK offer integrated master's programmes, usually designated MArts (where the programme intended learning outcomes are at master's level).

2.6   Music may be studied as a single honours award, as part of a joint honours programme, or within a combined honours programme. In the cases of joint and combined awards, the smaller range of specifically musical knowledge and skills that can be acquired may be compensated for by the insights and skills proper to the accompanying discipline(s).

2.7   Music degrees are offered by a range of different types of provider, for example, universities, conservatoires, colleges of higher education, academies and alternative providers. Each provider offers a distinctive educational experience, with its own mission and focus, contributing to the healthy diversity of the sector.

2.8   In content and scope, Music programmes range from the eclectic to the specialised. Programmes in the former category enable students to develop a very wide range of musical skills and knowledge, but also allow students to chart their own pathway through a range of options. At the other end of the spectrum are programmes that train students for specific careers (for example performer, sound technician, computer games composer) or that focus on specific styles or repertoires (for example popular music, jazz, world music and so on). Between these two extremes are programmes which adopt broad-based approaches to specific areas of musical activity (for example music education and music technology). Despite this rich diversity, programmes in Music all share the aim of providing students with the ability to engage with music in sophisticated and effective ways, through creativity and critical thinking.

2.9   Collaborative teaching and assessment are strengths of many Music programmes, often involving the fruitful mixing of undergraduate levels. This is especially the case in performance studies, where students across degree programmes may participate in ensembles that may usefully be drawn from different levels. Collaborative work may be undertaken in any part of a programme, and may involve students of different disciplines or subdisciplines bringing their own expertise to bear on a group project.

2.10   Given the wide range of programmes in Music, entry requirements vary considerably. Some providers require students on entry to a given programme to have very specific musical proficiencies (such as playing an instrument, singing, reading scores or composing to an appropriate level). Entry to such programmes may be by audition or test, and/or may be conditional on the achievement of specified qualifications.

2.11   A Music degree equips students with skills and knowledge appropriate for a very wide range of careers. Music graduates may pursue careers involving performing, composing, teaching, sonic art, sound design, music librarianship, journalism, publishing, broadcasting, music management, community musician/animateur, digital media, or the recording industry. Some take up employment in specific organisations or venues, some join performing ensembles while others go on to enjoy freelance careers. Many go on to be academics or teachers in the formal or informal sectors, via further study. Others pursue careers in the arts more widely, as administrators, policy makers, fixers, and consultants. Many enjoy portfolio careers, where they combine different activities. Music graduates are not limited to careers in music, for they possess skills and experience welcomed in industrial, financial, educational, media, technological, public service, and third sectors.

2.12   The education of musicians is a global concern, and one that has in turn engendered specific responses from the global music community. Recognition of the role of music in place-making and as an enabler of, and critical response to, global challenges in relation to diversity has placed it - along with other arts disciplines - in a pivotal position within global cultural debate. Following the publication of UNESCO's Seoul Agenda on Cultural Education and the European Music Council response to it, known as the Bonn Declaration, educators of musicians have been challenged to address wider societal concerns, and to assist students of music in engaging with these.

3 Subject knowledge, understanding and skills

3.1 Owing to the creative, critical and practical dimensions of the subject, Music graduates demonstrate a very wide range of attributes, including skills of reflection, discipline, creativity, entrepreneurship, communication and team work, allied with cultural, historical, sociological, aesthetic and theoretical understanding. They develop professional competence and practical skills in their specialist activities, and intellectual skills in analysis of the musical texts and materials with which they engage. They gain contextual understanding of how their creative musical practice links to those of others in different contexts, and entrepreneurial skills to equip them for carving out a range of employment opportunities.

3.2 Important to the study of music are repertoires: the processes involved in their creation, performance, and transmission, and the historical, cultural, scientific and technical issues that inform knowledge about them. Repertoires may be understood to include composed pieces, written or unwritten, and frameworks for improvisation. These repertoires are identifiable because they have qualities that are intrinsic and distinctive. Musicians study these distinctive qualities, often contrasting one repertoire with others by analysing and comparing their components and their broader aesthetic.

