

**Part one: Programme Specification**

**Course record information**

Name and level of final award:	BA Honours Commercial Music The BA Commercial Music is an undergraduate degree that is Bologna FQ-EHEA first cycle degree compatible.
Name and level of intermediate awards:	Diploma of HE Commercial Music Certificate of HE Commercial Music
Awarding body/institution:	University of Westminster
Status of awarding body/institution:	Recognised Body
Location of delivery:	Harrow Campus
Language of delivery and assessment:	English
Course/programme leader:	Dr Christian Kennett
Course URL:	<a href="http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/music/undergraduate-courses/full-time/u09fucmu-ba-honours-commercial-music">http://www.westminster.ac.uk/courses/subjects/music/undergraduate-courses/full-time/u09fucmu-ba-honours-commercial-music</a>
Mode and length of study:	3 years full-time
University of Westminster course code:	W50
JACS code:	W304
UCAS code:	W304
QAA subject benchmarking group:	Music; General Business and Management
Professional body accreditation:	
Date of course validation/review:	May 2010
Date of programme specification:	5 September 2014

## Admissions requirements

All students apply to the course using the standard UCAS system. Those who meet the criteria for interview are asked to attend the university for half a day, and will be sent guidance notes with their invitation to enable them to prepare for the interview. Students are expected either to play live or to play recorded material, or to make a business presentation as part of their interview. The interview selection criteria are:

1. evidence of significant achievement in either commercial music production or music business, relative to the applicant's age, geographical location, and involvement in relevant education activities;
2. evidence of strong commitment to practical work in commercial music production or music business, or in music sociology;
3. evidence of an ability to study successfully and to complete courses of study;
4. evidence of a desired career goal which is congruent with the shape of the industry and the student experience of the course;
5. an ability to present a coherent and reasoned personal statement, and
6. a strongly supportive reference from a reliable source.

In addition, applicants will normally satisfy the minimum age requirement for admission (18 as at the 31st December in the year of entry), AND EITHER Grades A-C at GCSE should include Mathematics and English Language plus a minimum of 160 UCAS points from at least two A2 qualifications, OR a minimum overall pass in the BTEC/Edexcel National Diploma qualification.

Currently the department's undergraduate courses are heavily over-subscribed, with eight applicants per available place, and so the average number of UCAS points per successful applicant tends to be much higher, at just over 300 points (2014-2015), though this criterion is not the primary one by which applicants are judged at any stage of the applications process.

If English is not the applicant's first language, an overall score of 600 in the TEOFL examination, 92 in the TEOFL IBT, 6.5 in the IELTS test or Grade B in the Cambridge Proficiency examination must be attained. Overseas applicants may be invited to interview at which they perform the same tasks as UK resident applicants. Overseas applicants unable to attend for interview are asked to submit a video of a musical performance, a recording and score of a composition by the student and an essay about the future of the music industry in the applicant's country. Music business overseas applicants will not submit the video and audio recording, but will submit a further 2000 word essay on the commercial development of the career of an international artist of their choice. Candidates offering non-UK qualifications will have their academic record assessed using internationally recognized equivalence criteria.

Applicants who have non-standard entry requirements will be actively considered. Candidates who do not have the traditional qualifications should demonstrate their ambition, ability and potential through employment and/or experience in the field of commercial music or related areas. This evidence will support the candidate at the selection for interview stage. At the interview the candidate's background in commercial music will be discussed in detail to investigate and establish the compatibility of the course with their abilities, aspirations and prior experience.

The course supports applications for direct entry to the second year (Level 5) and, in exceptional circumstances, the final year (Level 6), via APCL or APEL, though the award of a place is subject to considerations of the size of the year group. Applicants should contact the Admissions Tutor in the first instance for more information.

