BIMM UNIVERSITY | A university for the creative industries

MA
POPULAR MUSIC PRACTICE

Academic Year 2024/25

Welcome

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I am delighted to welcome you to the School of Postgraduate Studies at BIMM University, and I wish you every success on your course.

The school has existed since 2019, and the school's ethos is to allow you to explore creative arts practice to fulfil your artistic ambitions and career aims. Through such exploration, you can generate fresh insights and new perspectives relevant to you and others. To enable this, we take a student-centred and active approach to learning, so you will learn by doing and understanding theory as a tool for understanding creative practice. You will be taught by staff who are exceptional practitioners in their field, skilled educators and active researchers.

My role in the school is to uphold the standards we have set for your education and to monitor the quality of your student experience. I do that through meeting with your student representatives at the Postgraduate Board of Studies and by chairing the Postgraduate Assessment Boards, which process your academic results. I also convene monthly meetings with your course leaders and their teams to ensure they can support you in getting the best from your educational experience.

This handbook will provide important information on how your postgraduate course is structured and the support available to you academically and personally. Studying at postgraduate level is an intense experience, and we understand that you have made a considerable commitment to study at this level. Many of you may also be working to support your studies, or you may have caring responsibilities outside of university, and we understand the additional pressure such obligations generate. We are here to help you, so do not hesitate to reach out to us at any time.

Finally, one of the great pleasures I have at the university is to see the work generated by postgraduate students. I am often moved and inspired by what I see and hear, and I look forward to seeing what you create during your postgraduate journey.

Professor Mark Irwin
Deputy Provost and Director of Postgraduate Studies

Contents

PART ONE: GENERAL INFORMATION

Key Resources

A quick note: you will need to be logged into your BIMM Microsoft account to access some of the links in this handbook.

BIMMStudents
bimmstudents.com is a one-stop portal for all key electronic resources and services students will require during their studies including the following:

> Campus SharePoint sites

> Microsoft Office 365 (including emails, cloud storage and apps like Word and Excel)

> Timetables (CELCAT)

> BIMM Library

> Study Skills Hub

> BIMM University's Virtual Learning Environment (Canvas)

> Creative Futures (careers) information and guidance

> Tutorial booking

> BIMM Connect - Student networking

> BIMM Digital User Guides

Canvas
Canvas is BIMM University's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). It is an online space containing materials and tools to support and enhance your learning experience. This platform is an integral part of the student experience at BIMM University - it is not only an online extension of the classroom but is also the place where you will submit digital assignments and receive grades and feedback.

It also contains a wealth of valuable guidance to support you during your studies, including important information such as assessment deadlines and guides to each module on the course. Each module has a dedicated space in Canvas where students can access materials used in class and additional study resources.

Students will also find links to campus news and networking forums, annual monitoring reports, campus Board of Studies and Student Representation forum minutes, and much more in Canvas.

Module Specifications
Module specifications contain important information about each module such as the module's summary and aims, its learning outcomes, details of assessments, teaching methods and contact hours, and the module reading list.

You can find all module specifications in the **Course Documentation SharePoint**. They are also linked to in the **"Course Structure"** section of this handbook.

Timetables
Your student timetable is your guide to where you need to be. Your timetable is accessible through **BIMMStudents**, and it includes details of the times, dates and locations of your lessons, as well as who will be teaching you. If you'd like to synchronise your timetable with calendar applications on your devices, you can go to the 'Application Support' section of bimmstudents.com. If you have any questions about your timetable, you should reach out to your Course Leader.

Reading Lists
Your reading list is an important tool for finding information on your module topic. You should consult your reading lists when looking for academic material to support your learning and for completing your assignments.

Each reading list is made up of resources relevant to your module, which will help you to identify some of the authors and sources of information that are considered reliable and reputable. Your reading list can also save you time at the start of the research process as it provides easy access to key material, and shows which resources are considered core or additional reading, which will help you to prioritise your reading.

You can access reading lists for all modules in Canvas. For full details on how to access reading lists, and other how-to guides, visit the **Module Reading List SharePoint page**. Further guidance is also available on the **BIMM Library website**.

BIMM Student Association (BSA)
Run by students, for students, the BIMM Student Association (BSA) is here to help you connect with like-minded people. The BSA's student-led societies and events are a fantastic way for you to meet new and interesting people, gain valuable life skills and build your own BIMM University experience. If you don't feel like your passions, beliefs, or interests are represented, you can start your own group with the BSA's help, as funding and support are available.