3.3 Students learn to appreciate and understand the interrelationships between musical creation and reception and other realms of human experience and activity. This learning can occur in a number of ways, for example, through reflection on the students' own musical practices; through an historical understanding of the influence of music on events and human behaviour; or through the influence of events and human behaviour on music. It can also come about through a comparative study of music with other forms of art, or through study of combined art forms that include music.

3.4 Musicians study a diverse range of music and the languages and practices associated with them. Thus, for example, the performance, analysis and critique of a particular repertoire may be complemented by other more specialised vocational studies (for example music technology, music therapy or music pedagogy), sharing similar generic concerns, but exercising them in different ways. All music graduates are expected to be able to engage with music critically, confidently and creatively. The texts or artefacts associated with a particular repertoire may take various forms, such as written or recorded music, performances, musical instruments, ethnographic data, or technical, critical or other forms of discursive literature

3.5 In order to engage with the creative and expressive aspects of music, and its meaning and emotional significance for people at different periods and in different cultural contexts, the music graduate possesses a combination of intellectual, practical, and personal (management and communication) skills.

Intellectual skills

3.6 The study of music, including its historical, philosophical and cultural contexts, involves a variety of intellectual skills. Some of these skills are related to the specific knowledge and understanding of music, and some are shared with other branches of study.

Intellectual skills specific to Music

i   Contextual knowledge: the ability to relate music to historical, social, cultural, political, philosophical, economic, spiritual and religious contexts, and to relate processes of change in music to historical, social and other factors.

ii   Cultural awareness: the ability to discuss music's position, function and value in human lives, in relation to educational, professional, institutional or community perspectives including an awareness of contemporary issues in the cultural and creative sectors (for example policy, funding, organisations).

iii   Critical understanding: the ability to assimilate information and insights from scholarly discourse (including from other arts or sciences), and relate them to the practice and experience of music.

iv   Repertoire knowledge: the ability to assimilate the experience of a broad body of repertoire, and to call upon detailed knowledge of the texts, resources, concepts and issues associated with it.

v   Curiosity: the ability to confront, explore and assimilate unfamiliar musical sounds, concepts, repertoires and practices.

vi   Analytical demonstration: the ability to analyse and interrogate musical materials (for example, scores, performances and audio-visual media) and to communicate the findings in a coherent form.

Intellectual skills shared with other disciplines

i   Research and exploration: the ability to gather, synthesize and evaluate evidence, including the ability to quote from and acknowledge written sources.

ii   Reasoning and logic: the ability to analyse data and to formulate and express relevant arguments and hypotheses.

iii   Understanding: the ability to assimilate different theoretical and aesthetic systems of thought and to relate theory to practice.

iv   Critical judgment: the ability to examine assumptions, concepts and hypotheses critically in the light of evidence, to make informed choices, and to apply insights and discoveries in one area of study to another.

v   Assimilation and application: the ability to synthesize inputs (knowledge, materials, information) in order to generate outputs in written, aural or practical format.

Practical skills

3.7   Practical skills relate to students' technical control of their musical medium, whatever their musical discipline, genre or context. No single programme and no single graduate is expected to demonstrate all the skills listed, however the majority of programmes involve acquiring skills under more than one of the following headings:

Musicianship skills

i   Recognition: the ability to recognise and identify by ear essential components of a musical language, such as intervals, rhythms, motifs, modes, metres, and qualities of sound and to notate them if and where appropriate.

ii   Classification: the ability to recognise and describe musical organisation, style, genre or tradition, whether aurally or by studying a written score.

iii   Contextualisation: the ability to study the sounds of music so as to relate them to each other, to their written representations, and to their context.

iv   Reconstruction: the ability to read and imaginatively reconstruct the sound of music that has been written in some form of notation and to hold music in the memory.

v   Exploration: the ability to confront, explore and assimilate unfamiliar musical sounds, concepts, repertoires and practices.

