

# CURRICULUM

## **Master of Music (cand. musicae), Composition**

**Degree course**

**RHYTHMIC MUSIC,  
COMPOSITION/SONGWRITING**

**Aarhus**

Effective as of 2011

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# 1 Introduction

## Content and opportunities

The MMus Rhythmic Composer/Songwriter degree course at The Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus, is a 2-year course (with a limited number of seats) during which students build upon the knowledge, skills, and qualifications acquired during the BMus degree course. Taking their own musicianship as a starting point, students specialise in either rhythmic composition OR songwriting. The degree course qualifies students to choose in relation to future artistic careers. The master's degree also prepares students for post-graduate studies at soloist or PhD level.

## The course structure

**Main study area:** The degree course focuses on the student's development as a composer/songwriter and artist as evidenced by an independent and personal artistic profile. Work is done on qualifications, skills, and knowledge that support and develop a creative and reflective approach. The degree course is characterised by a great degree of independence, as the student is free to choose from a wide selection of electives, seminars, workshops, projects, and tuition formats.

The Entrepreneurial Studies subject is concluded after the 3rd semester and provides the student with relevant tools for administering his/her artistic and communicative ambitions through e.g. self-management and entrepreneurial skills.

The MMus Rhythmic Composer/Songwriter degree course concludes with a student-defined master's project based on the student's artistic profile. The project constitutes the student's final specialisation.

## The course subjects are divided into the following fields:

- **Main study area:** Subjects where the student studies composition/songwriting as well as subjects, seminars, workshops, and projects supporting this.  
*Composition/songwriting, seminar and workshop, electives and projects*
- **Entrepreneurial Studies:** Subjects and projects where students immerse themselves in the role as entrepreneurs and managers of dynamic processes and develop their career administration tools.
- **Master's project:** In addition to the project work itself and related guidance, students receive tuition in subjects that prepare them for the final project work.

## 2 Course content, individual subjects, and examinations

ECTS chart:

<b>Master of Music, Rhythmic Composer/Songwriter</b>	1st sem	2nd sem	3rd sem	4th sem	Total
<b>Main study area:</b>					
Composition/Songwriting	15	15	9	12	51
Support subject	6	6			12
Projects/One Year Project	3	3			6
Seminar and workshop or elective	3	3	3	3	12
<b>Entrepreneurial Studies</b>	3	3	3		9
<b>Master's project</b>			15	15	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>120</b>

## 2.1 Main study area

### 2.1.1 Composition/Songwriting

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the subject, the student:

- Is capable of artistic expression at a high level.
- Possesses specialist knowledge of internationally recognised artistic and technical practice, repertoire, methods, and theory in relation to composition or songwriting.
- Understands and is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to his/her own further artistic development.
- Has mastered artistic and technical skills and forms of expression in relation to composition or songwriting.
- Commands critical and analytical approaches to music and musical practice.
- Is able to assess and choose among artistic forms of expression, create relevant solution models, and make informed and reflected artistic decisions.
- Is able to work with artistic communication and discuss music related and professional problems with peers as well as non-specialists.
- Is able to manage complex and unpredictable creative challenges in the development and realisation of his/her work as a composer in a globalised world.
- Can commence, realise, and communicate his/her own works and participate in interdisciplinary cooperation independently.
- Is able to act professionally as regards responsibilities and ethics.
- Is able to independently assume responsibility for his/her own learning needs, specialisation options, and potential for creative development and prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts.

#### Content

The student chooses whether to specialise in composition or songwriting.

Tuition encompasses development of the student's personal musical expression and technical ability through work on the following:

- Own compositions/songs
- Creativity and creative processes
- Various composition/songwriting techniques

For students specialising in songwriting, emphasis is also placed on lyrics writing and the interrelations between music and lyrics.

### Mandatory participation in Academy activities:

The Academy regularly arranges projects and special seminars that the students must participate in. Participation in these is included in the ECTS points awarded for the subject.

### **Tuition and work formats**

One-to-one tuition, class tuition, and workshops.

A main teacher is chosen for at least 2 semesters at a time. Additional lessons may be used for guest teachers, class tuition, workshops, and so on.

### **Semesters**

1st to 4th semester.

Prior to the commencement of studies, a kickoff meeting with the subject coordinator is held during which the following are decided: main teacher, other teachers, support subjects, project, and seminars/electives.

An evaluation/planning meeting with the coordinator is scheduled prior to each semester.

### **Scope**

51 ECTS towards the degree.

### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

#### After the 2nd semester: 1st year test

##### *Examination content*

No later than May 1st, the student hands in a presentation of 2 to 4 works/songs (written during the study period and with a total duration of no more than 30 minutes) which will form the basis of the evaluation.

The presentation must include audio reproductions of the works/songs as well as relevant annexes (scores, lyrics, descriptions, etc.) and may be created using various media (website/portfolio, CD catalogue, book, etc.).