Each year, a President and Committee are selected at each campus to run the local BIMM Student Association (BSA). Together, they work with campus staff and students to continually improve the BIMM student experience. We will introduce you to your BSA President after you begin your course.

Examples of societies past and present include:

> Quiz Nights (including Tutors Vs. Students Quiz)

> DJ Society

> Five-a-side Football Tournaments

> Bouldering Society

> Skateboarding Society

> Vinyl Club

> LGBTQ+ Society

> Women's Society

> Vegan Society

Communication

Your University email
The University will send important information about teaching, assessments, and Faculty events to your BIMM University email address. It's important that you check your University emails on a regular basis and respond or take action as required.

Trusted (Emergency) Contact
We require you to provide the name and contact details for someone to act as your primary designated 'Trusted (Emergency) Contact'. Where possible, we ask you to give details for a second person to act as a secondary 'Trusted (Emergency) Contact. These people could be called upon to make medical or legal decisions for you if you become incapacitated.

Where possible, at least one should be a parent, guardian or family member. They must be 18 or over. Please do not include someone where the relationship could change over the next few years and ensure they are made aware that you have nominated them as this contact. You will have been asked to nominate these contacts at registration, but you can update these contacts at any time by emailing your Student Wellbeing team.

Note that this policy only applies to students aged 18 or over. For those under 18, the **Under 18s Admission Policy and Procedure** applies and emergency contact details must be provided via an U18 Parental Consent Form before arriving at the University.

For further information, see our full **Trusted (Emergency) Contact Statement**.

Canvas
Information will sometimes be shared through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), **Canvas**, both via module pages and via general announcements.

Student Voice
The University's Student Voice processes offer several ways for students to feed back. You can do this via one of the surveys open throughout the year, or you can feedback at any time through a number of methods and contacts, such as:

> Course Leaders

> Campus teams, e.g. Student Wellbeing

> Student Representatives

The University welcomes student feedback to help us improve and enhance our provision, so please do take part in our Student Voice activities. More details can be found in our **Quality Handbook**.

Support and Advice

If you are unable to find the information you need in this Handbook or on the website you can contact staff, who will be able to help or point you in the right direction (see Communication and Contacts section above). For any guidance or support around interpreting our academic policies or procedures, please contact your Head of School or Course Leader in the first instance.

Student Wellbeing
Student Wellbeing teams promote and support the mental, emotional, and physical health and wellbeing of students on campus, as well as ensuring a culture of safeguarding for all students and staff. They provide a whole spectrum of support and can offer advice, support and guidance on a range of issues such as mental health or physical health concerns, additional learning needs, mitigating circumstances and reasonable adjustments, financial hardship, complaints, or anything else relating to wider university life.

Our campus-based Student Wellbeing teams provide support for students with learning difficulties, disabilities, or medical conditions. They have a wide range of resources enabling them to help with topics from anxiety, eating disorders and financial advice to stress management, resilience, and coping skills. They lead on the promotion of healthy behaviours and environments on campuses, with initiatives related to physical activity, healthy eating, and substance use prevention.

A triaging approach ensures that students are quickly referred to specialists within the Student Wellbeing team, or to external counsellors or health specialists as required. You can find details of your Student Wellbeing teams via **BIMMStudents**, or through your campus's on-site Information Hub.

Learning & Disability Support
If you have additional learning needs, you should inform your local Student Wellbeing/Learning Support team as soon as possible if you feel you require learning support to aid you in their course. If additional learning needs are stated prior to enrolment, Student Advisors will contact you to discuss your requirements and any support that needs to be put in place from Semester 1.

Learning Student Support teams can help you to explore what statutory and local support is available to you and in some cases, degree students in UK campuses may be eligible for Disabled Students Allowance (DSA).

In order to access additional support, a diagnosis of a condition is key. Anyone without a diagnosis should organise one as soon as possible to ensure they receive the support they are entitled to. BIMM University can support students in accessing a dyslexia assessment service should they require it.

Please contact your local campus Learning Support team who will be able to offer up to date information and guidance on all matters relating to Learning and Disability Support – see your campus SharePoint (accessible via bimmstudents.com) for more information.

Academic Support
Academic support information, including guides to referencing and academic writing, can be found on the **Study Skills SharePoint**.