Creative skills

i   Conception: the ability to conceive musical ideas and to manipulate them in an inventive and individual way.

ii   Elaboration: the ability to develop materials into well-formed and coherent musical structures.

iii   Adaptation: the ability to work idiomatically with a variety of musical styles, materials (instruments, voices), and media (film, electronic and electro-acoustic resources) and to manipulate them as desired.

iv   Presentation: the ability to use a range of techniques to enable effective communication of musical intentions clearly to others (performers, audiences).

v   Collaboration: the ability to work with co-creators, including those from different artistic disciplines.

vi   Preservation: the ability to document creative practice, with consideration for issues of both dissemination and impact.

Re-creative skills

i   Interpretation: the artistic, technical, aesthetic and expressive skills necessary to communicate music convincingly to a listener.

ii   Innovation: the ability to explore the creative links between scholarly research, analytical reflection, and processes of performing so as to challenge existing conventions.

iii   Versatility: the ability to adapt to different performance contexts (solo or ensemble, public or private), to different musical resources (genres, instruments, repertoires), and to improvise with the materials at hand, as appropriate to the specific mode of performance.

iv   Awareness of the biomechanical, physiological, psychological demands of musical performance.

v   Awareness of the semiotic systems, cultural conventions, and stylistic traditions associated with the music performed.

vi   Awareness of the application of principles of learning and teaching to one's own performance and to the performance of others.

Technological skills

i   Digital capture: the ability to capture, publish, analyse and edit music using appropriate technological (digital recording) resources, whether visual or aural (including web-streaming/hosting, livecast, interactive media).

ii   Digital expression: the harnessing of technological resources (including software development) for the purposes of composition, performance, music production, instrument creation, sound synthesis, notation and dissemination.

iii   Digital innovation: the ability to design and build technological resources through computer coding, programming and audio electronics for the purpose of interface design, as well as composition and performance.

Personal skills - skills of personal management

i   Self-motivation: the ability to acquire new skills, to engage in further learning and exploration and to keep abreast of developments in ever-changing environments.

ii   Self-critical awareness: the ability to monitor and assess progress, to reflect on achievements.

iii   The ability to respond positively to self-criticism and to the criticism of others while maintaining confidence in one's own creative work.

iv   The ability to work independently: to understand one's own learning style and work regime.
v   Entrepreneurship and employment skills: the ability to be resilient in developing and sustaining a career path (including self-employment), taking account of personal health and welfare.
vi   Time management and reliability: the ability to construct one's own timetable, ensuring adequate preparation and the meeting of deadlines.
vii   Organisational skills: the ability to set priorities, plan and implement.
viii   Awareness of intellectual property rights: knowledge of the legal, ethical and other regulatory frameworks that are relevant to music production, manipulation, distribution, circulation and reception.

Skills of communication and interaction

i   Oral and written communication skills, as appropriate to context.
ii   Skills of public presentation, including an awareness of audience characteristics and responses.
iii   The ability to absorb the imaginative concepts of others, and to refine ideas to inform one's craft.
iv   Team working and collaboration.
v   An awareness of professional protocols.
vi   An appropriate outlook and sensitivity for working in multicultural environments.
vii   The acquisition of information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

4 Teaching, learning and assessment

Teaching and learning methods

4.1 The teaching of music, especially in areas of practical skills, involves a substantial component of individual or small-group teaching. Much of the best teaching is an interactive process, with students, professional practitioner-teachers and academics gaining mutual benefit within a research and/or professionally informed environment. The interaction between teaching and scholarship is a key element in the study of music at honours level. A culture of research, scholarship and professional development underpins the most stimulating teaching and learning environments.

