

Music

Music is a universal means of human artistic and cultural expression, essential for the wellbeing of individuals and communities throughout the world.

The teaching of music at SOAS recognises no geographical, cultural or social boundaries: however, you will study in depth the music of specific regions of Africa, Asia and the Middle East as well as their African diasporas.

You will also study at least one instrument or vocal style from these or related regions, learning directly from one of our expert teachers.

Music students benefit from being part of the School of Arts, with modules that cross the disciplines of Music, English and History of Art and Archaeology, emphasising a combined approach to theory and practice. No other university in the world offers such a range of teaching or such a concentration of research specialists in these areas.

Music is an ideal lens through which to study human culture and experience, and SOAS offers a unique environment in which to do so.

Structure and assessment

Students take taught modules to the value of 120 credits per year – unless stated otherwise, with an Independent Study Project in their final year.

Minimum entry requirements

BMus Music

A-Levels: AAB - ABB (A level Music or equivalent and excluding General Studies)

IB: 35 with 6/6/5 at Higher level, (including Higher Level Music)

BA Music and...

A-Levels: AAB - ABB (excluding General Studies), IB: 35 with 6/6/5 at Higher level.

A level Music is not required for the combined Music programme, but evidence of both academic ability and active involvement in musical performance or composition is essential.

BA Global Popular Music

A-Levels ABB-BBB (excluding General Studies), IB: 33 points with 5/5/5 at Higher level.

See p160 for more on entry requirements, application assessment, Widening Participation and joint degrees.

English language requirement

Overall IELTS grade of 6.5 with 6.5 in writing and speaking and 6.0 in reading and listening. Visit www.soas.ac.uk/english-requirements for alternative acceptable qualifications.

Duration

Three years, or four years when combined with another subject.

Skills gained

A degree in Music prepares you for a wide range of careers in a variety of sectors including performance, the media, (including radio and television), teaching, arts administration, music librarianship, publishing, marketing, record companies and production, and music research.

Employers will be looking for highly skilled recruits. A music programme does not just teach you a body of facts, but also a range of skills, for example:

- the practical skills of learning music and performance including global genres
- learning languages through music
- the intellectual skills of examining theoretical understanding
- various transferable skills such as research, analysis, communication, teamwork, problem solving, time management, organisation, sound recording, and radio script writing and presenting; interviewing.

What do Music graduates do?

Composer
Professional performance
Music journalism and research (print, radio, television, film)
Music education (school teachers and university lecturers)
Doctoral and post-doc research
Archivist, Curator, Producer
Consultant to Music Charities & NGOs
Production and Programming for music venues and festivals
Music Therapy

Employers include

UNESCO
British Library
Music Without Borders
Roundhouse
Barbican Centre
Sony (UK)
Microsoft
BBC Radio 3
British Forum for Ethnomusicology
Méér Muziek in de Klas (Netherlands);
British Council; Goethe Institute (Tunis);



It was the discovery of my mother's old guitar in the attic, which began a snowball effect. Originally, I wanted to become a physicist or engineer, but becoming blind during my teens prevented me from pursuing these ambitions, yet musical instruments combined physics and engineering with musical expression. This became my passion.

I taught myself to play guitar and bass, and most other instruments I could lay my hands on in subsequent years. Over time, owning one instrument became three, and grew into a collection close to 100 different musical instruments from all over the world, far too many to be able to choose a favourite.

It was only after coming to the UK in 2013, that I decided to return to education.

SOAS teaches music from a wide range of regions and their diasporas. My particular interest is the subject of musical migration, which ties in closely with my longstanding love for the Blues. My goal is to see how far I can get academically. I would like to take a Masters at SOAS, and then eventually a PhD.

Ruud Bemelmans
BA Music



Taught Programmes

- BA in Global Popular Music
- BMUS Music
- BA Music and...



More Information

www.soas.ac.uk/music



BA Global Popular Music

UCAS code: W301

This unique degree is designed for students who are keen to pursue music studies, but may not musical qualifications, to learn about global musical cultures and industries. The degree includes regional modules that build on the expertise of SOAS staff in music in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, world music performance, practical skills modules in multimedia, approaches to the study of popular music, and opportunities for directed independent study projects on topics ranging from K-Pop to hip-hop, Latin dance music to Rai.

Structure (Typical course content)

Core modules

Year 1

Students take six introductory modules plus 30 credits of open option modules.