Careers
Career advice and guidance is available via the Creative Futures team. The team is made up of experienced careers specialists who are dedicated to connecting students to industry opportunities, and to acting as a compass as students navigate their pathway into the creative industries.

The support provided by Creative Futures is designed around our students' unique skills and interests. The team works closely with industry partners and the University's academic teams to equip students with the skills and experiences needed to succeed, empowering students to build a sustainable career in music and the broader creative industries.

You can find more information by navigating to **BIMMStudents**, selecting your campus, and then selecting the Creative Futures icon.

Complaints & Appeals

We hope you are satisfied with your experiences at BIMM University. However, if you have a concern, then we have procedures in place for handling Student Complaints and Appeals.

The Student Complaints Procedure outlines how to submit a formal complaint if you experience problems relating to teaching, learning, research and supervision, and to the provision of other services by the University. We always suggest trying to resolve the issue informally with your local campus teams first (see below for further information).

The Student Appeals Procedure outlines how to make an appeal against a decision made by an academic body (such as an Assessment Board) regarding results, progression or award, or a procedural outcome (such as a disciplinary panel sanction or judgement).

If you are considering making an Appeal or Complaint, you are strongly advised to talk to one of the following staff at your Campus. They can advise you on your case, help to resolve it informally and, if necessary, support you in the process of making a formal Appeal or Complaint:

> Student Wellbeing Advisor or Manager

> Your Course Leader or Deputy Course Leader

> Head of School or Campus Dean

> One of your Student Representatives

Further information on Academic Appeals and other Appeals and Complaints, as well as the relevant forms, can be found on the **Appeals and Complaints** pages of our website.

Student Responsibilities

All of BIMM University's policies and procedures can be found on the University's **website**. Students are expected to familiarise themselves with all policies and procedures. For any guidance or support around interpreting our academic policies or procedures, please contact your Heads of School or Course Leader in the first instance.

You are expected to attend classes and submit work for assessment as well as engage in the required amount of self-directed study as quantified in the module specifications. Expectations around student engagement are outlined in our **Student Engagement Policy**. Poor attendance with little engagement may lead to being withdrawn from your course, so it's important that you get in touch with your Course Leader or Wellbeing team if you are going to be absent or are struggling. We can provide support and guidance to students who require it, so please do reach out to your course and campus teams.

Library resources are supplied through the **BIMM University electronic library** and dedicated physical reading rooms, and you are expected to use these resources in your own time.

Prevent Duty
The Prevent Duty is part of the UK Government's Counter-Terrorism strategy to prevent individuals being drawn into extremism. BIMM University safeguards learners from extremist ideologies, radicalisation and support individuals through early intervention.

We take a proactive and risk-based approach to the Prevent Duty, and it is embedded into many of our policies, including our dedicated Prevent Duty Policy, and our Safeguarding Policy. Anyone can make a referral – if you have a concern, you should speak to your local Student Wellbeing team in the first instance for help and support.

For further information, see the **Prevent Duty Policy**.

IT Usage
The **Fair Usage Policy** outlines the expectations for use of BIMM University IT systems including equipment, email, OneDrive and student WIFI. Students should adhere to the outlined expectations of this policy and avoid engaging in prohibited activities.

Prohibited activities include (but are not limited to): intentional physical damage, unauthorised administrative system changes, hacking or bypassing security measures, engaging in cyber threats or intentionally spreading malware, bullying and harassment or discriminatory behaviour, inappropriate web browsing including (but not limited to) gambling, pornography, violence or extremist material and illegal streaming.

Graduate Attributes

Advanced practitioner
MAPMP graduates will be advanced practitioners within their chosen field of popular music practice. They will be resilient, autonomous and enterprising, and empowered to take charge of their creativity and professional development.

Creative and open to change
MAPMP graduates will endorse creativity, innovation and technological change, working at the forefront of their discipline. They will exhibit awareness of and appreciation for the diverse and complex contexts that they will work in.

Research-literate and ethical
MAPMP graduates' practice stems from the interplay between research and practice and is grounded in theory and knowledge of their audience and marketplace. They create knowledge through practical work and their research activities are informed by ethical considerations.

Collaborative and inclusive
MAPMP graduates will be able to collaborate with individuals from diverse backgrounds, demonstrating awareness of issues surrounding equality, diversity and inclusivity. They are able to give and receive feedback responsibly.