## **Aims of the course**

The course aims to:

- Nurture a practical and theoretical understanding of the business of commercial music;
- Prepare students for employability and entrepreneurial participation in the commercial music market
- Develop students' critical understanding of the relationships between the music industry and the broad social & cultural environment in which it operates;
- Establish students' ability to use the production processes to create musical works to the prevailing standards of the Commercial Music sector
- Enhance students' independence and self-motivation and ability to form, lead and work in teams
- Encourage students to act as agents of change by using their understanding of the culture, business and production processes of commercial music and offering vision, innovation, judgement, wisdom, direction, leadership and implementation;
- Establish the basis for a future career strategy suited to the abilities of each student;
- Nurture students' ability to work with others to create value in any situation, and
- Prepare students for further study.

## **Employment and further study opportunities**

Today's organisations need graduates with both good degrees and skills relevant to the workplace, i.e. employability skills. The University of Westminster is committed to developing employable graduates by ensuring that:

- Career development skills are embedded in all courses
- Opportunities for part-time work, placements and work-related learning activities are widely available to students
- Staff continue to widen and strengthen the University's links with employers in all sectors, involving them in curriculum design and encouraging their participation in other aspects of the University's career education and guidance provision
- Staff are provided with up-to-date data on labour market trends and employers' requirements, which will inform the service delivered to students.

Work-related learning is fundamental to the entire BACM course. For over 20 years, learning through professional practice has successfully developed students' workplace skills, whether specific to their musical activity or general, transferable skills such as IT, to a level which has impressed employers and placement providers. The 2014 course enhances this through its large core modules in the first two years, centred on relevant professional practice 'moments': tours and record releases.

Students take Professional Development (PD) core modules in their second and third years. In the second year, the learning programme offers students leadership and management skills, negotiation and interpersonal skills and familiarity with personal audit tools such as SWOT analysis. This is supplemented by a PD pilot project, in which students develop a skill

or quality through a personal programme agreed with their tutor. A work experience placement programme can be chosen as the project, most often when students anticipate a need for workplace skills before they graduate.

In the third year, a larger PD module allows students further development of their skills profile, through a large-scale personal project, as they approach employment. A work experience programme is a significant option in this module, though students who expect to be self-employed as musicians or music entrepreneurs will be able to develop relevant skills in many other ways.

The course has a proud history of very successful work placements across the music industry, from sole traders to multinational companies. The leader of the PD team oversees employer relations, though students source and negotiate their own placements. The PD Programme makes strong use of the university's online provision of portfolio development software. The university's Workplace unit is regularly consulted to ensure the programme meets the needs of new graduates.

Our graduates include: Above & Beyond, Anjunabeats (label), Tom Baxter, Kevin Mark Trail (tours with The Streets), The Feeling, emmythegreat, Al Shux (won Grammy in 2011 as writer of 'Empire State of Mind' for Jay-Z), Baker Boyz (production team working for Rihanna on single 'What Now' in 2013), Rudimental, senior executives in SONY, Universal, MTV, PRS, BPI... (Tom Overbury, Fayola Hoyte and many, *many* more).

Within the university's music department there are two MA courses: MA Audio Technology and MA Music Business Management, and the largest PhD programme in Commercial Music in the UK. Graduates of BACM have progressed onto these courses, and also to study Entertainment Law at the university's School of Law and have studied MSc Music Therapy, MMus Composition and MA Voice Studies at other institutions including Goldsmiths University of London, City University, Queen's University Belfast and other UK and international universities. We also have the largest cohort of Commercial Music PhD students in UK Higher Education (2014), and in May 2014 launched the first PhD student research symposium as a joint venture with Goldsmiths University of London.

## **Learning outcomes**

Learning outcomes are statements on what successful students have achieved as the result of learning. These threshold statements of achievement are linked to the knowledge, understanding and skills that a student will have gained on successfully completing a course.