The presentation format is agreed with the coordinator, and the presentation should be handed in to him/her.

No matter which format is used, a written guide for the examiners' use of the material must be handed in.

##### *Examination format*

The student presents the works/songs orally based on

- technical, aesthetic, and content-related considerations,
- a reflection of his/her own practice, and development options.

Duration: Student presentation: 30 minutes.

Interview: 20 minutes.

Discussion and comment: 10 minutes.

60 minutes total.

*Marking and evaluation*

Internal marking (supervisor and internal examiner). Pass/fail as well as a short oral statement.

The assessment must reflect to what extent the overall objectives of the course are expected to be achievable for the main study area over the two years of study.

After the 4th semester

Presentation and concert featuring own works/songs as well as an interview.

*Examination format*

- No later than May 15th, the student creates a general presentation of his/her composer/songwriter activities and works/songs (with the main emphasis on works/songs written during the study period). 3-5 important works/songs are singled out (total duration no more than 45 minutes) and will be used as a starting point for the evaluation.

The presentation may include scores, audio examples, lyrics, descriptions, etc. and may be created using various media (website/portfolio, CD catalogue, book, etc.).

No matter which format is used, a written guide for the examiners' use of the material must be handed in.

- The student creates and executes a 45 minute concert programme consisting of his/her own works/songs (primarily composed during studies).
- During a subsequent interview, the examiners may ask the student questions regarding the concert and the works in general. The student may start the interview off with a brief presentation (no more than 10 minutes). Interview duration: 30 minutes.

The examination concert repertoire may overlap that of the master's project.

Total duration including discussion: 105 minutes.

*Marking and evaluation*

External marking. Grade. The evaluation must reflect to what extent the objectives of the degree course have been achieved.

### 2.1.3 Support subject

#### Objectives

Upon completion of the subject, the student:

- Understands and is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to his/her own further artistic development.
- Has mastered concrete/technical skills in disciplines relevant to the composition/songwriting trade and the student's artistic development.
- Is able to assume responsibility for his/her own learning needs, specialisation options, and potential for creative development and prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts.

#### Content

The subject content is defined by the student in consultation with the coordinator and the teacher.

Particular emphasis is placed on the subject supporting the student's artistic development through a focus on relevant topics. Examples of topics include arrangement, ear training, theory, instrumentation, piano, or guitar.

#### Tuition formats

One-to-one tuition/guidance, possibly joint studies with students in relevant classes.

#### Semesters

1st to 2nd semester.

#### Scope:

12 ECTS towards the degree.

#### Evaluation and examination regulations

Certificate with the evaluation Approved/Not approved.

This certifies that the objectives have been achieved at a level at least corresponding to a Pass, and that current attendance rules have been followed.

## 2.1.4 Projects/One Year Project

### Objectives

Upon completion of the subject, the student:

- Is capable of artistic expression at a high level.
- Understands and is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to his/her own further artistic development.
- Has mastered relevant compositional and technical skills and forms of expression.
- Commands critical and analytical approaches to music and musical practice.
- Is able to assess and choose among artistic forms of expression, create relevant solution models, and make informed and reflected artistic decisions.
- Is able to work with artistic communication and discuss music related and professional problems with peers as well as non-specialists.
- Is able to manage complex and unpredictable creative challenges in the development and realisation of his/her musicianship in a globalised world.
- Can commence, realise, and communicate his/her own works and participate in interdisciplinary cooperation independently.
- Is able to formulate and execute a cohesive project and carry it out through all phases from idea to realisation.
- Is able to act professionally as regards responsibilities and ethics.
- Is able to independently assume responsibility for his/her own learning needs, specialisation options, and potential for creative development and prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts.

### Content

All projects must incorporate an artistic dimension, an entrepreneurial dimension, and relevant considerations and a written reflection regarding the project.

### Tuition and work formats

In consultation with the director of studies, the student selects one major project (6 ECTS; the project runs during the 1st and 2nd semester) or two minor projects (3 ECTS each; one per semester). The student may choose between A and B:

- A. Participation in a joint project where the student plays a major role as a composer, arranger, conductor, entrepreneur, or similar.

The student's work must involve preparations for, participation in, and evaluation of the project.

Prior to the project, approval of a project description must be sought from the director of studies and the project manager. The project description must include

the project title, a description of the idea behind the project, the work form, and the desired supervisor.

The project is supervised.

- B. Formulating, carrying out, and evaluating a project in the form of a solo project that the student is responsible for OR a group project in which the student cooperates with one or more fellow students.

Prior to the project, approval of a project description must be sought from the director of studies. The project description must include the project title, a description of the idea behind the project, the work and presentation form, and the desired supervisor.

The project is supervised.

### **Semesters**

1st to 2nd semester.

