

University of Cambridge: Programme Specifications

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this programme specification. At the time of publication, the programme specification has been approved by the relevant teaching Faculty or Department. It is, however, natural for courses to develop and change over time and we reserve the right, without notice, to withdraw, update or amend this programme specification at any time.

MUSIC TRIPOS

1 Awarding body	University of Cambridge
2 Teaching Institution	University of Cambridge
3 Accreditation details	n/a
4 Name of Final award	Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Music
5 Programme Title	Music Tripos
6 UCAS Code	W300 BA/M
7 Benchmark Statement	Music
8 Qualifications Framework Level	H
9 Date of production/revision	October 2004

Subject

The Music Tripos is taught over three years in Part IA (1st year), Part IB (2nd year) and Part II (3rd year). The degree of Bachelor of Music (Mus.B.) is open to any candidate who has successfully completed one Part of the Cambridge Music Tripos. In practice, however, it is normally taken as a postgraduate degree.

Entry

Typical offer: AAA or AAB; average A-level score: 29 points (???). Admission is based on high achievement in A-level or equivalent examinations, on school recommendations and on success in interview and in admissions tests. On average there are 60-70 students reading Music in each year, all of whom are full-time students. The Colleges occasionally admit affiliated students in Music, most of whom enter the Tripos at Part IB.

Facilities and Provision

The core teaching staff consists of 12 University Teaching Officers. Responsibility for the provision and quality of teaching in Music is shared between the Faculty and the Colleges. The Faculty provides formal teaching through lectures, seminars and classes; it also conducts examinations. The Colleges provide individual and small-group teaching through supervisions; the latter run parallel to the Faculty's teaching.

The Faculty of Music is situated in a building on the Sidgwick Site on West Road in Cambridge. The Music School - a spacious building constructed in the late 1970s and extended in 2001-02 - houses the Pendlebury Library of Music (which contains extensive collections of music, books, periodicals and recordings), the West Road Concert Hall (an auditorium with seating for 500 people), the Recital Room (a smaller auditorium with seating for 120 people intended for both concerts and rehearsals), the Centre for Music and Science (which comprises a recording studio, a research room and a computing centre), the Ethnomusicology Laboratory, the Cudworth Room (in which the Faculty's collection of historical musical instruments is kept), lecture rooms and other teaching and practice rooms. The Faculty also has the use of office space in an adjacent Victorian house.

Educational aims of the programme

The Music Tripos is intended to deepen students' understanding of music and of its historical, social and cultural contexts whilst ensuring that fundamental skills in writing and analysing music and in practical musicianship are acquired.

The core of the course comprises studies in history, analysis and compositional techniques. As the student progresses through the three years of the Tripos, an increasing amount of choice is offered. Opportunity is given to explore aspects of music that are likely to be less familiar, such as ethnomusicology, notation, acoustics, psychology of music and performance practice. The development of basic intellectual and practical skills is balanced by the aim of stimulating and encouraging individual interests. Although most undergraduates who read Music at Cambridge aspire to enter the music profession in one guise or another, the course provides a broad education for those who take up other occupations.

Part IA

The first-year course comprises papers in Harmony, Counterpoint, Subjects in the History of Music I, Historical and Cultural Studies, Analysis and Set Work and Practical Musicianship (Keyboard and Aural). Students are required to take all six papers.

On completion of Part IA students should have

- i made the transition in learning style and pace from school (or other educational background) to university;
- ii acquired a basic grounding in techniques of tonal harmony and of common-practice counterpoint;
- iii acquired basic knowledge and understanding of mainstream repertoire through both historical and analytical studies; in addition, they will have acquired more specialised knowledge of at least two areas of musical history (one of which will involve dealing with sources and notation) and of one ethnomusicological subject;
- iv developed aural skills and acquired basic fluency in keyboard techniques;
- v acquired basic learning skills in
 - the reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources;
 - essay writing;
 - musical composition;
 - effective participation in individually supervised and group discussion.

