

## Information for Erasmus + and Exchange Students 2019/2020



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## General Information

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is part of the Arts, Design and Media faculty of Birmingham City University, but has its own site in the centre of Birmingham, close to the main concert halls, Town Hall and Symphony Hall, and theatres. You will find more details about the City's cultural life and the musical activities of the Conservatoire on our website [www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire).

Birmingham has a number of arts venues holding events of national and international standard, and is situated in the middle of England less than 2 hours from London by rail.

### Academic year 2019/2020

The year is divided into three terms of three months, but the teaching is carried out over two semesters. Exchanges usually take place in the first term or first semester or for the whole academic year, although they are also possible in the second term or semester.

<b>Autumn Term</b>	<b>13 September 2019 – 13 December 2019</b>
Christmas vacation	16 December 2019 – 5 January 2019
<b>Spring Term</b>	<b>6 January 2020 – 28 March 2020</b>
Easter vacation	30 March 2020 – 19 April 2020
<b>Summer Term</b>	<b>20 April 2020 – 19 June 2020</b>
Practical examinations	4 May 2020 – 5 June 2020

*After the end of examinations, there are orchestral, ensemble and vocal activities and individual tuition but no taught academic classes.*

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Semester</b>	<b>13 September 2019 – 12 January 2020</b>
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester</b>	<b>13 January 2020 – 5 June 2020</b>

### Language

All teaching is in English. If English is not your native language, we recommend that your English language abilities are at least B2 standard (IELTS 5.5 overall)

### Accommodation

You can apply for a single room with shared facilities at one of the nearby self-catering University Halls of Residence. For more information please contact:

[accommodation@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:accommodation@bcu.ac.uk) and visit:

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/student-info/accommodation>

## Costs

Room in Hall of Residence - about £115 per week payable for 4 months in advance on arrival – to include the vacation weeks. A local travel pass if required is approximately £230 per semester. Food costs are about the same as in other West European countries.

## Healthcare

If you are from within the European Union, please bring your EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) with you. For all others please ensure you have purchased travel insurance to cover any medical care you may need while studying in the UK.

## Other information

As well as ensuring that you have a valid passport, you are advised to ensure you are able to study with us without an entry visa by visiting <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration>. You may also like to ensure that you have adequate insurance cover against theft, loss or damage and for musical instruments and travel.

## Contacts

Ruth Wootton

International Relations Coordinator

Laura Davies

Erasmus+ and Exchange Administrator

## Telephone

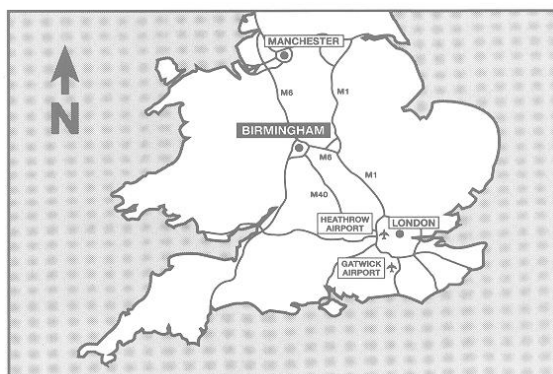
00 44 121 331 5901

## Email

ConservatoireMobility@bcu.ac.uk

## Address

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire  
200 Jennens Road  
Birmingham  
United Kingdom  
B4 7XR



## **Programmes of study – an overview**

Each exchange student's programme is designed on an individual basis dependent on the requirements of your home conservatoire. Following a successful offer of placement, using the details you provide on your completed Erasmus+ application form, you will have the opportunity to discuss your needs with your relevant course director at the beginning of your stay, a few weeks in and also at the end of your time with us. You will be given a transcript of your programme at the end of your study period with us.

The units of study will be taken from either the BMus (Hons), BMus Jazz (Hons) or Postgraduate courses at a suitable level. Your time with us is likely to include:

- Individual lessons on your main (First Study) discipline (i.e. Trumpet, Voice, Composition, Music Technology etc.) (1 hour per week)
- Participation in workshops and master classes in your Department / Instrument area (Usually 2 – 3 hours per week)
- Orchestra and chamber music ensembles (3 – 5 hours per week)
- Two or three options (chosen academic and practical musicianship activities)
- Accompaniment opportunities for pianists
- Appropriate classes and lectures from the academic programme as requested (1 – 4 hours per week)

### **Teachers**

Please see Royal Birmingham Conservatoire's website for names of teachers in each Department. You can request a particular teacher at the time of application or you will be allocated a teacher in your Department before arriving.

