

## **DSA Study Needs Assessment**

Course information for assessors: BA (Hons) Music (Classical)

### **Course Overview**

The BA (Hons) Music (Classical) degree is usually studied over three years. Students will study Western classical music and its relationship to contemporary practice, alongside jazz, popular music, world music and music technology. The BA (Hons) Music (Classical) degree consists of three strands, Specialist Study, Contextual Studies and Professional Studies, with students receiving individual study tuition and ensemble group tuition in their chosen primary study of either performance or composition. There are approximately 16 guided learning hours per teaching week and students are advised they should undertake at least a further ten hours of private study.

### **Methods of Assessment**

In all three years, modules are assessed through a combination of submissions that range from performance tests, recitals, harmony and analysis worksheets and written essays. Work may also be expected as a Mahara portfolio (e.g. critical listening).

### **IT Hardware and Software**

Teaching may be via the Microsoft Windows platform or Apple Mac computers. Currently there are two types of iMacs in use. The majority of Apple hardware at the conservatoire is made up of iMac M1 Chip 8-Core CPU + 8-Core GPU, 16GB RAM and 2TB SSD storage models, supplemented by Mac Studio M1 Max 10-core CPU + 24-core GPU models with 32GB RAM and 4TB SSD storage. The essential core music software package in use on the Classical pathway is Avid Sibelius Educational (musical score writing software). Students can work on either Microsoft or Apple platforms when using Sibelius as the files are interchangeable. Logic Pro (music recording and arranging software) may be used, depending on the choices of shared modules that the student makes. Students on combined pathways (e.g. combined Classical and Production) use Logic.

We have a number of Apple Mac and PC computer suites that students can access throughout the conservatoire. These facilities are available until 3am on weekdays and during the daytime at weekends.

Due to the restricted networking capabilities of Apple products and software licensing restrictions, Leeds Conservatoire is unable to provide students with individual licenses of all the course-specific software that they require for their pathway of study. All students are expected to take advantage of in-house facilities as much as possible to complete their studies during term-time, as these facilities are of a professional standard across the conservatoire. These facilities are provided in-house so each student is not required to own an Apple Mac at a professional level specification to run all of the additional software and hardware needed.

Students with learning difficulties/conditions that affect their working memory, co-ordination, focus or information processing speed often experience extra difficulty in reading music, accurately handwriting musical scores or inputting information into music writing software Sibelius, and coping with the high density multiple screen setup of information in professional music software like Logic Pro. This is similar to the difficulties experienced when producing word-processed written work, and the process of working with music goes alongside working with other written information as a core part of the learning process on this course. Mental health or other difficulties causing concentration problems can also make specialist music software more difficult to use due to the volume and complexity of information the user is required to input and manipulate.

This course involves a significant amount of moving between different studios and performance venues in and out of the conservatoire, and for this reason, we have found that many of our disabled students benefit from having a laptop to allow them to access their assistive technology and course materials on the move.

Music software applications use a large amount of memory, particularly when run concurrently with accessibility software, so extra RAM may be required to avoid slowing down the operating speed of any DSA recommended computer system. It is preferable to specify a machine with a smaller core hard drive but greater additional memory rather than vice versa, as music software uses a large amount of RAM on its own.

For notetaking and lecture recording purposes, a digital recording device with a built-in two-way microphone is recommended as a useful aid to learning to enable the recording of music excerpts used alongside orally and visually presented information in lectures.

All course information and lecture notes are accessed only via Space, the online Virtual Learning Environment. The majority of assignments are submitted online via the VLE and use of the internet for research is also required.

Further information on the support available at Leeds Conservatoire is available on our website: <https://www.leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/student-life/student-support/disability-support/>

### **Contact information**

The Disability Support Team is located in the Student Support room (4th floor) of the Leeds Conservatoire St Peter's Square building.

Email: [disability@leedsconservatoire.ac.uk](mailto:disability@leedsconservatoire.ac.uk)