Year 1 modules listed below:

- Global Pop (15 credits)
- Music and Culture (15 credits)
- Performance 1b (15 credits)
- Sounds and Cultures (15 credits)
- Studying Popular Music (15 credits)
- Performance 1a (15 credits)
- Great Works: Recordings, Objects, Films (15 credits)

Year 2

Students take one compulsory module (listed below), plus 75 credits from the listed additional modules, and up to 30 credits from our open option modules.

- The Music Business (15 credits)

Year 3

Students take two compulsory modules, plus 60 credits from the listed additional modules, and 30 credits from our list of open options.

- Arts, Culture and Commodification: Themes in the Global Creative and Cultural Industries (15 credits)
- Urban Soundscapes (15 credits)

Additional modules

- Atlantic Africa: (P)Layers of Mediation in African Popular Music (15 credits)
- Classical Singing in India: Continuity and Change (15 credits)
- Jerusalem: Soundscapes of Nation and Conflict (15 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in South Asia (15 credits)
- Music of Central Asia (15 credits)
- Music in Africa: Musical crosscurrents in East

- Africa and the Indian Ocean (15 credits)
- Music in Africa: Critical Listening - The Mande World (15 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in the Middle East and North Africa (15 credits)
- Musical Traditions of East Asia (15 credits)
- Pop and Politics in East Asia (15 credits)
- Popular and Fusion Music in South East Asia (15 credits)
- Raga: Concept and Practice (15 credits)
- The World of Cuban Music (15 credits)
- Arts, Culture and Commodification: Themes in the Global Creative and Cultural Industries (15 credits)
- Composition (15 credits)
- Curating Global Arts (15 credits)
- Critical Readings in Arts and Cultures (15 credits)
- Gender and Music (15 credits)
- Global Hip-Hop (15 credits)
- Introduction to Sound Recording (15 credits)
- Music, Shamanism and Healing (15 credits)
- Presenting World Music on Radio (15 credits)
- The Music Business (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in Music 1 (15 credits)
- Performance 2 (15 credits)
- Performance 3 (30 credits)

For the most up to date and relevant list of modules please visit our webpage: www.soas.ac.uk/music/programmes/ba-in-global-popular-music/

BMUS Music

UCAS code: W300

This programme provides a unique opportunity to study the musical traditions of Asia, Africa and the Middle East, and their global diasporas. Students are taught the principles of ethnomusicology with thematic, vocational, and regional courses covering a variety of musical genres and traditions. Performance is a central component of the degree.

In years 2 and 3 students are encouraged to focus on the music of specific regions and to consider cross-regional themes. BMus Students have the opportunity to develop expertise in a great variety of musical performance traditions, and they may also take up to 30 credits of music modules at Kings College London.

Structure (Typical course content)

Core modules

Year 1

Students take the 6 compulsory 15 credit modules (90 credits in total). The remaining 30 credits may be an open option module or a music module at King's College London.

- Introduction to Music Analysis (15 credits)
- Great Works: Recordings, Objects, Films (15 credits)
- Music and Culture (15 credits)
- Performance 1a (15 credits)
- Performance 1b (15 credits)
- Sounds and Cultures (15 credits)

The remaining 30 credits may be an open option from another SOAS department.

Year 2

Students take the compulsory 15 credit module Ethnomusicology Themes & Variations. They must also take 30 credits chosen from the 'Area modules' list. Remaining credits can be selected from any of the groups with up to 30 credits from an open option module or music modules at King's College London.

Year 3

Students take the compulsory 15 credit module Urban Soundscapes. They must also take 30 credits chosen from the 'Area modules' list below. Remaining credits can be selected from any of the module groups with up to 30 credits from an open option module or music modules at King's College London.

Optional modules

Year 1

- Studying Popular Music (15 credits)

Years 2 and 3

Area modules

- Atlantic Africa: (P)Layers of Mediation in African Popular Music (15 credits)
- Classical Singing in India: Continuity and Change (15 credits)
- Jerusalem: Soundscapes of Nation and Conflict (15 credits)
- Klezmer Music: Roots and Revival (15 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in South Asia (15 credits)
- Music and Religion in South East Asia (15 credits)
- Music of Central Asia (15 credits)
- Music in Africa: Musical crosscurrents in East Africa and the Indian Ocean (15 credits)
- Music in Africa: Critical Listening - The Mande World (15 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in the Middle East and North Africa (15 credits)
- Musical Traditions of East Asia (15 credits)
- Pop and Politics in East Asia (15 credits)
- Popular and Fusion Music in South East Asia (15 credits)
- Raga: Concept and Practice (15 credits)
- The World of Cuban Music (15 credits)