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/music/departments>

### **Orchestras and other ensembles**

All instrumental players are expected to do some orchestral work, and you will also have the opportunity to join in other ensembles, for instance chamber music, brass band, jazz orchestra, chamber choir etc. Voice students are given opportunities to take part in operatic and song concerts.

### **Certificate/transcript**

You will be given a transcript of your programme at the end of your mobility which will give details of all the activities you have completed.

## Undergraduate Programme – BMus (Hons)

During induction week you will have a meeting with your programme director and Erasmus+ Coordinator where you will agree the programme of study you will follow during your stay. This is the typical pattern of modules studied for Autumn Semester mobility and the equivalent ECTS credits:

Modules	UK Credits (Autumn Semester)	ECTS credits awarded
First study	30	15
Professional Portfolio 3 [Pedagogy]	7.5	3.75
Musicianship specialism	7.5	3.75
Contextual studies specialism	7.5	3.75
Performance Traditions	7.5	3.75
	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>

We do not formally assess you in any part of the programme of study: we expect you to attend and participate in classes, but we do not expect you to write essays or give presentations unless there is a specific requirement from your home college for us to award you marks. If this is the case, please let us know.

There is also some flexibility in which modules you study: we do not insist that you take all the academic modules, although we would normally expect you to follow at least one Musicianship Specialism and one Contextual Studies Specialism. If you want to take additional specialisms, you may; if you want to take electives [see below] these can also be used for credits on your programme.

### First study

Details of your programme will come from your Head of Department / Department Administrator. You will have a weekly one-to-one lesson and a range of departmental classes and activities

### Professional Portfolio

The main part of this module in the Autumn Semester is pedagogy classes and lectures looking at different issues in teaching music. There are two types of classes for this: a cross-department class every three weeks; and a weekly departmental class.



## Performance Traditions

This is taught via a weekly lecture. The module covers ideas of historical and contemporary performance practice (performers) or contemporary notation (composers / music technologists).

## Specialisms

For the two specialisms modules, you will normally either choose one from each group (Musicianship and Contextual Studies); or you can choose two from the same group.

Below are examples of specialisms that typically run in the Autumn Semester;

### Musicianship Specialisms

- Composing and Performing Minimal Music
- Conducting (*you will need to have done some conducting before to take this option, but you can take Conducting as an elective instead if not*).
- Editorial Techniques
- Free Improvisation
- Further Baroque Counterpoint
- Music for Voices
- Analysis for Musicians
- Improving Keyboard Skills

### Contextual Studies Specialisms

- British Folk Music
- Hearing Film: Music in Contemporary Cinema
- Women in Music
- Development of Modern Jazz
- Conceptual Art/ Conceptual Music
- Music and Intertextuality

## Electives

You can take electives in place of a Musicianship specialism, or as an added unit of study. Electives typically include:

- Chorus
- Alexander Technique
- Big Band (Jazz Large Ensemble)
- Brass Band Scoring & Arranging
- Chamber Choir (by audition only)
- Camerata (unauditioned chamber choir)
- Conducting – Beginners
- Conducting – Intermediate & Advanced
- Creative Ensemble
- Early Music
- Folk Ensemble
- Improvising for Classical Musicians
- Introduction to DJing

- Introduction to Sound Recording
- Jazz Improvisation
- Kodaly method
- Techniques of Electronic Music
- Performing with Technology

We normally only accept students for single semester visits and we would expect this to be during the first semester. The pattern of teaching, especially on the Jazz programme, makes a second semester visit very difficult to facilitate. Occasionally, we accept students for the full academic year but this must be agreed before you begin your visit.

### Undergraduate Programme – BMus Jazz (Hons)

During induction week, you will have a meeting with your programme director and the Erasmus coordinator, where you will agree the programme of study you will follow during your stay. This is the typical pattern of modules studied in the Autumn Semester and the equivalent ECTS credits:

<b>Modules</b>	<b>UK Credits (1 semester) awarded</b>	<b>ECTS credits awarded</b>
First study	22.5	11.25
Transcription Project	7.5	3.75
Studio Project	7.5	3.75
Composition: Large Ensemble Concepts	7.5	3.75
Pedagogy: Art of Teaching	7.5	3.75
Professional Development 3	7.5 (not in semester one)	N/A
	<b>60</b>	<b>26.25</b>

We do not formally assess you in any part of the programme of study: we expect you to attend and participate in classes, but we do not expect you to write essays or give presentations unless there is a specific requirement from your home college for us to award you marks. If this is the case, please let us know.



