

BMus(Hons) Songwriting - course specification

Full Title of the Course & Award	BMus (Hons) Songwriting
Mode of Attendance	Full-Time
Length of course	This course is taught as a three-year course at levels 4, 5 and 6.
Start date	2020
Awarding Institution	BIMM Institute
Teaching Institution	BIMM Institute Birmingham, BIMM Institute Brighton, BIMM Institute Bristol, BIMM Institute London, BIMM Institute Manchester
UCAS Code	3C45
Language of Study	English
Final Award	Certificate of Higher Education (exit award only at level 4) Diploma of Higher Education (exit award only at level 5) Bachelor's Degree with Honours
FHEQ Level	120 credits at Level 4 120 credits at Level 5 120 credits at Level 6
Reference Points	QAA Subject Benchmark in Music (2016) FHEQ (2008) QAA Quality Code (2018)
Minimum Period of Registration	3 years
Maximum Period of Registration	6 years
Admissions Criteria	Minimum of 2 A-levels at Grade E or above (32 UCAS points), OR BTEC Level 3 equivalent, and normally three GCSEs at a minimum grade C/4, including English Language. For overseas students: IELTS 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 to be achieved in each band or equivalent English language qualification.
Date of Course Specification Revisions:	Specification: October 2019

Contents

BMus(Hons) Songwriting - course specification	1
Course Structure	3
Timetables.....	4
Year Structure	4
Workload.....	5
Assessments.....	6
Practical Exams	6
Written exams.....	6
Practical coursework.....	6
Multimedia coursework/ Portfolio Assessments.....	6
Written coursework.....	6
Presentations	7
Teaching and learning.....	8
Teaching.....	8
Self-directed study.....	8
Formative Assessment	8
Work based Learning	8
Staff	9
Language	9
Costs.....	9
Tuition fees	9
Additional Costs	10
Accommodation and Living Costs	10
Disabled Access.....	10

Course Structure

Year 1					Available Options								
Semester 1	The Creative Industries & You 1: Finding Your Path	Songwriting Skills for Ensemble	Songwriting Techniques	Digital Music									
Semester 2	Context & Culture of the Creative Industries	Collaboration & Performance	Styles & Genres	Creative Technology									
Year 2					Available Options								
Semester 1	The Creative Industries & You 2: Creative Collaboration	Music Publishing, Events & Releasing	Music Creation with Technology	Option	Writing in Context and to Commission	Complementary Instrument Skills for Songwriters	Composition in Genres	Composition & Arranging Techniques	Youth, Music and Social Change	Creative Video Production	Touring and Live Events		
Semester 2	Creativity, Identity & Agency	Songwriting & Arrangement	Option	Option	Songwriting Portfolio	Sound Design & Writing for Media	Lyricism & Aesthetics	Creative Band Performance	Vocal Capture and Production	Global Music Styles	Working in the Creative Industries	Practical Learning and Teaching in the Creative Arts (1)	
Year 3					Available Options								
Semester 1	Final Project	Showcase & Showreel	Option	Option	Creative Performance with Mixed Media	Scoring for Drama	Performance, Stagecraft & Identity	Electro-acoustic Composition	Technical Event Production	Culture & Society	Gender & Sexuality	Film Studies	
Semester 2		The Creative Industries & You 3: Professional Portfolio	Option Module	Option Module	Creative Ensemble	Progressive Creative Technology	Audio Post Production	Theory & Analysis	Event Video Production	Practical Learning and Teaching in the Creative Arts 2	Diversity in the Creative Industries	Psychology of Music	

Apart from the Final Project module, all modules are worth 15 credits each. Students take 120 credits each year and will be required to have passed 360 credits to receive the full degree. Students must pass 120 credits each year to progress. The overall degree classification is based on grades achieved in year 2 and year 3.

In year two students choose one option in semester 1 and two options in semester 2. In year three students choose two options in semester 1 and two options in semester 2.

Not all option modules will run, and this will be based on student demand and resource availability. Modifications may be made to the course in line with our [Course Development and Approval Policy](#).

Timetables

Timetables are made available at enrolment. While every effort is made to make the timetables as student friendly as possible classes could be timetabled any time between 9am-6pm, Monday – Friday (9am -8pm at BIMM London only). Classes may also be at different BIMM buildings depending on tutor and resource availability.

On average, full time students will have around 8-10 class contact hours per week.

Year Structure

Years at BIMM Institute are divided into two 15-week semesters of which 12 weeks are dedicated to teaching. The academic year usually starts late September/early October and runs until the end of June.