### **Scope:**

6 ECTS towards the degree.

### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

No later than 1 May at 12.00, the student must hand in a portfolio or CD/DVD (3 copies) with recording(s) of the project(s) as well as report (min. 4 pages per project without appendices) The report must contain the following: Purpose, description of the process (preparation and participation – both artistic and concerning the entrepreneurial aspect) and an evaluation. Relevant appendices (scores, etc.) must be included.

For group projects, it must be clear which part of the project the student is responsible for.

Examination format:

The student presents (live or with video or audio examples) and accounts for the project(s). Duration: max. 20 minutes.

Furthermore, the students answers questions from the examiners (about 10 minutes).

### *Marking and evaluation*

Internal marking (supervisor and internal examiner). Pass/fail as well as a short written statement.

## 2.1.4 Seminar and Workshop

Mandatory for students specialising in rhythmic composition.

Optional for students specialising in rhythmic songwriting.

### Objectives

Upon completion of the subjects, the student:

- Is able to work with artistic communication and discuss music related and professional problems with peers as well as non-specialists.
- Possesses specialist knowledge of internationally recognised artistic and composition-technical practice, repertoire, methods, and theory.
- Understands and is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to his/her own further artistic development.

### Content

At the seminars, students, teachers, and invited guests present and discuss their ideas and projects. Seminars may also be used for presentations or debates on technical or theoretical subjects. In the workshop format, students test their composition ideas in practice with their fellow students or possibly an external ensemble. Teachers continuously confer with students regarding future subjects and/or guests.

### Tuition and work formats

Seminar tuition takes the form of joint classes with one main subject teacher acting as moderator/presenter.

Workshop tuition takes the form of joint classes with teachers and fellow students called in for the purpose.

### Semesters

1st to 4th semester.

### Scope

12 ECTS towards the degree.

### Evaluation and examination regulations

Certificate with the evaluation Approved/Not approved.

This certifies that the objectives have been achieved at a level at least corresponding to a Pass, and that current attendance rules have been followed.

### **2.1.5 Electives**

For students specialising in rhythmic songwriting.

The student may opt to participate in an existing class based on the catalogue of supplementary main subjects for a semester (excluding the pedagogical/communicative element) OR set up an independent class with at least 3 fellow students.

#### **Objectives**

For each class, the student and teacher agree which of the objectives for the subject in question must be fulfilled.

#### **Content**

For each class, the student and teacher agree which part of the content for the subject is expected to be studied.

#### **Tuition and work formats**

For classes that already exist (based on the catalogue of supplementary main subjects), the tuition and work formats of the subject in question are used. If an independent class is set up, the students agree with the teacher(s) which tuition and work formats to use.

#### **Semesters**

1st to 4th semester.

#### **Scope**

12 ECTS towards the degree.

#### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

Certificate with the evaluation Approved/Not approved.

This certifies that the objectives have been achieved at a level at least corresponding to a Pass, and that current attendance rules have been followed.

## 2.2 Entrepreneurial Studies

### Objective

Upon completion of the Entrepreneurial Studies subject, the student:

- Possesses specialist knowledge of the music business and culture in an international context.
- Understands and is able to reflect on professional practice and the complex relations between music industry players.
- Commands programme creation and communication with a view to employment in music.
- Is able to assess challenges and issues in relation to his/her career, create relevant solution models, and make informed and reflected career decisions.
- Is able to communicate his/her own profile and discuss vocational issues in relation to peers, audiences, and media players.
- Is able to manage complex and creative challenges in relation to the music business and culture in a globalised world.
- Can commence and lead independently in various professional contexts and interdisciplinary cooperation.
- Is able to independently assume responsibility for his/her own potential for creative development in a professional career context.

### Content

Tuition on the individual semesters covers various subjects including:

#### 1st semester:

- Career plan
- Individual research
- Self-management
- Communication
- Financials
- Music and society

#### 2nd semester:

- Business plan
- Sales
- Marketing
- Partnerships and cooperation with other music industry players
- Development of ideas
- Project design

#### 3rd semester:

- Project management
- Individual and group guidance
- Realising a project
- Career plan

### **Mandatory assignments**

To pass each semester, the student must hand in an online learning portfolio containing the work/assignments completed over the course of the semester.

At the start of the tuition course, the teacher announces which online platform is to be used.

The semester can only be passed if the assignments have been handed in and approved by the teacher. All assignments must relate theory and/or method to practice.

**1st semester:** Development of a career plan drawing on perspectives from the interview with a business professional chosen by the student

**2nd semester:** Development of business plan for project

**3rd semester:** Examination assignment

**Scope of written assignments on the 1st and 2nd semester: 3 to 5 pages.**

### **Tuition and work formats**

Class tuition, seminars and individual guidance.

