

Music (BA or BMus) @ UK unis - quick facts

Top 20*

1 Durham	AAB	11 Bristol	AAB
2 Manchester	AAB	12 Cardiff	AAB
3 Cambridge	A*AA	13 Nottingham	ABB
4 Southampton	ABB	14 York	AAB
5 Birmingham	AAB	15 Aberdeen	BC
6 Glasgow	AAB	16 Guildhall	EE
7 Oxford	AAA	17 Sheffield	AAB
8 Leeds	AAB	18 Surrey	BBB
9 Royal Holloway	AAB	19 KCL	AAB
10 Edinburgh	AAB	20 RNCM **	AAB

* Complete University Guide April 2020 ** Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester

Must haves

Music A Level. Some universities will accept grade 8 music theory instead of music A Level. Although exact requirements vary dependent on the institution, you'll need a minimum grade 7, usually grade 8, in at least your main instrument of study. For conservatoires you will need grade 8 or a diploma.

Applying through UCAS/UCAS Conservatoires

You apply for an academic music degree through UCAS, but if applying to a conservatoire, such as the RNCM, or the Guildhall, you apply via UCAS Conservatoires, for which the deadline is 1 October.

Example course modules

Universities offer BA and/or BMus degrees. Music degrees can vary in content enormously and, before applying, you will need to consider whether you prefer a practical, academic or theoretical programme. You can study classical (early to contemporary), jazz, popular and electronic music. Regardless of the programme, you will take modules like composition and theory; instrumentation, harmony and analysis; techniques of tonal music; history of western music; free improvisation; musicianship; ethnomusicology; orchestration; conducting; world music traditions; music of India and eastern cultures; the history of opera; music and science; music and politics; contemporary music. Your degree is likely to include practical performance in one or several instruments.

Contact hours per week: 10, on average. (Average all subjects 14.)

Career prospects

The music industry is very competitive but also full of opportunities. Many graduates further their careers through performance and/or teaching. A portfolio career is quite common and you may combine freelance and contract work. You could work as a musician, music therapist, private music teacher, sound engineer, sound technician, music producer or artist manager. Your ability to perform under pressure, self-management, communication and planning skills will make you attractive to a range of employers, who might include orchestras and touring companies, music production companies, music retailers, media organisations, schools and colleges, travel industry companies and a range of employers in the cultural and creative industries and beyond.

Average starting salary: £17,000