Covid-19 Adjustments

Due the current situation some modules may be taught online. This may affect contact hours noted in this document and some assessments may be adapted for online delivery. More details can be found here: <https://www.bimm.ac.uk/study/applicants/>

Workload

	Average Number of Assessments	Average Expected Hours of Student Effort Per Assessment
Year 1: Semester 1	5	20
Year 1: Semester 2	5	20
Year 2: Semester 1	6	20
Year 2: Semester 2	7	17
Year 3: Semester 1	6	27
Year 3: Semester 2	9	18

	Average Contact Time (Hours Per Year)	Average Self-Directed Study Time (Hours Per Year)
Year 1 (Level 4)	248	952
Year 2 (Level 5)	248	952
Year 3 (Level 6)	200	1000

All details above are provided for guidance only but are believed to be accurate at the time of writing. Average figures will differ from course to course and will depend on the option modules chosen.

Assessments

Practical Exams

Practical exams ask you to demonstrate a practical skill under exam conditions. These practical skills could include things such as your ability to play your instrument, your ability to perform in an ensemble setting or your ability to produce a recording or operate hardware/software. The skill being tested will depend on the module and course being taken. Many practical assessments also contain a viva voce where the examiner will ask you questions regarding your exam and the related subject area.

Written exams

Many students will be familiar with this type of assessment. Written exams at BIMM are often used for theory and listening modules and are sat under exam conditions. For more details on exam conditions please refer to [Section 16: BIMM Institute Academic Regulations](#)

Practical coursework

Practical coursework often asks you to demonstrate a practical skill but, unlike practical exams, you work on the assessment piece in self-directed study time and hand in the final assessment for marking. Examples of this type of assessment include writing a song or mixing a recording.

Multimedia coursework/ Portfolio Assessments

Multimedia coursework contains a mixture of elements some written and some practical. An example of this type of assessment is creating a 3-page newspaper layout containing text and visual elements. On some courses, you may have to do portfolio assessments which you compile a mixture of audio/visual and written elements together this is usually done using online portfolio software.

Written coursework

Written course work is used in all BIMM courses and can take several forms.

- Research essays – in these assessments you will be expected to conduct research into the chosen topic. This could include secondary research (reading) or primary research (conducting original research such as focus groups/questionnaires etc.). You will then be required to write an essay based on this research, putting forward clear and concise arguments.
- Reflective essays – in these assessments you are required to reflect on your professional practice or development activities and identify areas for improvement. These essays do require you to engage in adequate research which will depend on what the subject of the reflective essay is.

- Dissertation/ Final year project – most courses have a large final year project which is double weighted. This is usually a combination of detailed research and reflective elements. Most courses require you to undertake an active project as the subject of your dissertation and this project is normally agreed with your tutor.
- Blog assessments – these assessments require you to submit regular written tasks normally to an online blog which are then combined to form the final assessment submission. These written tasks contain a mixture of reflective and research elements.
- Patchwork Text Assessments – these assessments are constructed from smaller written tasks given to the student throughout the year. The student then combines these smaller written tasks and submits them along with a final piece of writing that links the tasks together. These written tasks could be research or reflection based.
- Case Study – these assessments require you to research and write about a specific entity or section of the industry related to your course. For example, a case study of a record Label would require you to look at how the company works, what has made them successful etc.

In some cases, an assessment may combine two or more of these types of written work.

Presentations

In these assessments, you will be asked to make a planned presentation to an assessor or panel of assessors. Some presentation assignments ask you to reflect on your practice on the course while others are more academically focused and require you to engage in rigorous research.

Teaching and learning

Teaching

BIMM encourages its staff to employ a wide range of learning and teaching techniques. We provide training for new staff and many of our tutors are qualified teachers as well as industry professionals.

Most lessons will be in classes of 10-25 students however this will depend on the number of students that apply for a course and the resources that are available at the BIMM College you are applying to.

There are some larger lectures for bigger modules which are shared across multiple courses. These classes are delivered in a more traditional university lecture style to large groups of students.

For more detail on the teaching and Learning methods BIMM employs please see our [Learning and Teaching Strategy](#).

Self-directed study

All courses at BIMM have self-directed study hours associated with them. During this time, you are expected to be engaging in appropriate learning activities for your course. This could include practicing your instrument, conducting research, writing assignments and preparing for upcoming classes.

Formative Assessment

BIMM has a number of mechanisms for formative assessment which allow you to gain feedback before the final exam or coursework deadline.