### **Scope**

9 ECTS towards the degree.

### **Semesters**

1st to 3rd semester

### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

*Examination format:*

Oral examination based on the examination assignment.

Duration: 20 minutes

Discussion: 10 minutes

The examination assignment is handed in online and consists of two parts:

- A well-developed presentation portfolio/home page with a professional look
- A project assignment/learning portfolio Scope: 5-7 pages or corresponding video material/accessible portfolio content. The assignment must include a reflection on the student's practical experience with entrepreneurial activities and must relate to 2-3 themes from the core areas of the subject with relevant literature (theory and/or method).

*Marking and evaluation:*

Internal marking. Evaluation: grade. The assessment must reflect to what extent the objectives of the course have been achieved.

## 2.3 Master's project

### Objective

Upon completion of the master's project, the student:

- Possesses specialist knowledge of practice, methods and theory within the chosen project area.
- Understands and is able to reflect on his/her practice and choice of specialist methods in relation to the project.
- Has mastered relevant methods, tools and forms of expression for creative, performative, and/or pedagogical work.
- Is able to identify project relevant knowledge in an independent and critical manner and evaluate, create and choose from project related solution models.
- May communicate and discuss project idea and results orally and in writing to both peers and non-specialists.
- Is able to manage complex and creative challenges in relation to project work.
- Is able to independently find relevant cooperation partners and act critically and professionally in vocational and/or cross-disciplinary cooperation.
- Is able to independently assume responsibility for his/her own learning needs and potential for development in relation to project work, and to draft and manage realistic schedules.

### Content

The student chooses and defines his/her own master's project. The project must include the following elements:

- At least one of the following dimensions: an artistic, performative, pedagogical or theoretical dimension
- A communicative dimension
- A written reflection. Scope: 15 to 30 pages

The repertoire of the 4th semester main instrument concert may overlap that of the master's project.

### Tuition and work formats

Individually, in large groups and in study groups

The main project is completed during the 3rd and 4th semesters.

Individual project guidance is provided by the main supervisor, possibly assisted by an external supervisor.

Preparations for the project are made in the Master's Project: Joint Classes subject.

The Master's Project: Joint Classes subject includes tuition in project management, method awareness, literature searches, interview techniques, etc. and provides an introduction to various research methods.

During the course, student projects are used as case studies as applicable.

The student prepares his/her own project plan as part of the tuition.

## **Deadlines**

### **1 April, 2nd semester**

The student sends a preliminary title and a draft of the content to the project coordinator along with a prioritised application for a main supervisor.

### **Early September, 3rd semester**

In the Master's Project: Joint Classes subject, the students are introduced to the scope, form and expectations/options in connection with the master's project and are instructed to prepare a preliminary project description.

Study groups of 3 to 4 students are formed. The group convenes at least three times during the project period. A report of these meetings must be included as an annex to the written part of the project.

### **1 November, 3rd semester**

The preliminary project description is submitted for review by the project coordinator. This includes a description of the intended master's project as regards title, work format, plans for project realisation and final presentation format.

### **1 February, 4th semester**

In cooperation with the main supervisor, the student prepares the final project description which forms the foundation for the remaining work and the evaluation of the project.

This project description is binding in relation to the written part of the project.

### **1 April, 4th semester**

The written reflection (including material that the examiners are expected to be familiar with at the presentation) is handed in.

## **Special regulations regarding the written reflection**

In the written reflection, the student should account for e.g. the following:

- The chosen angle of the project

Which delimitations have been made, and for what reasons?

- The target audience of the project. "Who am I trying to reach?"

An identification and description of these as well as an evaluation of the degree to which they have been involved in work on the project.

- Music business anchoring. "Who may assist me?"

Where and how is the project meant to be located on the local/national/international music scene? This includes an evaluation of, and proactive measures in relation to, stakeholders.

- Traditions

An account of the artistic/pedagogical/performance related tradition that the project aspires to be a part of, including a list of relevant literature (in the broad sense of books, articles, TV shows, interviews, recordings, websites, etc.).

In addition, the written reflection must include the following:

- Literature list
- Abstract

Short summary (max. ½ page) of the project in English

- Annexes  
All relevant material is included as annexes, including the final project description and reports from study group meetings.

### **Late May, 4th semester**

Presentation of final project

See the evaluation and examination regulations.

### **Semesters**

3rd to 4th semester

### **Scope**

30 ECTS

### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

#### *Examination format*

A: Presentation (30 minutes)

Depending on the nature of the project, the presentation may take the following forms:

- A concert incorporating oral communication
- A teaching situation using a project approach
- A lecture

B: Interview with the board of examiners (10 minutes)

Duration of presentation and interview: 40 minutes. Duration of exam including discussion: 60 minutes.

#### *Marking and evaluation*

External marking. Grade and a written statement.

The assessment must reflect to what extent the objectives have been achieved.