Part IB

The Part IB course contains two obligatory papers (Analysis and Tonal Portfolio). In addition, candidates must choose further papers from a list that includes Portfolio of Free Compositions, Dissertation, Advanced Keyboard Skills, Notation, Music and Science, as well as occasional historical subjects that vary according to the teaching resources of the Faculty in any given year. All students are required to take a total of five papers; interested students can also offer a recital.

On completion of Part IB students should have

- i started to take responsibility for their own learning and to have developed the ability to work independently of direct supervision;
- ii learnt to compose original pieces which reveal more discriminating approaches to harmony and counterpoint than those required for Part IA;
- iii completed a survey of mainstream repertoire from the eighteenth century to the present day through analytical studies;
- iv acquired subject-specific knowledge and skills in three sub-disciplines of the subject to a level sufficient to lay the foundations for, and inform choice, of advanced specialisation in Part II;

- v developed further learning skills in
 - the reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources;
 - essay writing;
 - musical composition;
 - effective participation in individually supervised and group discussion.

Interested students may also have acquired experience in musical performance.

Part II

The new Part II course (which was first examined in 2004) includes the following papers: Dissertation, Fugue, Portfolio of Advanced Tonal Compositions, Portfolio of Free Compositions, Analysis Portfolio, Notation Portfolio and Test of Performance. There will also be a number of additional papers. A candidate for Part II will be required to offer a total of six papers.

On completion of Part II, students will have developed advanced skills in the six sub-disciplines chosen for examination. It is expected that by this stage all students will have acquired detailed knowledge of several specialised historical areas. Through their study of these subjects they should have understood the basic principles of scholarly research and have acquired the ability to develop independent and critical judgement. Through the varied requirements of the course, students should have become aware of multi-disciplinary approaches to their subject and should have acquired the skills of oral presentation through presentations to seminar groups. Interested students will also have the opportunity to develop advanced proficiency in composition and/or musical performance.

Though it is possible to take another subject after either one or two years of studying Music, it is usually not possible to transfer into any Part of the Music Tripos other than Part IA.

Bachelor of Music (MusB)

A candidate who has obtained honours in any Part of the Music Tripos may, in the third year or later, be a candidate for the MusB examination (the student cannot in the same year be a candidate for both the MusB and for any other University except that for a Certificate or Diploma in a Modern Language).

The examination consists of two Sections. The first is an instrumental or vocal recital drawing on a submitted programme of approximately ninety minutes in duration. The second comprises a dissertation of between 10,000 and 15,000 words and a three-hour written paper on the background of the subject of the candidate's dissertation.

The MusB degree, which dates back to the fifteenth century, is intended to give candidates the opportunity to develop intellectual and practical skills in equal measure. Teaching is delivered through supervisions and practical teaching organised through the candidate's College.

Teaching

Teaching is delivered in the Faculty through lectures and seminars which relate to the papers offered in the Tripos, through Practical Musicianship classes (in Aural and Keyboard) and in the Colleges through supervisions which provide individual and small-group teaching through written work and feedback thereon. Throughout students are encouraged to undertake independent reading and study to consolidate what is taught.

Assessment

Formative assessment is provided through Faculty classes and through College supervisions where feedback is given in both oral and written form. Summative assessment, takes place at the end of each academic year through written examinations, through the submission of portfolios, essay and dissertations and through the examination of recitals.

