



Det Jyske
Musikkonservatorium
**The Royal Academy
of Music**

CURRICULUM

Bachelor of Music (BMus) programme

SONGWRITING

Aarhus

Effective as of 2019

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1 Introduction

Songwriting is a 3-year BMus programme at the Royal Academy of Music preparing students for working professionally with songwriting and music production. In an open-minded and undogmatic environment, work is based on a concept of artistic quality that is in constant motion and crosses the traditional boundaries between artistic and commercial approaches to songwriting.

The programme focuses on the student's compositional and songwriting skills. It also includes communication of music and practical teaching experience. The programme is concluded with a bachelor project where the student specialises in a particular subject.

The programme subjects are divided into the following fields:

- Main study area: subjects where the student works with composition, lyrics, and production
- Pedagogy: subjects where the student works with communication and pedagogical practice
- General studies: subjects where the student works with a broader perspective on the main subject, for example by studying studio and sound technology, musicianship, and music history
- Artistic entrepreneurship: subjects and projects where the student gains experience as an entrepreneur and manager of dynamic processes and acquires career management tools, based on his/her artistic practice
- Bachelor project: specialisation including guidance and immersion in a subject chosen by the student

The elements of the programme are credited with ECTS points based on an assessment of the workload involved in the subjects.

2 Programme content, individual subjects, and examinations

	1st sem	2nd sem	3rd sem	4th sem	5th sem	6th sem	Total
Main study area							
Songwriting (composition, lyrics, and production)	20	15	15	10	10	15	85
Joint module (all programmes)	5						5
Pedagogy							
Communication		5					5
Applied pedagogy			5				5
Training				5			5
General studies							
Studio and sound engineering	5						5
Performance and musicianship		5					5
Aesthetics and music history			5				
Entrepreneurial studies			5	5	5		15
Electives		5		10	15	5	35
Bachelor project						10	10
Total	30	30	30	30	30	30	180

2.1 Main study area

2.1.1 Songwriting

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Possesses musical and technical songwriting skills at a professional level
- Is conversant with the conventions of the main study area with a view to performing professionally
- Is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to his/her own artistic practice
- Has acquired and is able to use technical and musical skills and forms of expression in the songwriting field
- Is capable of making artistic choices and assessments
- Is able to communicate various forms of musical and artistic expression in a way that is relevant for a given target audience
- Is able to identify and handle artistic challenges in a creative, investigative, and analytical manner
- Can participate independently in various musical contexts
- Is able to identify and handle challenges in the field of music theory in an investigative and analytical manner
- Is able to identify his/her own learning needs and potential for creative development, and to prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts in relation to these
- Is able to search for and acquire relevant knowledge
- Possesses knowledge of relevant methods for learning new material
- Is able to communicate in writing and verbally to peers and non-specialists

Content

The Songwriting main study area is divided into the following subject fields: composition, lyrics, and production.

Composition

Composition includes work on rhythm, harmony, arrangement, and melody. The student acquires practical and analytical skills within these subjects and gains practical experience with common composition methods within various traditions, commercial as well as experimental. Tuition includes individual work and co-writing, and it may include cross-disciplinary cooperation.

Lyrics

Based on the student's work as a songwriter, tuition includes lyrics analysis and narrative tools. The subject focuses on the creative process and includes lyrics writing for the student's own songs and for other artists. It also includes critical reflection, feedback, and contextualisation. Tuition includes individual work and co-writing, and it may include cross-disciplinary cooperation. It also draws on relevant literature.

Production

The subject includes the production of the student's own songs and those of others, and students are introduced to technical and analytical methods that make them familiar with production work within a variety of styles. Tuition requires that the student has his/her own DAW software (Digital Audio Workstation). In addition to practical and technical skills, tuition includes form, aesthetics, and critical reflection. It also draws on relevant literature.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition, joint classes, seminars, project weeks, and individual guidance

Semesters

1st to 6th semester

Scope

85 ECTS

Evaluation and examination regulations

Semester projects

The 1st, 3rd, and 5th semesters are concluded with semester projects featuring joint evaluation by fellow students and teachers. Projects can be individual or group projects. If one or more works were written with others (co-writing), each student accounts for his/her part of the work.