Effective communicator
MAPMP graduates will communicate multifaceted information and ideas clearly and confidently both verbally and in writing.

Information-literate
MAPMP graduates are able to navigate the complexities of the digital era and critically evaluate information. They will engage in evidence-based decision-making.

Value-led and reflective
MAPMP graduates' practice is informed by a good understanding of what their values are, and they make use of reflective models to guide their personal and professional development.

Assessment

Higher Education Strategy

BIMM University is committed to providing high quality teaching and support for its students by addressing the differentiated needs of individual learners, and ensuring that all students have equal and fair access to learning resources. All learning and teaching approaches adopted by BIMM University are flexible, student-centred, diverse, and appropriate to the skills and needs of individual students.

To provide relevant, diverse, quality learning experiences, every course implements the BIMM University Higher Education Strategy. This strategy allows us to create inclusive, engaging learning activities that can address diverse learning and teaching styles, foster the culture of a learning community, and enable students to develop their own creative identity. The strategy also aims to help build our students' capacity to be innovative in dealing with obstacles set by the professional demands of the industry. You can read BIMM University's Higher Education Strategy in full **here**.

Assessment Guidance

During your studies, you'll be assessed in various ways to help you understand your progress in your learning. Each course is assessed slightly differently, so students will need to read the **Student Assessment Handbook** in full to make sure you understand how assessments will work for you. Both the Assessment Handbook and the **Postgraduate Academic Assessment Regulations** provide guidance on all elements of assessment at the University, including assessment modes, assessment rubrics, late submission policy (including detail on the no penalty 24-hour deadline extension) and what happens if you fail a module.

How will I be assessed?

There are generally two types of assessment on BIMM University courses:

> Coursework – assessments that are submitted online through the University's VLE, Canvas.

> Face-to-Face – practical assessments including performances, demonstrations, presentations and other activities that are assessed in person.

Assessment can be formative or summative:

> Formative assessment has a developmental purpose and is designed to assist students in their learning by providing them with feedback on their performance. This feedback should indicate how students' performance can be improved or maintained.

> Summative assessment often evaluates student performance at the end of a module, and usually involves students receiving a grade that indicates their level of performance. Students will also receive feedback on summative assessment.

How will my work be marked?

Student work is marked using the BIMM University assessment rubric. A rubric is a tool that allows us to standardise the process of grading, making it more efficient, saving time for faculty and providing you with effective feedback that promotes your learning. You can find the assessment rubric for each level of study in the **Student Assessment Handbook**.

When will I be assessed?

Assessment dates can be found in the Course Structure section of this handbook, as well as in the module specification.

Academic Integrity
BIMM University is devoted to supporting students in their learning. Therefore, a clear understanding of academic integrity is an important component of the competencies students will develop whilst studying with us. All students studying at BIMM University are responsible for the integrity of their learning and their choices, including any decision to break the rules. However, we will work with students at every study level to understand our values and expectations. Moreover, our staff will model best practices in academic integrity in their teaching and research and the material they share with you to support. More information on Academic Integrity, including academic misconduct, can be found within the **Academic Integrity Policy**.

Exceptional Circumstances
We understand that sometimes students may require additional support, whether on an ongoing or temporary basis. **The Exceptional Circumstances Policy** covers topics such as reasonable adjustments, adjustments to teaching, and mitigation.

Feedback

Students will receive lots of feedback through the course of their studies, which should help you learn and develop. Getting critical comments as well as positive ones is entirely normal and isn't a sign of weakness. Everyone will get both positive and critical feedback - whatever your course, you're being prepared to enter a highly demanding profession in which you'll be expected to be able to take constructive criticism and use it to improve your approach. Responding well to constructive feedback will help you meet professional expectations of behaviour.

Different types of feedback

There are three main types of feedback that are used at BIMM University:

> Informal iterative feedback from your teacher and possibly your peers in class and during online sessions.

> Formative assessment feedback is more formal feedback from your teachers and peers designed to help you improve a specific piece of work for assessment.

> Summative assessment feedback is the feedback you receive on formal graded 'summative' assessments.