### **First study**

Details of your programme will come from your Head of Department / First Study Administrator. You will have a weekly one to one lesson and a range of departmental classes and activities.

### **Professional Portfolio**

The main part of this module are pedagogy classes and lectures looking at different issues in teaching music. There are two types of classes for this: a cross-department class every three weeks; and a weekly departmental class.

### **Performance Platform**

This is a weekly class where students present their own ensembles for 30 minutes each. The performance is followed by verbal feedback from staff and peers.

### **Forum 6/7**

This is a weekly lecture on a variety of topics in the jazz area. There is a particular emphasis on composition, research and performance issues.

### **Options**

In the first semester of year 3 you have two options for further study as follows:

- Media 3: Enterprise 1
- Pedagogy: The Art of Teaching

## Postgraduate Modules

Note that all modules run across the whole academic year: if you are with us for a shorter period than that but require assessment, we will negotiate a bespoke assessment for you. For Autumn semester mobility, a student will study:

Modules	UK Credits (Autumn)	ECTS credits awarded
Principal Study	30	15
Professional Development Option 1	10	5
Professional Development Option 2	10	5
Career Development Option 1 or Professional Development Option 3	10	5

Also note that modules involving placements (Teaching Matters and Music, Community and Wellbeing) have limited places and so we cannot guarantee availability. If you are *required* to take a pedagogy module, please let us know *well in advance* of your arrival.

If you need further information in advance of your arrival, contact the Interim Director of Postgraduate Studies, Luan Shaw ([luan.shaw@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:luan.shaw@bcu.ac.uk)).

Module	Description	UK Credits	ECTS
Principal Study Performance, Composition, Conducting or Musicology	Individual lessons every week, plus numerous departmental activities. Assessment varies from department to department.	60	30
Concepts in Musicology	This module is designed to develop your understanding of the world of musicology by introducing you to its key concepts and theoretical foundations, providing you with a broad knowledge of the field, and enabling you to contextualise your own research or practice.	20	10
Contemporary Music Concepts and Practice	This module focuses on compositional language/notation and performance issues in contemporary music, involving research which places these in the broader context of	20	10



	compositional and performance practices. It is delivered by weekly classes.		
Creative Interactive Music Technology Performance	In this module you will gain experience of performing and working with live electronics.	20	10
Critical Editing Techniques	In this module you will increase your knowledge of editorial principles and practice. It culminates in the preparation of a critical edition.	20	10
Documentation	This module offers professional-level training to enable you to produce high quality video evidence of your performance-based activity in music/the performing arts.	20	10
Experimental Performance in Context(s)	This module will cultivate a deep engagement with key historical concepts relevant to experimental performance to enrich your creative and collaborative practice.	20	10
Historical Performance Practice	This module focuses on case studies in Historical Performance Practice up to early 20th century, involving weekly lectures and practical workshops which involve the application of research/theory to practice.	20	10
Independent Scholarship in Music	In this module you will undertake a small-scale scholarly or research-based project on a topic of your own choosing.	20	10
Music, Community and Wellbeing	This module is designed to prepare you for working with music in health and therapeutic contexts, involving real-life placements. <i>Places limited: there will be a formal application procedure for all students.</i>	20	10
Music & Ideas	This module explores a variety of different approaches to thinking about music, taking the form of a weekly reading and discussion group.	20	10
Music Technology Contexts	This module looks at the aesthetic and contextual issues that underpin and justify artistic choices within music technology. It is delivered by weekly classes.	20	10



Orchestration	<i>For Composers:</i> In this module you will explore various different aspects of orchestration through the completion of a range of exercises.	20	10
Professional Music Criticism	In this module you will develop your skills as a music critic, but will also engage with the history of the discipline of music criticism.	20	10
Self-Promotion Project	This is a flexible module, designed to help you pursue a project relevant to your own professional development: e.g. setting up a teaching business; setting up and marketing an ensemble.	20	10
Writing Music for Media	<i>For composers:</i> In this module you will be given commissions to compose music for short films in real-life timescales.	20	10
Teaching Matters	Weekly classes designed to give you a context for instrumental/vocal teaching by engaging with current ideas, theories and research, and incorporates teaching observations. <i>Limited availability.</i>	20	10