4.2 Modes of teaching vary from programme to programme, and new methods of delivery are constantly being developed. A student studying an honours degree in Music will typically experience a range drawn appropriately from the following:

- one-to-one teaching and supervision, supporting the development of creative skills in composition, production and performance, personal development planning, and self-directed research skills in individual projects
- seminars or other forms of small groups, offering opportunities for debate, peer-learning, project-related team work and for individual/group presentations, so developing oral presentation, negotiation and communication skills
- lectures, encouraging discussion and further reading/listening by which students can extend their own knowledge and understanding
- individual or small-group practical instruction, developing techniques of performance/ production/composition, experience of repertoire, musicianship, interpretation and presentation, often under the guidance of professional practitioners
- group performance activity, ranging in size from small to large ensembles, developing teamwork and leadership skills
- workshops and masterclasses, normally addressing the acquisition of creative skills and techniques within a group context, and often benefiting from the experience of visiting specialists.

4.3 Approaches to learning also vary from programme to programme. Students learn in a range of contexts drawn appropriately from the following:

- writing and speaking (essays, learning journals, concert reviewing, oral presentations, and so on) as a means of developing research techniques, acquiring knowledge, and presenting ideas and arguments in verbal form
- practical exercises, usually connected with the development of creative, analytical and aural skills
- independent learning, whether as directed reading and listening related to essay-writing or dissertation/project work or as practice for developing creative skills
- peer learning where students critique and analyse their own and peers' work
- studio or laboratory work, including hands-on experience in the use of electronic equipment for composition, performance and/or recording, and for various forms of empirical work
- distance learning, including online lectures, blended learning methods, discussion groups, tutorials and supervisions
- external placements, often with a vocational slant, such as work experience in hospitals, schools and arts organisations, recording studios or periods of study abroad

- fieldwork projects, where students study a musical culture in situ, by such methods as attending, observing and participating in events, and interviewing performers, patrons or listeners
- non-assessed curricular activities, especially those involving the participation in or attendance at performances, some of which require the ability to accept the direction of others.

4.4 The teaching and learning of music require a higher level of resourcing than most other arts programmes, both in terms of staff time and technical facilities. Regular one-to-one specialist staff/student contact is required to ensure students' technical and creative development in instrumental/vocal studies and in composition. The emphasis on listening and performing, in addition to reading, demands easy access to a wide range of scores, sets of performing material, and audio/video recordings. Music technology requires up-to-date equipment for creative work and recording, as well as for the analysis of acoustic, psychoacoustic and psychological phenomena. Music students normally expect, as appropriate to the aims of the programme, access to acoustically-appropriate practice and performance facilities, as well as to musical instruments.

Assessment and feedback

4.5 Given the variety of abilities and skills developed within diverse curricula, a variety of assessment methods are used. These include both formative assessment methods (for example, feedback on drafts of written papers, dialogue within practical lessons and supervisions, criticism of performance platforms) and summative assessment methods (for example, formal written submissions and examinations). Assessment methods are drawn appropriately from:

- practical examinations which allow students to demonstrate their technical and interpretative skills in performance. These may include set works and prescribed studies/technical exercises, as well as own choice items. Practical examinations may involve individuals or groups and may be held in public
- essays and other coursework which test students' ability to investigate a topic in depth and organise their material and ideas
- dissertations, individual projects and practical portfolios (for example, recordings, compositions) which are intended to demonstrate advanced understanding, knowledge, research skills and/or creative achievement
- collaborative projects which may be assessed through a mixture of continuous assessment, final presentation, and supporting documentation including critical reflection
- formal written examinations which require students to work and think under pressure, assessing their knowledge-base, understanding and analytical skills
- aural examinations which assess the students' ability to recognise by ear and to reproduce/identify/notate sounds, in a wide range of contexts
- 'take-away' examination papers which allow the assessment of longer exercises in orchestration/arranging, or extended pieces of analytical work
- oral presentations which test presentation and communication skills in an individual or group situation
- viva voce examinations which test students' ability to present a convincing argument orally, or to justify creative or interpretative choices
- peer assessment in which students present work - usually performances or compositions - for group discussion and critique, thereby developing students' abilities to formulate criteria for judgement and to express their thoughts verbally