Sometimes, you'll get your feedback straight away. For instance, if you perform for your classmates in a class, they might be asked to give you feedback during the lesson. Comments on assessed work should always be returned to you promptly, which means within 21 days (plus any public holidays) of you submitting it.
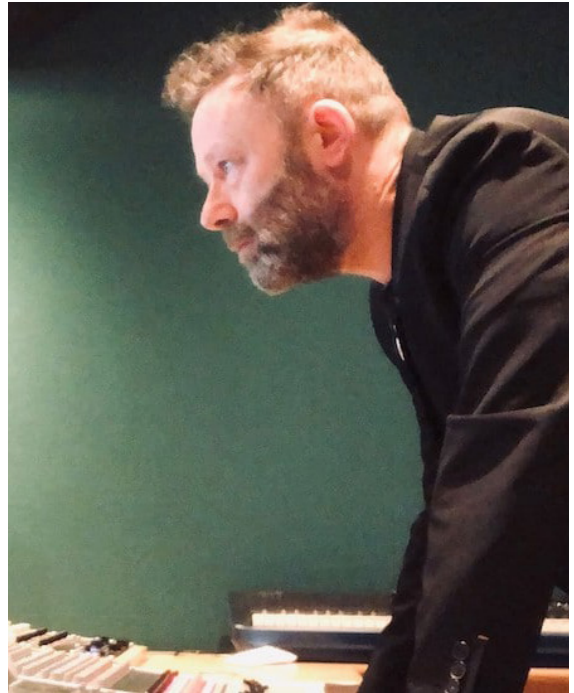
Please see the **Student Assessment Handbook** for more information on feedback, including how to prepare for receiving feedback, how to understand feedback, and how to use feedback.

PART TWO:
COURSE-SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Key Course Staff

Photo by Thomas Margraf

Dr Liam Cagney
Course Leader (Berlin)
liamcagney@bimm-institute.de

Dr Paul Rogers
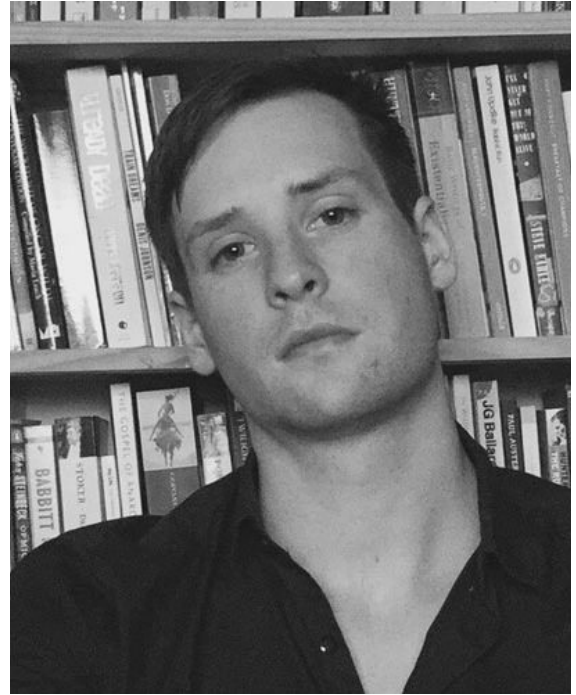**Course Leader (Birmingham)**
paulrogers@bimm.co.uk

Dr Jon Stewart
Course Leader (Brighton)
jonstewart@bimm.co.uk

Dr Riaan Vosloo
Course Leader (Bristol)
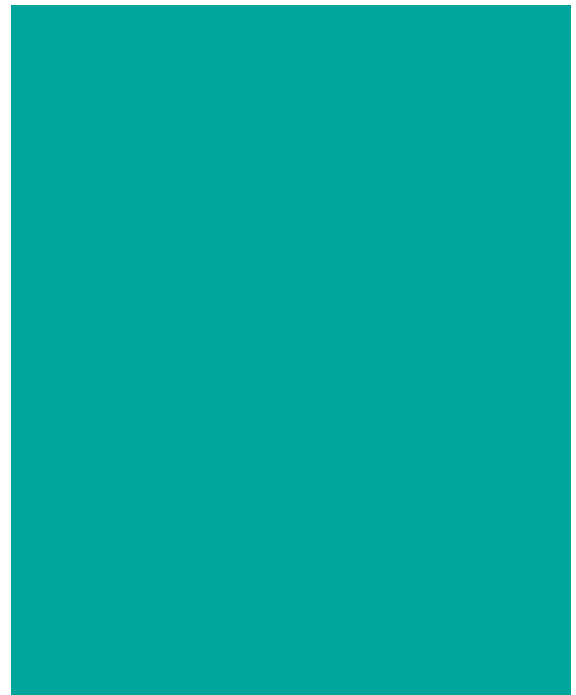riaanvosloo@bimm.co.uk

Dr John Millar

Course Leader (Dublin)

johnmillar@bimm.ie

Dr David Deacon

Course Leader (London)

daviddeacon@bimm.co.uk

Dr Anton Hunter

Course Leader (Manchester)

antonhunter@bimm.co.uk

Course Summary & Aims

Course Aims

MA Popular Music Practice offers you the opportunity to deepen your practice through engagement with research while positioning yourself within the creative industries.

