



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

# CURRICULUM

## **Master of Music (MMus) programme**

### **COMPOSITION**

**Songwriting, electronic, jazz/pop, and classical composition**

Aarhus

Effective as of 2019

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# 1 Introduction

**Composition** is a 2-year MMus programme at the Royal Academy of Music where students work with composition and/or songwriting in an artistic and reflective manner. Taking the student's compositions as a starting point, the programme includes a broad range of subjects and projects that form the basis for the student's choices in relation to an active future career.

The programme focuses on the student's composition skills and artistic expression. The student takes one of the following main study areas as his/her starting point:

- Songwriting composition
- Songwriting
- Jazz/pop composition
- Classical composition

Joint electives, project weeks, and seminars for all composition programmes provide opportunities for collaboration across main study areas. The programme is concluded with a Master's project where the student specialises in a particular subject. Applications must be made for each main study area separately.

The programme subjects are divided into the following fields:

- Main study area: subjects where the student works in an investigative, creative, and methodical manner as well as subject immersion that supports this aspect
- Electives: subjects where the student can work with e.g. artistic communication, technical ability, and/or pedagogical practice
- 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
- Master's 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	Total
Main study area					
Composition	15	15	10	10	50
Electives	10	10	10	5	35
Artistic entrepreneurship	5	5			10
Master's project			10	15	25
Total	30	30	30	30	120

## 2.1 Main study area

### 2.1.1 Composition

#### Objective

Upon completion of the course, 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 artistic and composition 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 career as a composer in a globalised world
- Can independently commence and lead cross-disciplinary collaboration in the composer, songwriter, and/or communicator role
- 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 to prioritise and structure his/her time and work efforts

#### Content

The Composition main study area is divided into four main areas: electronic composition, songwriting, classical composition, and jazz/pop composition. Applications must be made for each main study area separately.

#### ***Songwriting***

The Songwriting main study area focuses on developing the student's artistic practice in experimental as well as commercial contexts. Work is divided into the main areas composition, lyrics, and production of the student's own songs and songs written for other artists. Tuition includes individual work and co-writing, and it may include cross-disciplinary cooperation.

Immersion area: In addition to the above, the student selects a relevant subject area that supports his/her individual artistic practice.

#### ***Electronic composition***

The Electronic composition main study area focuses on developing the student's artistic practice in experimental as well as commercial contexts. Work is based on composition technical, aesthetic, and stylistic trends in electronic music and draws on

relevant knowledge of topics such as programming, signal processing, and acoustics. Immersion area: In addition to the above, the student selects a relevant subject area that supports his/her individual artistic practice.

### ***Jazz/pop composition***

The Jazz/pop composition main study area focuses on developing the student's artistic practice in experimental as well as commercial contexts. Work is based on knowledge of composition technical, aesthetic, and stylistic trends in an inclusive understanding of music that is expressed in work with different types of ensembles, collaboration with other art forms, and various types of notation and communication.

Immersion area: In addition to the above, the student works with instrumentation to support his/her individual artistic practice.

### ***Classical composition***

The Classical composition main study area focuses on developing the student's artistic practice. Work is based on knowledge of composition technical, aesthetic, and stylistic trends in classical music, and it relates to musical and technical practice, repertoire, literature, methods, and theory from contemporary music.

Immersion area: In addition to the above, the student selects a relevant subject area that supports his/her individual artistic practice.

### **Tuition and work formats**

Class tuition, individual guidance, project weeks, and joint seminars for all composition programmes

The first year is concluded with an individual presentation from each student followed by peer evaluation. The presentation is part of tuition and is not an examination.

The student hands in 10-25 minutes of music created on the first year and a written reflection assignment. Works can be handed in as scores and/or audio files.

The scope of the written assignment must be 3-5 pages excluding annexes (lyrics, scores, descriptions, etc.). If one or more works were written with others (co-writing), each student accounts for his/her part of the work.

The music is presented to the other main study area students. The student prepares an oral presentation of the works submitted and the reflection assignment. The presentation and the works are subsequently evaluated orally by fellow students and teachers.

The assignment may include the following:

- A reflection on practice and choice of methods in relation to the student's own artistic practice
- A description of technical knowledge of e.g. mixing, production, acoustics, programming, or signal processing in the applied artistic practice
- Details of the student's own development process
- For songwriting students: artistic and stylistic deliberations in relation to the work with composition, lyrics, and production
- A reflection on the context and possibly audience of the compositions

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

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

The works and the reflection assignment are handed in digitally according to instructions from the Study Administration and by the date communicated by the Study Administration, but no later than 14 days before the evaluation.

### **Semesters**

1st to 4th semester

### **Scope**

50 ECTS

### **Evaluation and examination regulations**

After the 4th semester: examination and written assignment

THE STUDENT MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN THE FOLLOWING TWO EXAMINATION FORMS. THIS CHOICE MUST BE COMMUNICATED TO THE STUDY ADMINISTRATION BY 1 OCTOBER ON THE 3RD SEMESTER.

The assignment must be handed in by the date communicated by the Study Administration.

The student hands in 20-30 minutes of music created on the MMus programme. If one or more works were written with others (co-writing), each student accounts for his/her part of the work.

Works must be handed in as scores, sound recordings, video, or other.

In addition, a 3-5-page written assignment must be handed in. Lyrics, scores, and/or descriptions must be included as annexes. The assignment must include a reflection of the intentions, creation, form, context, or other relevant parameters of the works.

At a public presentation, the student carries out a technical and aesthetic presentation of at least one of the works handed in and also accounts for his/her artistic intentions.