### Electives (non-credit-bearing)

- Chorus
- Alexander Technique
- Big Band (Jazz Large Ensemble)
- Brass Band Scoring & Arranging
- Chamber Choir (by audition only)
- Camerata (unauditioned chamber choir)
- Conducting – Beginners
- Conducting – Intermediate & Advanced
- Creative Ensemble
- Early Music
- Folk Ensemble
- Improvising for Classical Musicians
- Introduction to DJing
- Introduction to Sound Recording
- Jazz Improvisation
- Kodaly method
- Techniques of Electronic Music
- Performing with Technology

Postgraduate Erasmus students are assigned a Personal Tutor (usually the International Student Mentor) who will not only help mould your programme to suit

your – and your home institution's needs – but who will be a useful point of contact throughout your stay. Other support will come from the Course Director, and staff in your Principal Study Department, not least your Principal Study Tutor(s). You will also be assigned a student mentor who is a continuing student who can offer advice about life in Birmingham and studying in the Conservatoire. You will also have the opportunity to join our international PG students in weekly academic skills workshops.

## Department Information

Each section provides an overview of study you can expect to experience within each department. For additional information, please follow the website links provided.

### Brass

Head of Brass: Amos Miller

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/brass>

Ensemble playing, from a group as small as a brass trio right up to full symphonic brass section, is fundamental to the brass player's musical life, therefore, teamwork is at the core of the Brass Department's activities.

Tuition is available in orchestral and brass band instruments and our team of brass tutors has the expertise to address all areas of performance and technique by helping you to diversify your skills in both areas (where appropriate), as well as jazz and early music.

Alongside various band, orchestral and chamber music activities, is a full schedule of masterclasses and brass classes covering everything from practice technique to orchestral repertoire.

The department also offers bespoke tuition at postgraduate level, for student brass quintets who wish to consolidate their ensemble skills while developing their individual playing abilities.

Close links with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Royal Ballet, Welsh National Opera and the Royal Shakespeare Company give our students a special advantage in experiencing the versatility required to join the music profession of today.

### Choral Conducting

Principal Tutor: Paul Spicer

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/conducting/choral-conducting>

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire currently offers great opportunities to students wishing to study choral conducting. Our postgraduate courses require any student specializing in this area to be highly motivated, and prepared to be proactive.

1:1 choral conducting tuition is normally provided by Paul Spicer, supplemented by some individual singing lessons.



Choral Conducting students run and conduct the Conservatoire's Camerata chamber choir, in the process gaining a significant amount of regular podium time. Additional masterclasses, led by distinguished choral conductors, are held every year. Weekly bespoke musicianship and repertoire classes are also offered, and it is possible for choral conductors to attend language classes designed for singers. Interaction with students and activities on the Conservatoire's postgraduate Orchestral Conducting programmes is encouraged.

For full details, see the postgraduate course pages for Conducting:

<https://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/courses/conducting-mmus-pgdip>

Birmingham is a vibrant city, with plenty of opportunities for involvement in choral singing in a secular or sacred context, including the city's two cathedrals.

### **Chamber Music**

Head of Chamber Music: Robin Ireland; Head of Piano in Chamber Music: Daniel Tong

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/chamber-music>

Chamber Music has a core place in Conservatoire life: all string players and other instrumentalists will be helped to form chamber music ensembles, and will receive mentoring and coaching, as well as opportunities to perform. Concerts, master classes and seminars held by the ensembles in residence, Junior Fellows and other leading UK chamber music ensembles take place throughout the year. For strings players in Years 1-3, chamber music is assessed as part of the curriculum.

#### *Tutors*

- Robin Ireland: Head of Chamber Music, formerly violist with the Lindsay String Quartet
- Louise Lansdown: Head of Strings at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, violist with the Pleyel Ensemble
- Oliver Wille: newly appointed International chair in Violin (2014), founder of the String Quartet Academy at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire, co-founder of the Kuss Quartet
- David Angel: Second violinist of the Maggini String Quartet
- Susanne Stanzeleit: former first violinist with the Maggini Quartet, violinist with the Primrose Piano Quartet
- Richard Lester: Former cellist with the Florestan Piano Trio and current cellist of the London Haydn Quartet
- Jane Salmon: Cellist with the Schubert Ensemble
- William Howard: Pianist with the Schubert Ensemble

#### *Ensembles in Residence and Junior Fellows*

- The Schubert Ensemble
- The Navarra String Quartet

- The Atéa Wind Quintet (Associate Ensemble in Residence)
- The Gildas String Quartet (Junior Fellows)

#### *Chamber Music concerts and concert opportunities for students*

- Concerts at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery: student groups have the opportunity to play in monthly recitals in the Round Room at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
- CBSO Lunchtime Concerts: Chamber music recitals performed by CBSO players or students in the CBSO Centre on Berkley Street
- Chamber Music Festival at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire: The chamber music program reaches its climax in June, after the exam period, with four packed days of music making including performances by the Conservatoire's Ensembles in Residence, student groups, combined staff and student ensembles and invited guests

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire is also in the midst of establishing a String Quartet Academy and Postgraduate Courses specifically for pre-formed groups wanting to launch a career, with Oliver Wille and Robin Ireland at the helm – quartets from Japan and UK are already involved. Watch this space.