- self-assessment demonstrating students' abilities to evaluate their work objectively and to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, and to negotiate their assessment with others
- reports on external placements including periods of study abroad
- reports on empirical work, which may take the form of fieldwork or laboratory experiments. Such reports are designed to demonstrate the students' ability to analyse and present evidence from a research project carried out in a manner appropriate to its cultural context.

4.6   Tutors regularly provide written and/or oral feedback, both in support of students' ongoing development, as well as in direct response to student work formally within assessment contexts. Provision of continuous feedback - defined as information communicated to students with the intention of improving learning - is a significant and distinctive strength of many Music degree programmes. It is particularly manifest within the iterative dialogue which takes place between tutor and student(s) in practical learning contexts. All forms of assessment also offer opportunities for 'feed forward', substantiating any articulation of a student's current level of achievement.

5 Benchmark standards

5.1 This Subject Benchmark Statement does not define or imply a common curriculum for Music. Indeed, the diversity of provision means that standards can only be measured against the learning outcomes of individual programmes. Given the different specialisations of degree programmes, standards within the subcomponents of the discipline will not be common across the sector.

5.2 Given the richness and diversity of Music studies at degree level, the following outcomes do not represent a checklist that all programmes should follow. However, some broad general criteria can be put forward as indicators of both threshold standards (the minimally acceptable standard achieved by a bachelor's degree with honours graduate) and typical standards (the level of achievement which describes student performance around the median, which is where the performance of the majority of students currently lies, that could act as goals or targets).

5.3 While explicit standards are necessary for the development and review of programmes, these are not intended to lead to standardisation of the study of Music at the honours level. On the contrary, diversity of approach within the same discipline or sub-discipline can have positive value in questioning received wisdom and in developing good practice, thereby moving the study of the subject forward in innovative ways. The plurality of approach is a recognised strength of higher education in the United Kingdom.

5.4 The benchmark standards expressed in these tables are for programmes leading to Bachelor's degrees with honours in Music. They should be used in conjunction with the generic descriptors for qualifications at honours level as referenced in the *Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (Qualifications Frameworks),* formerly published separately as *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ), and *The Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland* (FQHEIS).

Intellectual skills

On graduating with a Bachelor's degrees with honours in Music, students are able to:

Threshold level	Typical level
Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of a body of music and of the repertoires, texts, resources, concepts associated with it.	In addition, show the ability to explore, evaluate, apply or challenge associated scholarship and research.
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of musical contexts, including the relationship of music to historical, philosophical, cultural and social practices and phenomena.	In addition, demonstrate awareness of the critical debates arising from the placing of music in wider contexts.
Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of how music interconnects with other disciplines in the arts, humanities, social and physical sciences as appropriate.	In addition, show an awareness of the implications of an interdisciplinary approach to music for creation, innovation and research.
Demonstrate the ability to analyse and interrogate musical materials and to communicate the findings in a coherent form.	In addition, show critical awareness of issues of debate or uncertainty raised from analysing musical materials.
Demonstrate an understanding of relationships between practice and theory in music, as applicable to the particular area studied.	In addition, show the ability to question the nature of theoretical constructs in music and their relevance.