3 selected songs written during the semester are handed in, along with a written reflection assignment reflecting the character of the songs.

The scope of the written assignment must be 1-3 pages excluding annexes (lyrics, scores, descriptions, etc.).

The assignment can include the following:

- Artistic and stylistic deliberations
- A reflection on the work processes
- Details of the student's own development process

Sound files must be in .mp3 or .aac format.

Video materials (if any) must be handed in as active links.

The songs composed and the reflection assignment must be handed in by 30 November.

Presentations and evaluations are done in groups. The student prepares an oral presentation on the works submitted and the reflection assignment. The presentation is then evaluated orally by fellow students and teachers. As the programme progresses, the reflections provided in the written assignments are expected to be at a steadily higher level.

After the 2nd semester: 1st year evaluation

Examination content

The student hands in 4 songs composed on the 1st and 2nd semesters and a brief written reflection assignment.

The assignment must include the following:

- Artistic and stylistic deliberations
- A reflection on the work processes
- Details of the student's own development process
- A reflection on practice and choice of methods in relation to the student's own artistic practice

Requirements and specifications:

The written reflection assignment must be 3-4 pages long excluding annexes (lyrics, scores, descriptions, etc.). Sound files must be in .mp3 or .aac format.

Video materials (if any) must be handed in as active links.

If one or more works were written with others (co-writing), each student must account for his/her part of the work.

Examination format

Oral examination.

The student prepares a 10-minute presentation covering at least one of the works handed in, chosen by the student. The rest of the examination takes the form of an interview (10 minutes).

Deliberation: 10 minutes

Total duration including deliberation: 30 minutes

The songs composed must be handed in by 1 May.

Marking and evaluation

Internal marking. Pass/fail.

The assessment must reflect whether the overall objectives of the programme are expected to be achievable for the subject over the first three years of study.

After the 6th semester: examination

Examination content

The student hands in 5 selected songs created on the 3rd to 6th semesters and a written reflection assignment reflecting on the character of the songs.

The written assignment may include the following:

- Artistic and stylistic deliberations in relation to the work with composition, lyrics, and production
- A reflection on practice and choice of methods in relation to the student's own artistic practice
- Details of the student's own development process
- A reflection on the context and audience of the song

Requirements and specifications:

The written reflection assignment must be 4-6 pages long excluding annexes (lyrics, scores, descriptions, etc.). Sound files must be in .mp3 or .aac format.

Video materials (if any) must be handed in as active links.

If one or more works were written with others (co-writing), each student must account for his/her part of the work.

Examination format

Oral examination.

The student prepares a 20-minute presentation.

Interview: 15 minutes

Deliberation and statement: 20 minutes

Total duration including deliberation: 55 minutes

The works composed must be handed in by 1 May.

Marking and evaluation

External marking. Grade and a short written statement.

The evaluation is one overall grade for the works handed in, the reflection assignment, and the oral presentation, and it must reflect the extent to which the objectives have been achieved.

2.1.2 Joint module

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Is capable of making artistic choices and assessments
- Is able to search for and acquire relevant information
- Can participate independently in cooperation with fellow professionals

Content

Tuition may include the following themes:

- Study technique
- An overview of music history
- Critical reflection
- Knowledge of artistic citizenship
- Knowledge of the Academy as a place of study, including digital platforms
- Musical interventions
- Co-creation projects
- An introduction to artistic entrepreneurship

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition and group work

Semesters

1st semester

Scope

5 ECTS

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 Pedagogy

2.2.1 Communication

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Is able to communicate verbally and musically with peers, pupils and other non-specialists
- Is able to reflect on his/her practice and choice of methods in relation to communication situations
- Is able to formulate his/her knowledge about concepts, trends, and positions within songwriting
- Has acquired relevant communication tools
- Understands the relation between artist, recipient/audience, and work

Content

Developing the student's general understanding of the subject and communicative ability.

Tuition includes various songwriting disciplines (composition, lyrics, and production) as well as communicating existing music and optionally the student's compositions.