#### *Competitions at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire*

Several competitions and prizes which are open for chamber music groups, for example, the Leamington Music Prize, Birmingham Chamber Music Society Sylvia Cleaver Prize, Town Hall Symphony Recital Prize

### **Composition**

Head of Composition: **Joe Cutler** Deputy Head of Composition: **Michael Wolters**

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/composition>

Now, more than at any other time in history, composers can express themselves in any number of musical and artistic genres.

In contrast to most other composition courses at this level we at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire celebrate this diversity and make it our mission to foster artists who challenge, innovate and transform notions of artistic practice today.

#### *Individual Tuition*

*"If you want to work creatively, you study composition at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire."*

Louis Andriessen, Composer

Through individual tuition and small classes you will develop an understanding of differing compositional styles, particularly contemporary art music, pop, jazz and fusion, experimental and conceptual music, film and theatre music, electroacoustic and studio-based composition.

From the outset, you will be encouraged to explore your own ideas both within the context of a specific genre and using genre as a jumping-off point for the creation of new artistic concepts.

## **Jazz**

Head of Jazz: Jeremy Price

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/jazz>

The primary aim of the Jazz Department is to create a stimulating and inspiring culture for jazz musicians. As well as nurturing individual development, we place a great deal of emphasis on artistic exchange between students and staff, both within the Conservatoire and on the wider public stage: from local venues to international festivals.

The jazz scene in the Birmingham area is flourishing. We have an exceptionally strong relationship with Birmingham Jazz, the region's main promoter, and our students enjoy free entry to their gigs for a nominal Birmingham Jazz membership fee. During the last academic year alone, our students have attended performances through this scheme by internationally acclaimed artists such as Joe Lovano, the Fly Trio (Jeff Ballard, Mark Turner and Larry Grenadier), Uri Caine, Jim Black and masterclasses from Dave Holland, Mulgrew Miller, Jeff Ballard and George Colligan.

In addition to the international circuit that Birmingham Jazz brings to the region, the city hosts numerous clubs and venues that support the local scene.

Venues providing a platform for the wider jazz community include the MAC Birmingham, The Rainbow, Symphony Hall Foyer, Fizzle, the Glee Club, The Drum and the Jam House. All this means you will be able to immerse yourself in a vibrant and energising music scene.

## **Keyboard**

Head of Keyboard: **John Thwaites**; Associate Head of Keyboard: **Daniel Browell**

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/keyboard>

With a distinguished staff of tutors and consultants specialising in solo, collaborative and orchestral performance, the Piano Department concentrates on your development as a versatile, confident and self-reliant performer.

### *Develop your skills*

Reflecting the demands of versatility and artistic awareness in the realm of professional performance, your intensive pianistic training will be supplemented by a wide range of specialist activities and workshops, including classes in repertoire, accompaniment, coaching in accompaniment, fortepiano, and keyboard skills.

Weekly undergraduate and postgraduate piano classes are taken in rotation by around six tutorial staff members, which ensures variety and freshness of ideas, as does a weekly masterclass, given by a visiting pianist of world stature. Involving a high degree of practical involvement and feedback, both programmes will help you to develop the breadth of your own musical vision.

As well as solo performance, all undergraduates study accompaniment. You will also be encouraged to participate in chamber music (coaching is available to established ensembles), and you'll have the opportunity to gain experience in répétiteur work and orchestral keyboard performance as part of your course.

### *Performance opportunities*

Performance opportunities, provided throughout the course, include the Conservatoire's series of lunchtime and evening concerts. We enjoy close ties with the Vocal and Operatic Department and students often collaborate in performances and competitions, as well as in language and accompaniment classes.

Peter Donohoe, the Conservatoire's Vice-President, has been a consultant tutor to the department since 1989, and works closely with both staff and students.