General modules

- Arts, Culture and Commodification: Themes in the Global Creative and Cultural Industries (15 credits)
- Composition (15 credits)

- Curating Global Arts (15 credits)
- Critical Readings in Arts and Cultures (15 credits)
- Gender and Music (15 credits)
- Global Hip-Hop (15 credits)
- Introduction to Sound Recording (15 credits)
- Music, Shamanism and Healing (15 credits)
- Presenting World Music on Radio (15 credits)
- The Music Business (15 credits)

Project modules

- Extended Essay in Music 1 (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in Music 2 (15 credits)
- Independent Study Project in Music – Year 3 only (30 credits)

Performance modules

- Performance 2 (15 credits)
- Performance 3 (30 credits)

BA Music and...

May be combined with

African Studies	WT35
Arabic+	TW63
Chinese+	TW13
Development Studies	LW93
History	VW13
History of Art/Archaeology	VW33
Japanese+	TW23
Japanese Studies	TW2H
Korean+	TWLH
Korean Studies	TW43
Middle Eastern Studies	TW6H
Social Anthropology	LW63
South Asian Studies++ (3 years)	WTH3
South Asian Studies++ (4 years)	TW33
South East Asian Studies	WTHH
Religions	VW63
World Philosophies	W302

+ 4-year degree with (compulsory) 1 year abroad
++ 3- or 4-year degree with option of 1 year abroad

This two-subject module allows more scope for studying language or other non-musical aspects of particular cultures.

Please note: when doing a joint degree of Music and Language, some language programmes (eg Chinese) require 90 credits in language in year one, leaving only 30 credits for music. With a second year abroad, students will have to catch up on the music component in their third year back at SOAS.

Structure

(Typical course content)

Core modules

Year 1

- Introduction to Music Analysis (15 credits)
- Music and Culture (15 credits)
- Sounds and Cultures (15 credits)

PLUS

EITHER

- Performance 1a (15 credits)

OR

- Performance 1b (15 credits)

Year 2

Students take the compulsory 15 credit module Ethnomusicology Themes & Variations. They must also take 30 credits chosen from the 'Area modules' list. Remaining credits can be selected from any of the groups listed below, with up to 30 credits from an open option module or music module at King's College London.

Year 3

Students take the compulsory 15 credit module Urban Soundscapes. They must also take at least 15 credits chosen from the 'Area modules' list. Remaining credits can be selected from any of the groups with up to 30 credits from an open option course, or music courses at King's College London.

Optional modules

Years 2 and 3

Area modules

- Atlantic Africa: (P)Layers of Mediation in African Popular Music (30 credits)
- Classical Singing in India: Continuity and Change (15 credits)
- Jerusalem: Soundscapes of Nation and Conflict (15 credits)
- Klezmer Music: Roots and Revival (15 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in South Asia (15 credits)
- Music and Religion in South East Asia (15 credits)
- Music of Central Asia (15 credits)
- Music in Africa (30 credits)
- Music, Religion and Society in the Middle East and North Africa (15 credits)
- Musical Traditions of East Asia (15 credits)
- Pop and Politics in East Asia (15 credits)
- Popular and Fusion Music in South East Asia (15 credits)
- Raga: Concept and Practice (15 credits)
- The World of Cuban Music (15 credits)
- Mughal Arts: Sound, Text, and Image (15 credits)
- Music and travel on the Silk Road

- Music in Africa: Critical Listening – The Mande World (15 credits)
- Music in Africa: Musical Crosscurrents in East Africa and the Indian Ocean (15 credits)

General modules

- Arts, Culture and Commodification: Themes in the Global Creative and Cultural Industries (15 credits)
- Composition (15 credits)
- Critical Readings in Arts and Cultures (15 credits)
- Curating Global Arts (15 credits)
- Directed Study in Creative Industries (15 credits)
- Gender and Music (15 credits)
- Global Hip-Hop (15 credits)
- Introduction to Sound Recording (15 credits)
- Music, Shamanism and Healing (15 credits)
- Presenting World Music on Radio (15 credits)
- The Music Business (15 credits)

Project modules

- Extended Essay in Music 1 (15 credits)
- Extended Essay in Music 2 (15 credits)
- Independent Study Project in Music (30 credits)

Performance modules

- Performance 2 (15 credits)
- Performance 3 (30 credits)