Many modules have formative assignments built into them. In some cases, these are ungraded and are there purely so you can improve your final submission. Some modules use graded formative assessment, in these cases the formative assessment is only worth a small percentage of your final mark.

In-class activities are also used as an opportunity to provide feedback to students. During lessons, there are often opportunities to receive feedback from peers as well as the tutors and some lessons are heavily focused toward providing students who perform or present their work with feedback to help them improve.

Students can also take advantage of BIMM's tutorial system to gain additional feedback. The tutorial system allows you to book 1 to 1 sessions with tutors. You can use these sessions to gain specific feedback on any aspect of your work.

Work based Learning

The BA (hons) Event Management, BA (hons) Music Journalism and BA (hons) Music Business contain modules that require you to undertake work based learning.

During the second year of these courses you are expected to undertake a work experience placement for a minimum of 40 hours.

BIMM offers support in finding placements but students are responsible for arranging this work experience themselves in an area relevant to the course they are studying. If you choose a placement that is not local, you may incur travel costs. Most internships in the music industry are unpaid but you may be able to negotiate the paying of travel expenses.

Staff

BIMM is proud of its long history of employing music industry professionals to teach at all our colleges. We believe that through this practice we provide the best opportunities to our students to learn from tutors who understand their goals and have the knowledge and experience necessary to help make them a reality.

More information can be found regarding our tutors on our [staff page](#).

Unfortunately, BMM cannot guarantee which tutor will be teaching on individual modules as this will depend on tutor availability and when classes are timetabled.

Sometimes tutors are granted leave to engage in industry activities such as going on tour, conducting research or other professional development activities. This is vital to ensure that our tutors can give students the most current information, and share recent experiences, regarding a music industry that is constantly evolving and expanding into new areas.

Whenever a tutor goes on leave, whether it is due to industry activities or unavoidable factors such as illness or maternity leave, BIMM endeavours to ensure that lessons are covered by an industry professional with relevant experience in the subject. Through this practice, we aim to provide high quality learning opportunities throughout your course of study at BIMM.

Language

All qualifications at BIMM are taught and assessed in English

Costs

Tuition fees

Accurate tuition fees information can be found on our [finance page](#).

Proof of Student Loan or other funding body's acceptance of funding for the tuition fees, together with extent of funding provided must be received by BIMM Institute on or before 15th August. If such funding doesn't cover the full cost of your course of study a payment for the outstanding amount must be received by 15th August.

If you do not intend to apply for or are not eligible for a student loan/grant fees must be paid in full by 15th August.

Payment can be paid via debit/credit card at www.bimm.co.uk/pay or via bank transfer.

Any queries related to finance can be directed towards Financeenquiries@bimm.co.uk.

Additional Costs

Students who are thinking of applying to BIMM should read the [Essential Equipment](#) document which outlines what is required to successfully study at BIMM.

Most BIMM Colleges provide a limited number of rehearsal rooms, and free access to rehearsal facilities in local venues, unfortunately these can become fully booked at peak times and, at some colleges, are not available outside BIMM opening hours. Depending on when you want to rehearse and the frequency with which you want to rehearse you may need to pay for private rehearsal space.

Accommodation and Living Costs

Information about accommodation and living cost at each BIMM college can be found on the [Essential Documents](#) page.

Disabled Access

BIMM Berlin

At BIMM Berlin the main teaching building is wheelchair accessible, however, occasionally we may use external spaces for some lessons or events, which may not be accessible. If you require wheelchair access every effort will be made to arrange teaching spaces that are accessible.

BIMM Birmingham

All teaching buildings at BIMM Birmingham are wheelchair accessible.

BIMM Brighton

At BIMM Brighton the majority of teaching buildings are wheelchair accessible. However, our BIMM East building is currently not wheelchair accessible, this mainly affects Music Production courses. If you require wheelchair access every effort will be made to arrange different rooms that are accessible.

BIMM Bristol

All teaching buildings at BIMM Bristol are Wheelchair accessible, however some class rooms are not accessible, students who wish to study either Professional Musicianship (Drums) or Music Production are advised to apply to a different BIMM college if they require wheelchair access.

BIMM London

The main teaching building at BIMM London is wheelchair accessible. Our smaller second building offers full access to the student café – however, a small number of tutorial and lecture rooms are not wheelchair accessible. If you require wheelchair access every effort will be made to arrange different rooms that are accessible.

BIMM Manchester

All teaching buildings at BIMM Manchester are wheelchair accessible



For more information and details of how to apply for support please see our student disability guides (<http://www.bimm.co.uk/student-disability-guides/>)