You are supported to explore your own areas of interest, applying a theoretical lens to your own and others' professional practice. The MA draws on contemporary research and encourages you to investigate areas such as: popular musicology; performance and composition as research; music industry and entrepreneurship research; and research in the application of technologies to practice.

The MA utilises an outcomes-based framework to provide personalised learning. All assessments are negotiated on an individual basis against module learning outcomes, allowing you to explore your own interests in alignment with your personal, professional and creative aspirations.

MA Popular Music Practice is a single qualification with the capacity to provide specialist-names awards including:

> MA Popular Music Practice (Entrepreneurship)

> MA Popular Music Practice (Performance)

> MA Popular Music Practice (Production)

> MA Popular Music Practice (Composition)

Through undertaking four 30-credit modules, you will develop your practice in regular one-to-ones with specialist tutors, investigate links between research and practice and explore the contemporary popular music industry to establish how your practice fits in. The final 60-credit Major Project module allows you to produce an extended output that defines the naming of your award.

Course Structure

Code	Trimester	FHEQ Level	Module Title	Module Type	Credits	Assessment Week
Year 1						
MPM701	1	7	**Popular Music Practice & Research**	Core	30	13
MPM702	1	7	**You & The Popular Music Industry**	Core	30	A1: 7 A2: 14
MPM703	2	7	**Popular Music & Technology**	Core	30	A1: 9 A2: 13
MPM704	2	7	**Exploring Collaborative Practice**	Core	30	14
MPM705	3	7	**Major Project**	Core	60	13
Total Credits					180	

Course Learning Outcomes

Setting. Able to:

A1.   Critically evaluate the contexts that you are (and will be) working in.

A2.   Put your practice in context, determining where and how it fits in.

Knowledge and understanding. Able to:

B1.   Appraise a wide range of theoretical frameworks and approaches to research.

B2.   Evaluate current developments in the creative industries, while also making predictions about their future.

Cognitive skills. Able to:

C1.   Develop creative ideas, approaches and projects independently.

C2.   Apply theories in practice, bearing in mind the reciprocal relationship between the two.

C3.   Critically evaluate information, considering issues surrounding credibility, bias and ethics.

Performance and practice. Able to:

D1.   Create work that displays an advanced level of practice in your chosen field.

D2.   Engage in popular music-related practice that interacts with and is informed by research.

D3.   Experiment with and utilise relevant technologies effectively.

Personal and enabling skills. Able to:

E1.   Collaborate effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds and disciplines, displaying teamwork and leadership skills.

E2.   Communicate complex information clearly and confidently both verbally and in writing.

E3.   Manage time and resources autonomously while working on ambitious but achievable projects.

E4.   Reflect on and evaluate your development as a practitioner and researcher.

Course Specification

Full Title of the Course& Award	MA Popular Music Practice
Mode of Attendance	Full Time/Part Time
Length of course	1-year full time/ 2 years part time
Start date	September 2024
Awarding Institution	BIMM University
Teaching Institution	BIMM Music Institute London; BIMM Music Institute Brighton; BIMM Music Institute Bristol; BIMM Music Institute Dublin; BIMM Music Institute Manchester; BIMM Music Institute Birmingham; BIMM Music Institute Berlin.
UCAS Code	n/a
Language of Study	English
Final Award	MA Popular Music Practice (Entrepreneurship) MA Popular Music Practice (Performance) MA Popular Music Practice (Production) MA Popular Music Practice (Composition)
FHEQ Level	Level 7
Minimum Period of Registration	1 year (Full Time)/2 years (Part Time)
Maximum Period of Registration	2 years (Full Time) / 3 Years (Part Time)
Admissions Criteria	A good degree (normally 2.2 or above) or significant professional experience in a relevant subject. All applicants will be subject to interview and a portfolio may also be requested for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).
Date of Course Specification:	August 2019; re-approved February 2023.