### **Knowledge and understanding**

- The ability to investigate musical texts, written/aural
- The ability to explore musical repertoires
- An appreciation of the relevance of music making to societies
- A facility with musical processes and materials
- The ability to link aural to notational/verbal articulations of musical ideas
- The ability to relate theory and practice
- The capacity to enhance musical creativity

### **Specific skills**

- The ability to express one's ideas and put forward a convincing argument
- The facility to exercise initiative and personal responsibility
- A decision-making ability in complex and unpredictable situations
- The independent learning skills for continuing professional development
- Flexibility in a team or solo, employing both convergent and divergent thinking

#### Production: performance skills

- The ability to interpret musical ideas
- Artistic and expressive skills
- An understanding of presentational skills
- The ability to perform in an ensemble

#### Production: compositional skills

- The ability to conceive musical ideas
- The ability to develop materials into well-formed, coherent musical structures
- Engagement with a variety of musical styles
- Communication of musical intentions
- Creation of musical ideas and concepts

#### Production: technological skills

- An understanding of digital equipment use
- An understanding of professional-standard music software
- The ability to combine musical sound with other media

#### Business skills

- The ability to solve problems
- The ability to communicate effectively orally, in writing or via communication devices
- The capacity to perform effectively within a team
- The ability to build and lead teams effectively
- The ability to design and manage projects
- Interpersonal skills
- The ability to conduct business research

#### **Key transferable skills**

- Self-management skills in managing workloads and deadlines
- Skills in accommodating change and uncertainty
- Skills in analysing and evaluating critically information and knowledge and formulating a reasoned argument

- Skills in benefiting from the critical arguments of others and recognising personal strengths and needs
- Skills in applying interpersonal and social skills to interact with others
- The ability to communicate ideas and information in visual, oral and written forms
- The ability to present ideas and work to an audience
- Skills in applying information skills to navigate, retrieve and manage information from a variety of sources
- The ability to select and use communication and information technologies

## **Learning, teaching and assessment methods**

### **Learning**

Learning by thinking: assimilating and understanding information of a variety of styles and types.

Learning by practising: improving skills in repeated task areas of playing, negotiating, researching and drafting contracts.

Learning by challenging: improving upon and developing established practice and theory through reflection and critique.

Learning by doing: engaging with the pragmatics of putting on a gig *by putting on a gig*; engaging with the logistics of going on tour *by going on tour*, and so on.

Supported independent study (SIS): gaining deeper understanding through personal enquiry and research.

### **Teaching**

Lectures: to present information and as a springboard for students' research and discussion on a given subject.

Seminars: to support students' learning on the module through small group discussions of detailed theoretical content, techniques & ideas.

Workshops: small and medium size groups of students develop work in progress tutored by specialist staff.

Practical demonstrations: group demonstrations of techniques and technologies with active student participation.

Individual projects: projects devised by students and with outcomes and criteria agreed with a tutor

Tutorials: one to one contact between a specialist member of academic staff and a student conducting independent research;

Learning contracts: negotiated plans of learning agreed by the module leader to tailor the student's experience of a module or of specified learning outcomes.

Simulations: real or virtual simulations of industry practices such as telephone and email introductions, negotiations, job interviews and press conferences.

### **Assessment**

Assessment methods used on the course include:

- Group presentations of research
- Live performances of music
- Peer assessment reports
- Personal presentations of work
- Pitch meetings
- Portfolios of work
- Professional development portfolios
- Recordings and packages of recordings with associated marketing materials
- Reflective reports
- Research essays and reports
- Video diaries and blogs

### Course structure

This section shows the core and option modules available as part of the course and their credit value. Full-time Undergraduate students study 120 credits per year.

<b>Credit Level 4</b>				
<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>UK credit</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
MCMU400	The Learning Burst	Core	15	7.5
MCMU401	The Club Show	Core	30	15
MCMU402	The Pre-Release Recording	Core	30	15
MCMU403	The Musical Work	Core	15	7.5
MCMU404	Managing a Music Project	Core	15	7.5
MCMU406	Business for Creative People	Option	15	7.5
MCMU407	Music Technology Specialisation	Option	15	7.5
MCMU408	Commercial Score Writing and Arranging	Option	15	7.5
2BMU406	Technologies for Music Performance	Option	15	7.5
<b>Award of Certificate of Higher Education available</b>				
<b>Credit Level 5</b>				
<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>UK credit</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
MCMU500	Professional Development	Core	15	7.5
MCMU501	The Released Recording	Core	30	15