Practical skills

On graduating with a Bachelor's degrees with honours in Music, students are able to:

Threshold level	Typical level
Demonstrate the ability to convey personal expression and imagination in practical music-making through employing appropriate technical and interpretative means.	Demonstrate an individual musical personality or 'voice', through advanced technical skills and deeper levels of interpretative insight.
Demonstrate the ability to recognise and use essential components of a musical language (intervals, rhythms, modes, metres, timbre, texture, instrumentation).	In addition, demonstrate the ability to interrogate and manipulate components of a musical language.
Demonstrate the ability to recognise and respond to aspects of musical organisation, whether aurally or by studying a written score.	In addition, demonstrate the ability to internalise and reconstruct musical materials, whether aurally or in written form.
Demonstrate the ability to collaborate in music-making, whether through ensemble performance, co-creation, improvisatory work, or analogous activities.	In addition, demonstrate qualities of leadership within a creative team.

Personal skills (personal management; communication and interaction)

On graduating with a Bachelor's degrees with honours in Music, students are able to:

Threshold level	Typical level
Demonstrate intellectual curiosity and the potential for continuing artistic and creative development.	In addition, demonstrate the potential for artistic and creative leadership and innovation.
Demonstrate the ability to work independently, and to show self-motivation and critical self-awareness.	In addition, demonstrate the ability to produce independent work of high quality (rigorous, defensible, robust, imaginative).
Demonstrate the ability to work in combination with others on joint projects or activities.	In addition, demonstrate advanced skills of teamwork, negotiation, organisation and decision making.
Demonstrate the ability to organise and manage a timetable of work effectively.	In addition, demonstrate confidence in project planning and management.
Demonstrate an awareness of different professional and cultural contexts.	In addition, demonstrate the ability to adapt and respond creatively to different professional and cultural environments.
Demonstrate the ability to present work in accessible form, intelligible to both expert and non-expert audiences (readers, consumers).	In addition, demonstrate imaginative and articulate powers of presentation.
Demonstrate appropriate ICT skills.	Demonstrate advanced knowledge of - or innovative approaches to - the application of ICT skills to the area studied.
Demonstrate an awareness of the legal and ethical frameworks relating to intellectual property rights.	Demonstrate the ability to identify intellectual property rights issues, and to take steps to safeguard innovation and commercialisation processes.

Appendix: Membership of the benchmarking and review groups for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Music

Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Music (2016)

Mr Andrew Bates	British and Irish Modern Music Institute
Dr Rebecca Berkley	University of Reading
Dr Chris Collins	Bangor University
Professor Amanda Glauert (Chair)	Royal College of Music
Mark Hunter	The Institute of Contemporary Music Performance
Dee Isaacs	University of Edinburgh
Dr Claire Mera-Nelson	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Dr Laudan Nooshin	City University London
Dr John Pymm	University of Wolverhampton
Professor Jan Smaczny	(formerly) The Queen's University of Belfast

Employer Representative

Paul Hughes	BBC Symphony Orchestra and BBC Singers

Student Reader

Tom Davis	Bath Spa University

QAA Officer

David Gale	Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

Membership of the review group for the Subject Benchmark Statement for Music (2008)

Details provided below are published in the 2008 Subject Benchmark Statement for Music.

Dr Jeremy Cox	Royal College of Music
Dr Amanda Glauert	Royal Academy of Music
Professor Richard McGregor	University of Cumbria
Dr Claire Mera-Nelson	Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance
Professor Philip Olleson	University of Nottingham
Professor Jan Smaczny	The Queen's University of Belfast

Membership of the original benchmarking group for Music (2002)

Details provided below are as published in the original Subject Benchmark Statement for Music (2002).

Professor Graham Barber (Chair)	University of Leeds
Dr Eric Cross	University of Newcastle
Ms Louise Gibbs	Royal College of Music
Dr Amanda Glauert	Royal Academy of Music
Professor Trevor Herbert	Open University
Dr Rita McAllister	The Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, Glasgow
Dr Richard McGregor	St Martin's College, Lancaster
Professor Anthony Pople	University of Nottingham
Professor Derek Scott	University of Salford
Professor Jan Smaczny	The Queen's University of Belfast
Professor Adrian Thomas	Cardiff University
Dr Richard Widdess	School of Oriental and African Studies