Tuition may take the form of practical exercises, theoretical presentations, and discussions drawing on relevant literature on subjects such as rhetoric, psychology, etc. The subject includes the development of brief tuition courses where the student leads and teaches joint songwriting classes.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition

Semesters

2nd semester

Scope

5 ECTS

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.

2.2.2 Pedagogical practice

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Possesses elementary knowledge of relevant pedagogical concepts, theories, and methods
- Is able to reflect on practice and choice of methods in relation to teaching and communication situations
- Possesses elementary songwriting tuition skills
- Is able to create and arrange a pedagogical course with a suitable progression
- Is able to independently participate in and lead cooperation with peers and non-specialists
- Is able to identify and handle pedagogical challenges in a creative, investigative, and analytical manner
- Is able to identify his/her own learning needs and potential for artistic development in the field of pedagogy, and to prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts in relation to organisation of teaching courses

Content

Development of the student's ability to communicate and teach songwriting.

Tuition includes various subject areas within songwriting, including composition, lyrics, and/or music production. The subject includes planning and executing tuition courses during which pupils compose and write songs, communicating existing music through presentations and practical exercises, and studying practical and theoretical methods for planning and evaluating composition tuition.

Tuition takes the form of practical exercises and discussions and draws on relevant literature.

The subject includes a training course at a Danish folk high school or a similar training location and requires that students stay at the school.

Over a 2-week period, students carry out songwriting tuition in groups. The supervisor watches the tuition, either on location or via film recordings, and evaluates the students as a group and individually.

In addition, students receive guidance from a teacher at the training location. The course is concluded by a thorough evaluation.

No later than 14 days prior to the examination, students must hand in an assignment including a report about the course as well as a description of the methods, theories, or similar that the student has tried out in practice after becoming acquainted with them during theory classes.

The assignment (scope: 8-10 pages) must include the following:

- Objective
- A short presentation of the training course
- A reflection on the learning outcome for the pupils in relation to the student's pedagogical practice

- An account of selected pedagogical concepts, theories, and/or methods that the student has tested during the training course, and a reflection on his/her experience with this
- A list of material covered on the training course
- Examples of tuition materials
- Audio examples of pupil works created during the course may be included

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition

Semesters

3rd semester

Scope

5 ECTS

Evaluation and examination regulations

Examination format

Written assignment and oral examination

Written 8-10-page assignment (see above)

The assignment must be handed in by the deadline communicated by the Study Administration, but no later than 14 days prior to the examination.

Oral examination:

The student gives a 10-minute presentation, after which the examination takes the form of a 10-minute dialogue between student, examiner, and teacher. This is followed by 10 minutes of deliberation.

Total duration including deliberation: 30 minutes

Marking and evaluation

External marking. Grade.

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

2.2.3 Teaching practice

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Is able to create and arrange a pedagogical course with a suitable progression
- Is able to reflect on his/her practice and choice of methods in relation to the training course
- Is able to communicate verbally and musically with pupils and other non-specialists
- Is able to identify and handle pedagogical challenges in a creative, investigative, and analytical manner

Content

The student teaches songwriting to a single pupil or a small class. The course lasts a minimum of 8 weeks with lessons of a least 50 minutes. The course may, at the student's discretion, be executed at e.g. a music school, a municipal school, a company, or elsewhere. The objective is to execute a continued training course over an extended period of time.

Before the beginning of the training course, the student works on defining objectives, arranging the course, and preparing concrete tuition materials supervised by the teacher.

It is the student's responsibility to find a suitable training location in cooperation with the teacher.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition and individual guidance.

Semesters

4th semester

Scope

5 ECTS

Evaluation and examination regulations

Examination content

Written report and oral examination

The report (5-8 pages excluding annexes) must include the following:

- Objective
- A short presentation of the course
- A reflection on the learning outcome for the pupils, and the student's pedagogical practice
- A list of material covered
- Examples of tuition materials
- Audio examples of pupil works created during the course can be included

The report must be handed in by the deadline communicated by the studies office, but no later than 14 days prior to the examination.

Examination format

Written report and practical test.

Tuition demonstration during a 45-minute lesson.