MCMU502	The Touring Show	Core	30	15
MCMU503	Composing for Visual Media	Option	15	7.5
MCMU504	Conference Paper	Option	15	7.5
MCMU505	Music in Mew Media	Option	15	7.5
MCMU506	Music in Mew Media	Option	15	7.5
MCMU507	Pilot Music Project	Option	15	7.5
MCMU509	Songwriting	Option	15	7.5
MCMU510	Conference Paper (Bridging Module)	Option	15	7.5
2BMMU506	Strategies for Music Education	Option	15	7.5
<b>Award of Diploma of Higher Education available</b>				
<b>Credit Level 6</b>				
<b>Module code</b>	<b>Module title</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>UK credit</b>	<b>ECTS</b>
MCMU600	Final Major Project	Core	30	15
MCMU601	Publishing Research	Core	30	15
MCMU602	Continuing Professional Development	Core	30	15
MCMU603	Innovation and New Music	Option	15	7.5
MCMU604	Mentoring and Coaching in Music	Option	15	7.5
MCMU605	<i>Music and Sustainability (not running in 2014-15)</i>	<i>Option</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>7.5</i>
MCMU606	Personal Project	Option	15	7.5
MCMU607	Legal and Business Affairs	Option	15	7.5
2COG610	Music and the Mind	Option	15	7.5
<b>Award of BA Honours available.</b>				
<b>Award of BA available.</b>				

*Please note: Not all option modules will necessarily be offered in any one year.*

### **Academic regulations**

The BA Honours Commercial Music and its intermediate awards operate in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations and the *Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* published by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in 2008.

All students should make sure that they access a copy of the current edition of the general University handbook called *Essential Westminster*, which is available at [westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster](http://westminster.ac.uk/essential-westminster). The following regulations should be read in conjunction with Section 17: Modular Framework for Undergraduate Courses and relevant sections of the current *Handbook of Academic Regulations*, which is available at [westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations](http://westminster.ac.uk/academic-regulations)



## Award

To qualify for the award of BA Honours Commercial Music, a student must have:

- obtained at least 360 credits including:
  - passed 75 credits at credit Level 4 or higher and achieved at least a condoned credit in each of the remaining modules worth 45 credits at Level 4; and
  - passed a minimum of 120 Credits at credit Level 5 or higher; and
  - passed a minimum of 120 credits at credit Level 6 or higher.
- attempted modules with a maximum value of 330 credits at credit Levels 5 and 6; and
- satisfied the requirements contained within any course specific regulations for the relevant course scheme. For the BA Honours Commercial Music, in addition to the above requirements, *you must pass all core modules.*

The class of the Honours degree awarded is decided by two criteria, the average of the best 105 credits passed at credit Level 6 being in the range of the class to be awarded, and the average of the next best 105 credits passed at credit Levels 5 and 6 provided the next best 105 credits passed are no more than one classification below this.

## Support for students

Upon arrival, an induction programme will introduce students to the staff responsible for the course, the campus on which they will be studying, the Library and IT facilities and to the Faculty Registry. Students will be provided with the Course Handbook, which provides detailed information about the course. Students are allocated a personal tutor who can provide advice and guidance on academic matters.

Learning support includes four libraries, each holding a collection of resources related to the subjects taught at their Faculty. Students can search the entire library collection online through the Library Search service to find and reserve printed books, and access electronic resources (databases, e-journals, e-books).

Students can choose to study in the libraries, which have areas for silent and group study, desktop computers, laptops for loan, photocopying and printing services. They can also choose from several computer rooms at each campus where desktop computers are available with the general and specialist software that supports the courses taught at their Faculty. Students can also securely connect their own laptops and mobile devices to the University wireless network.

The University uses a Virtual Learning Environment called Blackboard where students access their course materials, and can communicate and collaborate with staff and other students.

