

Music at Bristol

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Why Music, Why Bristol?

Studying music at Bristol offers you the opportunity to:

1. Find your niche
2. Learn to think differently
3. Become more creative

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1. Find your niche

The flexibility of our degree courses gives you the chance to **find your niche**.

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Our BA in Music offers:

- A broad foundation
 - First years take units in performance (optional), composition, technical studies and music history
- Opportunity to specialise
 - An open unit in another department in your first, second and third years
 - A rich variety of optional units in music in your second and third years.



BA in Music Year 1

First years take 120 credits made up of:

- Two music history units (20 credits + 20 credits):
 - Music and Society: Music and People
 - Music and Society: Music and Place
- Practical Studies (20 credits):
 - Performance on your first study instrument **or**
 - Critical review writing (if you don't want to do assessed performance)
- Technical Studies: Harmony and Analysis (20 credits)
- Composition (20 credits):
 - Including some or all of: acoustic, studio, orchestration
- Open unit of your choice in another department (20 credits)

BA in Music Year 2

Second years take 120 credits made up of:

- Two music history units (20 credits + 20 credits)
 - Recent topics have included: Music and Politics, Music in the 1930s, Music and the Past.
- Four optional units (20 credits x 4) chosen from a list of:
 - Historical units covering topics from the medieval era to the present day
 - Technical units in harmony and analysis
 - Composition units, including some or all of acoustic, studio, electro-acoustic
 - Performance on your first study instrument
 - Open units in other departments

BA in Music Year 3

Third years take 120 credits made up of:

- One or two extended projects (40 or 80 credits):
 - Composition portfolio
 - Performance
 - Dissertation
- Two or four optional units (40 or 80 credits)

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Joint Honours courses

Joint Honours students take 120 credits each year.

- In your first year this is divided evenly between the two subjects.

In Music, you will take:

- 1 music history unit (20 credits)
 - 1 Technical Studies unit (20 credits)
 - 1 out of: Performance (20 credits), Composition (20 credits) or another Music History unit (20 credits)
- In your second and third years you can choose a 60:60 split or an 80:40 split.

For more details, please see our [programme catalogue](#)

Besides offering a flexible degree course, we help all of our undergraduates to **find their niche** by allocating them a Personal Academic Tutor.

In your first year you will meet in a small group with your tutor every week. They will be pleased to **offer you support in all aspects of your academic work**. They can also support you **in getting help for any pastoral issues** that might arise as you settle in.

Study abroad opportunities

Every year some of our undergraduates choose to **study abroad**.

- As a music undergraduate you could spend half of your second year studying in one of the American, Australian or European universities with whom we have links.
- If you travel to Europe, you can apply for an ERASMUS grant to help with the cost. If you want to go farther afield, bursaries, scholarships and grants are available.
- We will support you in making accommodation arrangements in Bristol and at your host institution.

2: Learn to think differently

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Bristol Hornstars play “Brighter Day” (summer 2019)

Studying music teaches you about so much more than just music.

Learn to think differently.

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Optional units: music history

Our music history units give you the chance to explore how music has been a force for social, cultural and political change. In recent years optional historical units have included:

- Hip-hop Music and Culture
- Music, Technology and Cultural Change – from the gramophone to the mobile phone
- The Film Musical
- Music of Asia: Turkey
- Music and Sex
- Inside Medieval Music
- Russian Opera

Browse our unit options via the [programme catalogue](#)

Open choices: practical and technical units

Our practical and technical units will challenge the limits of your own creativity.

In recent years these have included:

- Compositional Strategy
- Writing for Orchestra
- Transcription and Editing
- Music Recording and Production

Browse our unit options via the [programme catalogue](#)

3. Become more creative

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University of Bristol
Chamber Orchestra:
Elgar's Cello Concerto
(summer 2019)

Based in a city with a vibrant music scene and with more than 30 ensembles running in our department, our students have an array of opportunities to become more creative.

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University ensembles: instrumental

Our instrumental ensembles include:

- Symphony Orchestra (staff led)
- New Music Ensemble (staff led)
- BULO (Bristol University Loudspeaker Orchestra) (staff led)
- Chamber Orchestra, String Orchestra, Wind Orchestra, Symphonic Winds
- Brass Band
- Jazz Orchestra and Hornstars

Read more about [Department of Music ensemble opportunities](#)

University ensembles: vocal

Our vocal ensembles include:

- Symphony Chorus (staff led)
- University Singers (staff led)
- Schola cantorum (female) (staff led)
- Chamber Choir
- Madrigal Ensemble
- A Cappella Society: Bristol Suspensions, Pitch Fight (female), Academy (male)

Read more about [Department of Music ensemble opportunities](#)

University ensembles: combined

Our combined ensembles include:

- University Baroque Ensemble
- Music Theatre Bristol
- BOpS (Operatic Society & Chorus)
- BUMS Composition, Arranging and Orchestration Society

Read more about [Department of Music ensemble opportunities](#)

Music Making in Bristol

Bristol is home to a large number of cultural venues, staging all kinds of music. Current student favourites include:

- The Colston Hall
- St George's
- The Hippodrome
- The Watershed
- The Arnolfini
- Churches
- Bristol Cathedral
- Mr. Wolfs
- Trinity Centre

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Music Making in Bristol

Being part of city with such a rich musical heritage our department often has the opportunity to collaborate with other musical organizations. Recent collaborations have included:

- Bristol Ensemble
- Bristol New Music Festival
- CoMA Bristol
- New Music South West
- Bristol Plays Music
- The Bristol Music Club
- Schools
- Bournemouth Symphony
- BBC Singers
- English National Opera
- Welsh National Opera

Our students benefit directly from these collaborations, gaining access to cheap or free tickets, as well as opportunities for work experience or internships.

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More questions?

Please get in touch.

While, sadly, we can't offer you an in-person tour of the department at the current time, we'd love to talk through any questions that you have.

Please email us music-info@bristol.ac.uk and we'll be in touch.

Find us online

Find out more about [who we are](#) and what it's like to study with us on the [Department of Music website](#).

We're also on:

Twitter [@brisunimusic](#)

Facebook [@VicRoomsBristol](#)

bristol.ac.uk/music

Frequently Asked Questions

bristol.ac.uk/music



Performance-related FAQs

How many hours of one-to-one instrumental lessons will the department pay for?

Provided that you are taking an assessed unit in performance, the department will pay for: 14 hours in your first year; 16 hours in your second year; 20 hours in your third year.

Can I study more than one instrument?

Not officially, no. This is because we expect a high standard of performance in our recitals so, to support you achieving this, we limit the number of instruments you can study to one.

Can you help me find a private tutor for a second-study instrument?

Yes! While we can't pay for lessons on a second study instrument, we can put you in touch with local teachers on our database.