Interview: 15 minutes. After the tuition demonstration, the student comments on the training course and the lesson and answers questions from the examiners.

Deliberation: 15 minutes

Total duration including deliberation: 75 minutes

Marking and evaluation

Internal marking. Grade.

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

2.3 General studies

2.3.1 Studio and sound technology

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Possesses elementary knowledge of technical practice, methods, and theory within studio and sound technology
- Has acquired and is able to use technical skills within studio and sound technology
- Is able to identify his/her own learning needs and potential for creative development within studio and sound technology
- Is conversant with the uses of studio and sound technology in an artistic context and has acquired practical experience in this field

Content

Among other things, tuition includes an elementary introduction to the following: Developing basic student theoretical knowledge of, and experience with, sound technology.

Studio set-ups, microphone technique, sound formats, and an introduction to hardware and software.

Practical exercises.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition

Semesters

1st semester

Scope

5 ECTS

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.

2.3.2 Performance and musicianship

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Can participate independently and constructively in various musical contexts
- Is aware of physical mechanisms in relation to stage performances and artistic presentations
- Is conversant with exercises and physical methods for working with his/her body and breathing in connection with issues such as stage fright, presence, and communicating his/her own music
- Has developed his/her arrangement skills through practical experience on various instruments and electronic set-ups, synthesizers, and DAWs (Digital Audio Workstation)
- Has gained experience with ensemble playing and working in a band context
- Possesses knowledge of relevant methods for acquiring further skills on instruments and set-ups
- Is able to make artistically relevant choices and assessments
- Is able to identify his/her own learning needs and potential for creative development, and to prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts in relation to these

Content

Tuition includes a general practical introduction to the use of various instruments including arrangement and musical interaction, often in relation to the student's own compositions. The subject also includes exercises in communication, presence, and general stage performance. The semester is concluded with a concert and subsequent oral evaluation from the teacher.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition

Semesters

2nd semester

Scope

5 ECTS

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.

2.3.3 Aesthetics and music history

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Understands and is able to reflect on general terms and concepts from aesthetics and music history.
- Understands the relation between artist, recipient/audience, and work
- Is able to reflect on his/her musical practice in relation to the recipient/audience
- Can apply various critical and analytical approaches to music and musical practice, and assess and reflect on his/her musical practice in this connection
- Is able to search for and acquire relevant information
- Is able to communicate in writing and verbally to peers and non-specialists
- Can participate in musical interaction and cross-disciplinary cooperation based on his/her knowledge of music history

Content

Selected periods of music history and/or stylistic phenomena are covered from a culture historical and societal perspective. Auditive analysis from a historical and composition/songwriting related angle is emphasised. The student works with practical composition exercises related to selected subjects as well as perspectives on the student's work as a songwriter in relation to aesthetics and music history.

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition

Semesters

3rd semester

Scope

5 ECTS

Evaluation and examination regulations

Examination content

Written assignment and oral examination

8-10-page written assignment that forms the basis of an oral presentation of the subject.

Oral examination: 30 minutes. Deliberation: 10 minutes

The oral examination includes music written based on the period of music history/stylistic phenomenon that the assignment deals with.

Total duration including deliberation: 40 minutes

Marking and evaluation

Internal marking. Grade.

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

2.4 Artistic entrepreneurship

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Possesses elementary knowledge of the music industry and culture in a modern, globalised world
- Understands and is able to reflect on artistic practice and the relations between the music industry and various players in the cultural sphere
- Is able to create programmes and communicate with a view to employment in music
- Is able to appraise challenges and issues in relation to his/her own career
- Is able to work in a creative, investigative, and analytical manner in relation to the music industry and culture in a globalised world
- Is able to act with integrity in various professional contexts and participate in relevant cross-disciplinary cooperation

Content

Tuition on the individual semesters may include the following:

- Self-management
- Critical reflection
- Networking
- Internal communication, e.g. dialogic communication
- External communication, e.g. press releases, social media, and elevator speeches
- Planning and execution of training courses
- Development of ideas
- Project management
- Fund raising
- Planning and execution of a joint class project
- Cross-disciplinary artistic collaboration
- Artistic citizenship

3rd and 4th semesters are concluded with a written or oral presentation. This can be either a short written assignment (2 to 4 pages) or an oral presentation during class. The assignments are defined by the teacher at the beginning of the semester.