[Student Affairs](#) provide advice and guidance on accommodation, financial and legal matters, personal counselling, health and disability issues, careers and the chaplaincy providing multi-faith guidance. The Student Affairs Hub is located at 101 New Cavendish Street, Cavendish House (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), with an additional office located at the Harrow Campus.

<http://www.westminster.ac.uk/study/new-students/when-you-arrive>

The [University of Westminster Students' Union](http://www.uwsu.com/) also provides a range of facilities to support all students during their time at the University. <http://www.uwsu.com/>

### **Reference points for the course**

#### **Internally**

- UoW Handbook of Academic Regulations for Undergraduate courses
- UoW Code of Practice for Students with Disabilities
- UoW Essential Information for Undergraduate Students
- UoW Equal Opportunities Policy
- UoW Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedure for Students
- UoW Quality Assurance Handbook
- Campus Teaching, learning and Assessment Policy
- Media, Art & Design School Assessment Strategy
- Media, Art & Design School Skills Policy
- Media, Art & Design School Teaching & Learning Strategy
- Guide to HE and Career Management Skills (EIC)

#### **Externally**

- QAA Subject Benchmarks for Music (2008) and General Business (2010)
- QAA Foundation Degree Qualification Benchmark (2004)
- QAA Codes of Practice

## **Quality management and enhancement**

### **Course management**

The Course Committee meets once per semester and is formed of the Programme Director and/or Deputy Programme Leader, Level Leaders, Student Representatives from each level, the Studio Manager and the Music Librarian. The Course Committee is formally recorded and the minutes form part of the course's submission to the university's annual monitoring process. This is the main quality management and enhancement mechanism.

Staff members take part in teaching observations and are encouraged to take advantage of the university's staff development programme.

### **Course approval, monitoring and review**

The course was initially approved by a University Validation Panel in 1993, and was the first of its kind in Europe. The panel included internal peers from the University and external subject specialists from academia and industry to ensure the comparability of the course to those offered in other universities and the relevance to employers. Periodic course review helps to ensure that the curriculum is up-to-date and that the skills gained on the course continue to be relevant to employers. Our last full review was in May 2010; or next such review will take place in January 2015, as part of the University's Learning Futures programme.

The course is monitored each year by the Faculty to ensure it is running effectively and that issues which might affect the student experience have been appropriately addressed. Staff will consider evidence about the course, including the outcomes from each Course Committee, evidence of student progression and achievement and the reports from external examiners, to evaluate the effectiveness of the course. The Annual Monitoring Sub-Committee considers the Faculty action plans resulting from this process and the outcomes are reported to the Academic Council, which has overall responsibility for the maintenance of quality and standards in the University.

### **Student involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

Student feedback is important to the University and student views are taken seriously. Student feedback is gathered in a variety of ways. The most formal mechanism for feedback on the course is the Course Committee. Student representatives will be elected to sit on the Committee to represent the views of their peer group in various discussions. The University and the Students' Union work together as organisations to provide a full induction to the role of the course committee.

All students are invited to complete a Module Feedback Questionnaire before the end of each module. The feedback from this will inform the module leader on the effectiveness of the module and highlight areas that could be enhanced. The University also has an annual Student Experience Survey, which elicits feedback from students about their course and University experience.

Students meet with review panels when the periodic review of the course is conducted to provide oral feedback on their experience on the course. Student feedback from course committees is part of the Faculty's quality assurance evidence base.

**For more information about this course:**

Contact the Admissions Tutors: either Dr Christian Kennett (also the Programme Director) or Stu Lambert

Email: <mailto:c.kennet@westminster.ac.uk> or <mailto:lamberst@westminster.ac.uk>

Phone: 020 7911 5000 x68385 (Chris Kennett)

Or the Admissions and Marketing Officer for the course: Katie Doherty

Email: <mailto:admissions@westminster.ac.uk>

Phone: 020 7911 4063

**Please note:** This programme specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the course and the learning outcomes that a student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if s/he takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. This specification should be read in conjunction with the Course Handbook provided to students and Module Handbooks, which provide more detailed information on the specific learning outcomes, content, teaching, learning and assessment methods for each module.

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