### *Fortepiano*

Working towards an annual concert, all undergraduate pianists study fortepiano during their second year, exploring an extensive repertoire (including CPE Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert) on the type of instrument for which it was originally conceived. The Conservatoire possesses two fortepianos: a John Rawson copy of a 1780s Viennese instrument and another by Dennis Woolley (after Fritz, c.1820). In addition to solo pieces, you may also study chamber music and song accompaniment.

## **Organ**

Head of Organ: Daniel Moulton

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/keyboard/organ-and-harpsichord>

With 25 students, a world-class faculty and brand new facilities, Royal Birmingham Conservatoire enjoys a reputation as a leading centre for organ studies in the UK.

We are a destination of choice for some of the most gifted young professional musicians who, through our Junior Fellowship scheme, gain valuable experience of working at conservatoire level and receive support for competition preparation, research and performance projects. Current postgraduates (including musicians from cathedrals at Ely, Lichfield, Peterborough, St George's Chapel, Windsor, as well as international students from Germany, Norway, Japan and Hong Kong) include prize-winners at diploma, national and international competition level.

Recent undergraduates include several RCO prize-winners who have gone on to positions at cathedrals in Worcester, Chelmsford, St David's, Liverpool, Hexham (Abbey) and Norwich.

The arrival of a major new instrument at the University of Birmingham this year and the Conservatoire's move to a new, purpose-built home in 2017 (together with new instruments and state-of-the-art facilities) promises to provide a unique set of resources that will further equip our students to become leaders in the profession.

The city of Birmingham boasts a vibrant cultural scene that includes the CBSO, BCMG and regular concerts by city organist, Thomas Trotter. With three concert hall organs on our doorstep, plus the libraries of the Royal College of Organists and BIOS in the city and tuition by internationally renowned musicians, Birmingham provides the ideal environment for the serious study, research and performance of organ art music.

## **Music Technology**

Head of Music Technology: Simon Hall

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/music-technology>

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire provides a unique context to study Music Technology.

Not only do you have access to state of the art professional technical facilities, and are taught by a range of leading industry professionals, you are also surrounded by performers, composers and researchers of the very highest quality from across an array of musical disciplines - from classical soloists, through chamber ensembles and orchestras to opera, jazz, folk, electronica and rock.

This provides a rich and vibrant environment to develop recording, production and performance-based projects.

The BMus/MMus First Study Music Technology is aimed at the creative music producer, and allows you to study Music Technology as your principal subject area within the musical context of a Conservatoire.

Its aim is to create graduates that are flexible and virtuosic in their use of technology as their instrument, equally at home in the recording studio, creating music and sound for media, composing cutting edge electroacoustic composition and developing live electronics works for the concert hall.

Unique to Conservatoire music technology programmes, you'll have weekly one-to-one lessons in various music technology techniques.

This is supported by a backbone of Music Technology and Sound Recording modules that run through the entire programme to give you a strong technical understanding in areas such as studio recording, live recording, editing, synthesis, sampling, programming, coding, mixing, surround-sound, mastering and recording project management skills.

This is taught within the wider context of a musical training consummate with a conservatoire education.

## **Percussion**

Head of Department: Adrian Spillett

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/percussion> or  
[www.facebook.com/BCPerc](http://www.facebook.com/BCPerc)

For percussionists, your day to day life is full of activity. Here is a selection of opportunities which will entertain and educate successful candidates:

- Regular Practice Pad Workouts & Latin Hour – group sessions designed to develop strength, dexterity & sound quality.
- Masterclasses - recent masterclasses include soloists Alexej Gerasimez, Colin Currie, Tatiana Koleva, Nebojsa Zivkovic, Pete Lockett (Multi-Percussionist), Adam Betts (Drum Kit & Electronics), Neil Percy (London Symphony Orchestra), Tom Greenleaves (Gewandhaus Orchestra) to name just a few.
- Professional orchestral percussion schemes - regular classes with visiting players from Welsh National Opera and Birmingham Royal Ballet plus opportunities to workshadow/sit in amongst professional working sections, including the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Opera North.
- Two Percussion Ensemble Concerts a year - recent & future programmes include Steve Reich's Drumming, Mallet Quartet, Music for Mallet Instruments, Voices and Organ, Mason Bates' Stereo is King & Xenakis' Persephassa.
- International Travel - recent trips include a learning exchange programme in Brazil. In Salvador, the students took part in a peer to peer learning programme with the Bahia Orchestra Project (Neojiba) followed by a collaboration with the world-famous traditional Samba School, GRES Portela in Rio de Janeiro. In addition this year the department will travel to Spain for an intensive Cuban drumming, batá residency.