Scope

15 ECTS

Tuition and work formats

Class tuition and seminars plus individual guidance

Semesters

3rd to 5th semester

Evaluation and examination regulations

Examination format

Oral examination (20 minutes) based on the examination assignment. The assignment must be handed in by the date communicated by the Study Administration.

Scope of the examination assignment: 5-7 pages excluding annexes.

The examination assignment must provide a perspective on central issues pertaining to the subject with relevant literature (theory and/or method) as well as a reflection on the student's practical experience with entrepreneurship.

The oral examination elaborates on the assignment, and the student reflects on his/her professional and personal development.

Total duration including deliberation: 35 minutes

Marking and evaluation

Internal marking. Grade.

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

2.5 Electives

Every year, the Academy offers a number of electives within the study areas described in the curriculum. The main focus is on the main study area and the pedagogical area. Out of the total of 35 ECTS to be earned from electives on the BMus programme, at least 15 ECTS must be related to the main study area, and at least 15 ECTS must be related to the pedagogical area.

Content and objectives

The content and related objectives of the electives are stated in the descriptions of each elective.

Tuition and work formats

Electives are primarily executed as class tuition. Where relevant, however, other options are possible; this will be stated in the description of each elective.

Semesters and scope

2nd semester – 5 ECTS

4th semester – 10 ECTS

5th semester – 15 ECTS

6th semester – 5 ECTS

Electives can correspond to 5 or 10 ECTS. This will be stated in the description of each elective.

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.

2.6 Bachelor project

Objective

Upon completion of the course, the student:

- Possesses knowledge of practice, methods, and theory within the chosen project area
- Is able to reflect on his/her practice and choice of methods in relation to the project
- Is able to use relevant methods, tools, and forms of expression within the chosen project area
- Is able to independently identify and acquire knowledge that is both project-relevant and generally acknowledged
- Is able to communicate project idea and results orally and in writing
- Is able to work on a project basis in a creative, investigative, and analytical manner
- Is able to find relevant cooperation partners and act professionally in vocational and/or cross-disciplinary cooperation

Content

The bachelor project takes one main area as its starting point but may include other, cross-disciplinary approaches.

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

- 1) One or more of the following subject themes:
 - a) Composition
 - b) Professional artistic performance
 - c) Pedagogy
 - d) Artistic entrepreneurship
- 2) Communication of the above
- 3) A written reflection. Scope: 10-20 pages excluding annexes

Item 1) may for example take the form of a composition, concert, artistic intervention, performance, installation, recording, tuition course, or innovative work with various formats.

Item 2) may for example take the form of a detailed oral presentation at the final examination, or an independently created presentation using digital media.

Tuition and work formats

Guidance in individual project work as well as study group work

- At the beginning of the 5th semester, a description of the intended bachelor project (including the title and idea of the project as well as the name of the desired supervisor) must be submitted by the student for approval by the head of studies.

- No later than 3 weeks hereafter, the student receives the provisionally approved project description.
- After provisional approval, project descriptions and work plans are presented and developed in study groups.
- By 1 February on the 6th semester, the student in cooperation with the supervisor drafts the final project description which is submitted to the project coordinator for final approval.
- The project coordinator sends the approved project description to the student and the supervisor no later than 15 February on the 6th semester.

The written part of the project including the project description must be handed in by 15 April.

Semesters

6th semester

Scope

10 ECTS

Evaluation and examination regulations

Examination content

After the 6th semester: examination

Presentation in accordance with the approved project description.

Examination format

a. Presentation (30 minutes) Depending on the nature of the project, the presentation may take the following forms:

- A concert with optional oral communication
- A teaching situation using a project-related approach
- A lecture/presentation of the project based on the chosen subject themes

b. Interview with the board of examiners (10 minutes)

c. Deliberation and preparation of statement (20 minutes)

Total duration including deliberation: 60 minutes

Marking and evaluation

External marking. Grade and a written statement.

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