Skills

The Faculty expects that students will have acquired the following skills by the time they complete the course:

- i Knowledge and understanding of the subject matter
- ii Intellectual skills
The written work that students undertake enables them to learn how to study steadily, how to assimilate large amounts of literature swiftly, how to evaluate evidence critically and how to engage constructively with those with whom they disagree. All students learn how to present an argument and how to attain analytical skills; those who opt to write a dissertation further develop the skill of articulating an argument at length. The course as a whole draws on materials from a wide variety of sources and periods; students are encouraged to understand the historical, social or cultural contexts from which such materials spring. In addition, they develop competence in the practices, processes, techniques and methodologies appropriate to the sub-disciplines they have chosen to study.
- iii Practical skills
In the course of their studies students acquire the ability to read complex musical scores without necessarily having recourse to recordings. They gain fluency in keyboard skills such as transposition, score-reading and realisation of a figured bass, and they also develop advanced aural skills. Studies in composition enable all students to undertake simple tasks of composition and of musical arrangement; students who choose to specialise in composition acquire, in addition, the ability to write in complex idioms. Many students study one or more instruments to an advanced level and are ready, on graduation, to take up a place at music college.
- iv Ancillary skills
By the time they graduate students will have learnt how best to use libraries, archives (particularly of sound recordings) and other sources of information. They will have been taught how to construct bibliographies. Through lectures most will also have acquired the ability to take notes quickly and effectively.
- v Transferable skills
In addition to the skills outlined above, students are encouraged to develop the following directly transferable skills:
Communication skills: the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing (the former is developed particularly through seminar and supervision teaching; the latter is developed through many facets of the Faculty's work);
Interpersonal skills: the ability to work effectively in collaboration with other students and with members of the Faculty staff (many Music students take on positions of responsibility in University- or College-based organisations such as CUMS, CUCO etc. and develop thereby skills of negotiation and skills in the management of human resources);
Organisational skills: the ability to balance academic work and practical activities (many Music students perform musical instruments to a high level and, in order to observe practice schedules, need to learn how to manage their time effectively, to work to deadlines and to set priorities);
Research skills: the ability to work independently (many Faculty papers and dissertation projects require students to access information not provided directly through lectures, seminars or supervisions; students are taught how to find information and how to evaluate it critically);

Computer literacy: the ability to use information technology effectively (students are encouraged to use computers for accessing information on the web, for word processing and, increasingly, for musical composition; they are also introduced to the use of computers for sound recording and, where appropriate, for experimental and statistical purposes;

Foreign-language skills: the ability to use materials available only in foreign languages (all students have to work with foreign-language musical scores and most learn thereby some knowledge of, at the very least, French, German and Italian; many students are encouraged, particularly in their third year, to undertake research involving texts in foreign languages).

By the end of the course students should have completed a degree that will form the basis for postgraduate study at any university or will enable them to enter the broader employment market.

Career destinations

The career destinations of those who study Music in Cambridge are extremely varied, as one might expect of a Faculty that teaches a large number of independent sub-disciplines. Some graduates continue with postgraduate study (either at a university or a music college); some go into teaching (either directly or through a teaching-training course); some go into more general work in the media; some use the skills they have acquired in fields unrelated to music.

Quality Management

The Faculty Board is responsible for all teaching in the Music Faculty. The quality of the course is maintained by

- i) scrutiny of the reports of External Examiners by the Faculty and the General Board's Education Section (suggestions for improvement are adopted, where necessary or desirable);
- ii) student feedback through lecture questionnaires (these are discussed by the Chairman of the Faculty Board and the lecturer in question; issues of concern are addressed and feedback given to the students through the Staff-Student Committee);
- iii) student participation in the Faculty's decision-making processes (the latter include the Staff-Student Committee, Teaching Committee and the Faculty Board);
- iv) regular assessment of the Faculty's provision of resources such as books, recordings, computing facilities and instruments (this is monitored primarily through the Faculty's Library Committee and through the Committee for Needs and Resources, but *ad hoc* committees are formed from time to time to discuss, for example, the acquisition or disposal of instruments);
- v) appraisal and evaluation of staff, and the provision of staff development programmes;
- vi) through peer review (supervisors are encouraged to attend lectures; this frequently gives lecturers the opportunity of discussing their work with academics familiar with the field);
- vii) institutional audits, such as the one currently in progress.

Indicators of Quality

QAA score: Excellent

RAE score: 5*