## **Performance Department**

Performance Department Manager: Benjamin Noakes

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/performing-ensembles>



Playing in orchestras and other large ensembles at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire represents one of the most important steps for you in becoming a professional musician. You will have a wide range of opportunities to play symphonic music, as well as participating in opera, classical pops, contemporary and period performance at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire.

At the beginning of the year, students audition for their orchestral seats. Symphony Orchestra, the Conservatoire's premiere orchestra, performs regularly in Symphony Hall – one of the finest European concert venues – and in Birmingham's Victorian Town Hall. Other ensembles at the Conservatoire include Repertoire Orchestra; Pops Orchestra; Thallein Ensemble, which focuses on contemporary music; Opera Orchestra; and groups dedicated to the performance of strings, wind band and early music repertoire.

Regular conductors include Michael Seal, Associate Conductor of the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra (CBSO); Daniele Rosina, conducting tutor at the Conservatoire; and Richard Baker, a specialist in contemporary music. We also work alongside other leading specialists such as the music directors of RAF and Royal Marines bands; James Southall from Welsh National Opera; and Alexandra Wood, leader of City of London Sinfonia.

As well as providing valuable performing experience, our links with professional organisations all demand serious engagement from our students, involving a full application process and an audition in addition to the all-important contact with professional performers.

The CBSO/ Royal Birmingham Conservatoire Training Scheme allows selected students from the strings, woodwind, brass and percussion departments to gain first-hand professional experience attending and sometimes playing in CBSO rehearsals. Students on the scheme also have the opportunity to receive orchestral audition training and mentoring from CBSO's principal players. Auditions for the scheme reflect professional orchestral audition procedures. Widening the portfolio of opportunities for students, we regularly work alongside members of the orchestras of Birmingham Royal Ballet and Welsh National Opera; students can also watch rehearsals and talk to principal players of the Orchestra of the Swan. There are also regular opportunities for students to attend and participate in rehearsals with musicians from the Royal Shakespeare Company.

## **Strings**

Head of Strings: Louise Lansdown

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/strings>

As a student in the Strings Department at Royal Birmingham Conservatoire you will be part of a dynamic and exceptionally supportive student and staff fraternity. Strings staff include leading UK and internationally renowned performers and pedagogues.

We foster creativity and individuality through our bold and varied performance programme offering a wide-ranging agenda of solo, chamber music and orchestral performance opportunities, many internal and external recital possibilities and frequent master classes from international artists and visiting tutors.

We devote much attention to Pedagogy and the importance of adequately preparing our students for this essential and fascinating facet of the music profession. Above anything else – we care about the future of every one of our students and are utterly committed to helping them realise their dreams.

## **Harp**

Principal Tutor: Rita Schindler

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/strings/plucked>

Opportunities include:

- 1:1 teaching
- Plentiful orchestral and ensemble opportunities
- Chamber music projects
- Weekly harp classes comprising a variety of topics including performance classes, harp ensemble, in-depth study of technical issues, core repertoire in context, improvisation and light music
- Masterclasses with leading British and international harpists. Past guests have included Isabelle Perrin, Catrin Finch (International Chair in Harp), Skaila Kanga and Gabriella Dall'Olio, amongst many others.
- Specialised pedagogy module (*not every year/term*)

## **Guitar**

Head of Guitar: Mark Ashford

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/strings/plucked>

Guitar tuition is designed to equip you with all the skills required to enter the music profession. You'll cover a broad spectrum of repertoire, receiving specialised individual tuition in your chosen area of study, complemented by masterclasses with visiting artists. Additional technique and sight-reading classes will contribute to your training in both modern techniques and Early Music styles, as appropriate.

Regular performance opportunities include weekly performance workshops, lunchtime recitals, chamber music concerts and external events. There is a strong emphasis on ensemble playing, through mixed ensembles, guitar ensembles and our guitar orchestra. If you have a particular interest in chamber music or you are part of a guitar ensemble, there is a new pathway offering specialist training in these areas, available at postgraduate level. Creative collaboration is encouraged, both between classical,

jazz and rock guitarists, and with students from other departments throughout the college.