Student presentation: 20 minutes. Interview: 25 minutes.  
Total duration including deliberation: 65 minutes

OR

The assignment must be handed in by the date communicated by the Study Administration.

A 3-5-page written assignment must be handed in. Lyrics, scores, and/or descriptions must be included as annexes. The assignment must include a reflection on the form, intention, creation, context, or similar of the works.

At a public concert, the student presents his/her compositions at a 30-minute performance. This is followed by an interview about the works in relation to the written assignment and the performance experience.

Concert: 30 minutes. Interview: 15 minutes  
Total duration including deliberation: 75 minutes

#### *Marking and evaluation*

External marking. Grade and a written statement.

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



## 2.1.2 Electives

Every year, the Academy offers a number of pedagogical and artistic electives of 5 ECTS or 10 ECTS. The ECTS workload is stated in the description of each elective.

A total of 35 ECTS is to be earned from electives. The student may choose between pedagogical and artistic electives as he/she pleases.

### **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**

1st semester – 10 ECTS

2nd semester – 10 ECTS

3rd semester – 10 ECTS

4th semester – 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.

Some pedagogical electives are evaluated as follows using internal censorship. When relevant, this is stated in the elective catalogue:

Internal marking. Grade.

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

## 2.2 Artistic entrepreneurship

### Objective

Upon completion of the course, 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
- 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 artistic profile and discuss vocational issues in relation to peers, audiences, and media
- Can commence and lead independently in various professional contexts, participate in cross-disciplinary artistic collaboration, and assume artistic citizenship
- Is able to independently assume responsibility for his/her own potential for creative development in a professional career context

### Content

The student's work with artistic entrepreneurship is based on the student's own projects and practice. Tuition seeks to support this and may include the following:

- Self-management
- Individual research
- Development of ideas
- Self-management
- Project design and management
- Communication
- Financials
- Music and issues in society
- Business plan
- Sales
- Marketing
- Partnerships and cooperation with other music industry players
- Cross-disciplinary artistic collaboration
- Artistic citizenship

1st semester is concluded with an assignment. This can be either a short written assignment (3 to 5 pages) or an oral presentation during class.

2nd semester: examination assignment

## **Tuition and work formats**

Class tuition, seminars, and individual guidance

## **Scope**

10 ECTS

## **Semesters**

1st to 2nd semester

## **Evaluation and examination regulations**

After the 2nd semester: examination

*Examination format*

Oral examination (25 minutes) based on the examination assignment. Scope: 8-10 pages excluding annexes

The examination assignment must provide a perspective on central issues pertaining to the subject with relevant literature (theory and/or method). During the oral examination, the student relates theory to his/her own professional practice and uses this as a starting point for a reflection on his/her professional and personal development.

The assignment must be handed in by the date communicated by the Study Administration.

Total duration including deliberation: 40 minutes

*Marking and evaluation*

Internal marking. 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 course, 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 methods in relation to the project
- Has acquired mastery of relevant methods, tools, and forms of expression within the chosen project area
- Is able to identify project relevant knowledge and evaluate, create, and choose from project-related solution models
- Can communicate and discuss project ideas and results achieved verbally and in writing
- Is able to manage complex and creative challenges in relation to project work
- Is able to find relevant cooperation partners and act critically and professionally in vocational and/or cross-disciplinary cooperation
- Is able to assume responsibility for his/her own learning needs and potential for development in relation to project work and draft and manage a realistic schedule

### Content

The master's project builds upon (one or more of) the student's main study areas but may draw on cross-disciplinary approaches.

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

- 1) Work within one or more of the following areas
  - a) Composition/songwriting/arrangement
  - b) Professional artistic performance
  - c) Pedagogics/communication
  - d) Artistic entrepreneurship
- 2) Written assignment. Scope: 15-30 pages excluding annexes

The joint guidance classes for the master's project include tuition on assignment writing topics such as project formats, research methodology, interview technique, and literature searches. Tuition may be scheduled together with Artistic entrepreneurship.

### Tuition and work formats

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

Individual project guidance is provided.

In addition, the Master's project is prepared and supported in joint guidance classes.

### Important dates

#### 1 April, 2nd semester

The student submits the following to the project coordinator: a preliminary title and a

brief description of one or more project ideas, and a prioritised application for a project supervisor.

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

Introductory meeting with the project coordinator

The student is introduced to the scope, form, and opportunities of the master's project and is prepared for creating the project description.

Study groups of 3-6 students are set up.

The groups convene at least three times during the project period.

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

The project description is submitted for approval with the project coordinator.

This first project description must include the following:

- Title
- Objective
- Motivation (personal and general)
- A description of the product (the content itself and the result of the project)
- A description of the process:
  - preparation (literature, music references, interviews, etc.)
  - elements of the project process (for example, rehearsals, recordings, work with composition/songwriting, cooperation partners, etc.)
- Schedule

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

In consultation with the project supervisor, the student creates a final project description on which the rest of the work, and the evaluation of the project, are based.

This project description is binding in relation to handing in the written project. The requirements of the descriptions are stated above.

### **15 April, 4th semester**

The written assignment is handed in. Scope: 15-30 pages excluding annexes

The assignment is handed in along with all other relevant material that the board of examiners must be familiar with before the examination.

## **Semesters**

3rd to 4th semester

## **Scope**

25 ECTS

## **Evaluation and examination regulations**

*Examination format*

A: Presentation (30 minutes)

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

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

- A lecture/presentation of the project including documentation of the artistic/performative dimension in the form of a portfolio, CD/DVD recordings or similar

It is important that the presentation elaborates, or provides perspectives on, the content of the written assignment.

The repertoires of the examination concert and the artistic/performative dimension of the master's project may overlap.

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

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.