

DSA Study Needs Assessment

Course information for assessors: BA (Hons) Music (Classical)

Course Overview

The BA (Hons) Music (Classical) degree is usually studied over three years. Students will study Western classical music and its relationship to contemporary practice, alongside jazz, popular music, world music and music technology. The BA (Hons) Music (Classical) degree consists of three strands, Specialist Study, Contextual Studies and Professional Studies, with students receiving individual study tuition and ensemble group tuition in their chosen primary study of either performance or composition. There are approximately 16 guided learning hours per teaching week and students are advised they should undertake at least a further ten hours of private study.

Methods of Assessment

In all three years, modules are assessed through a combination of submissions that range from performance tests, recitals, harmony and analysis worksheets and written essays. Work may also be expected as a Mahara portfolio (e.g. critical listening).

IT Hardware and Software

Teaching may be via the Microsoft Windows platform or Apple Mac computers. Currently there are two types of iMacs in use. The newest ones are 27" 5k Retina screens, Core i7 quad-core processors, 32GB RAM and 1TB SSD. The others are 21.5" screens with Core i5 2.7GHz processor, 16GB RAM, 1TB HDD.

The essential core music software package in use on the Classical pathway is Avid Sibelius Educational v8 (musical score writing software). Students can work on either Microsoft or Apple platforms when using Sibelius as the files are interchangeable. Logic v10.2.2 (music recording and arranging software) may be used, depending on the choices of shared modules that the student makes. Students on combined pathways (e.g. combined Classical and Production) use Logic.

Music software applications use a large amount of memory, particularly when run concurrently with accessibility software such as Zoom Text or TextHelp, so extra RAM may be required to avoid slowing down the operating speed of any recommended computer system. It is preferable to specify a machine with a smaller core hard drive but greater additional memory rather than vice versa, as the Logic software uses a large amount of RAM on its own.

The course software is available in some specialist studios and Apple Mac suites within the conservatoire, but these rooms are heavily timetabled throughout the day, which significantly limits individual student access to these facilities. Leeds Conservatoire recognises that Assessors may therefore wish to consider recommending the course software if they feel the student has sufficient additional needs.

Students with specific learning difficulties that affect their working memory or information processing speed often experience extra difficulty in reading music, accurately handwriting musical scores or inputting information into music writing software Sibelius, and coping with the high-density multiple screen setup of information in Logic. This is similar to the difficulties experienced when producing word processed written work, and the process of working with music goes alongside working with other written information as a core part of the learning process on this course. Mental health or other difficulties causing concentration problems can also make specialist music software more difficult to use due to the volume and complexity of information the user is required to input and manipulate.

For notetaking and lecture recording purposes, a digital recording device with a built-in two-way microphone is recommended as a useful aid to learning to enable the recording of music excerpts used alongside orally and visually presented information in lectures.

All course information and lecture notes are accessed only via Space, the online Virtual Learning Environment. The majority of assignments are submitted online via the VLE, and use of the internet for research is also required.

Further information on the support available at Leeds Conservatoire is available on our website:

<https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/student-life/student-services/disability-support/>

Contacts

The Student Disability Advice Team is located in Student Services in room 401.

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