## Vocal and Operatic

Head of Department: Paul Wingfield

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/vocal-operatic>

Opportunities for undergraduate students include:

- Song classes: 2/3 per week
- Historical Class
- Contemporary class
- Language classes: French, German, Italian, Russian
- Chance to sing in Opera Scenes (December)
- Chance to sing in Opera (March)
- Coaching sessions
- Voice lessons – one hour per week
- Dance classes
- Drama Classes
- Chamber Choir (auditioned)
- Camerata chamber choir (auditioned)
- Singing in English for Foreign Students

In addition, postgraduates have an Opera Class and a repertoire class. They may also attend any of the above classes and have the opportunity to audition for Opera activities and Choirs.

## Woodwind

Head of Woodwind: **Jenni Phillips**; Associate Head of Woodwind: **Douglas Mitchell**

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/woodwind>

Opportunities include:

*Weekly solo performance classes:* a chance to rehearse with an accompanist, perform to a group of 2nd/3rd year students and receive feedback from the tutor taking the class and other students. As well as performing, you would attend all classes to watch and help give feedback on other performances. There is also the option of attending 4th year and Postgraduate performance classes.

*Woodwind Workshop:* a weekly two-hour class where the whole department is together for a masterclass, talk or demonstration.

Recent examples are:

- Masterclasses - from international instrumentalists such as Jonathan Kelly, solo oboist from the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra
- Careers talks - from orchestral managers and alumni students
- Theatre workshops - learning performance techniques from our theatre department
- West End Musicals - learning the skills needed to be a doubling and tripling expert

*Chamber Music:* our Associate Ensemble in Residence, the Atea Wind Quintet, as well as instrumental tutors from the Conservatoire, coach and mentor chamber music groups. Groups are either chosen by the students themselves or with the assistance of the Head of Department. There are performance opportunities throughout the year and competitions to enter.

*Wind Ensemble* - players are chosen by rota to play in wind groups, for example Mozart 'Gran Partita'. This is slightly dependent on repertoire chosen and instrument, for example, double reed players may have more opportunities to take part in Wind Ensemble.

*Wind Repertoire* – the Woodwind department have regular sessions, where we play though major symphonic works e.g. Holst 'The Planets', Mahler 'Symphony No. 3' etc. In the weeks students are not playing, they also come along and watch, following a score to learn their part. We also run Woodwind, Brass and Percussion sessions around three times a term.

## **Recorder**

Head of Recorder: Annabel Knight

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/woodwind/recorder>

Led by Annabel Knight and assisted by Chris Orton, our lively and supportive recorder department provides tuition in all aspects of style, technique and repertoire.

The emphasis is on making the most of each student's individual strengths and talents, with a view to opening up pathways into the varied and innovative professional world of the recorder performer-practitioner.

All periods of recorder music from the medieval and renaissance period up to the present day are afforded equal importance, with opportunities to develop both solo and ensemble playing.

For ensemble work the Conservatoire is proud to own a consort of Adrian Brown's renaissance recorders, as well as a Paetzold contra-bass which is frequently used to explore contemporary repertoire with electronics.

Royal Birmingham Conservatoire has an international reputation as a leading institution for interactive performance, composition and research linking acoustic instruments and cutting edge technology. Opportunities to take part in electives in

performance, improvisation and composition with live electronics are open to all students.

## **Saxophone**

Head of Saxophone: Naomi Sullivan

For additional information visit:

<http://www.bcu.ac.uk/conservatoire/departments/woodwind/saxophone>

Opportunities include:

- Weekly saxophone workshop: focussing on a wide-ranging approach to saxophone and music performance
- Jazz workshop: run by Anna Brook, catering for both the uninitiated to the more advanced
- Woodwind workshop: run by Jenni Phillips
- Further pedagogy classes: run by Andy Tweed
- Woodwind performance classes: opportunity to perform to the entire woodwind department
- Woodwind repertoire classes: looking at orchestral repertoire
- Saxophone quartet coaching and other chamber group opportunities
- Termly coaching from Visiting Consultant: Kyle Horch (Chambersax, Anglosax (Clarinet Classics)
- Termly coaching from Visiting Consultant in Multi-instrumentalism: Paul Saunders
- Masterclasses: at least three per year from international artists
- Saxophone prize: annual saxophone competition
- BMus Big Band: lead by Percy Pursglove
- Thallien: contemporary music group
- Termly department concerts
- Folk Ensemble
- Two saxophone ensembles
- Wind Orchestra

*Some related listening:*

- Flotilla (Big Shed Music)
- Andy Tweed: Spiritualise (Big Shed Music)
- Anna Brooks: My Time (Red Kite Records)
- Paragon Saxophone Quartet: Byrdland (Landor Records), Tuning In (AS Records)
- Syzygy: Songs for the Coming Day