

# **Reid School of Music – PhD application guidelines**

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## **Application guidelines for PhD - Music**

Follow the 'Apply now' links from the Degree Finder page to understand the layout of the online application form at an early stage. You can follow this link without committing to an application.

The 'Programme' section of the online application form asks for a personal statement. This should describe your suitability for and your expectations of a degree here with us. You are also asked to detail your qualifications and relevant prior experience, to give a summary of your proposed research project, and to name your proposed supervisors.

In order to provide this information in the application form, you will need to have prepared your main research proposal, which should be around 2,000 to 3,000 words. This is uploaded as part of the online application.

### **What does the proposal need to say?**

**AIMS:** Succinctly and clearly explain your aims and objectives. Identify a particular research question or area of concern prompting this research and convey its significance.

**CONTEXT:** Convey the intellectual, academic and artistic context of the research question(s) or concerns. Provide a bibliography of relevant scholarly literature and other key research resources.

**METHODS:** Explain the research processes and methods that you will apply. Indicate why they are the most appropriate and, if relevant, most innovative methods.

**IMPACT:** Explain how your research may have academic and artistic impact and/or social and economic impact. (What is 'impact'? See <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts/>)

**CLARITY:** Ensure that your proposal is succinct, clearly written and free of jargon (it should be readily understood by a non-expert).

### **(How) should I work with my prospective supervisor?**

Your research proposal is the key that allows Music staff to understand your intentions and readiness for a research degree. The best research proposals are developed through several drafts.

If you begin a dialogue with your prospective supervisor before applying, they may ask to see your proposal. They may offer you feedback. If they are willing to look at a further draft they may want to see how well you have understood and applied their advice.

The decision about when (or whether) to submit the formal application is yours.

If you have not already had personal contact with your prospective supervisor(s) before you apply, an interview (which can be held on Zoom or Skype) may be required before a decision can be made.

## Application guidelines for Music - PhD Creative Practice

Follow the 'Apply now' links from the Degree Finder page to understand the layout of the online application form at an early stage. You can follow this link without committing to an application.

The 'Programme' section of the online application form asks for a personal statement. This should describe your suitability for and your expectations of a degree here with us. You are also asked to detail your qualifications and relevant prior experience, to give a summary of your proposed research project, and to name your proposed supervisors.

In order to provide this information in the application form, you will need to have prepared your main research proposal (of around 2,000 words). Creative Practice PhD applications require a written proposal as well as a portfolio. Research proposal document(s) are uploaded as part of the online application.

### What should the written proposal include?

**AIMS:** Succinctly and clearly explain your aims and objectives. Identify a particular research question or area of concern prompting this research and convey its significance.

**CONTEXT:** Convey the artistic, intellectual, and academic context of the research question(s) or concerns. Provide a bibliography of relevant scholarly literature and other key research resources.

**METHODS:** Explain the research processes and methods that you will use. Indicate why they are the most appropriate and, if relevant, most innovative methods. Outline the techniques and exemplars that will guide your non-textual output.

**IMPACT:** Explain how your work might have academic, artistic or social impact – to whom do you expect it to be most useful? (See <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts/> to understand why and how the UK Research Councils talk about 'impact'.)

**CLARITY:** Ensure that your proposal is succinct, clearly written and free of jargon (it should be readily understood by a non-expert).

Creative Practice applications must also include a **portfolio of work** which should be available online either in the form of your own website/blog or as a downloadable PDF file stored in the cloud. You can include this link in the written proposal document.

### What should the portfolio of work include?

The portfolio should include **three pieces of composition or examples of work** related to your proposed field of study, and a **short piece of written output** to indicate the quality of your written language. This portfolio should convey the research values and methods of your work to date, and should be relatable to the ideas outlined in your proposal. The portfolio should include representative examples of work undertaken as part of a formal programme of study, any work carried out while in practice, and self-initiated projects

undertaken outside formal studies. As such, the portfolio can also provide corroborating evidence of your professional experience, as well as independent research thinking.

**(How) should I work with my prospective supervisor?**

Your research proposal/portfolio has to communicate your intentions; it will also indicate your readiness for a research degree, and your suitability for our particular department. The best research proposals are developed through several drafts.

If you begin a dialogue with your prospective supervisor before applying, they may ask to see your proposal/portfolio. They may offer you feedback. If they are willing to look at a further draft they may want to see how well you have understood and applied their advice. The decision about when (or whether) to submit the formal application is yours.

If you have not already had personal contact with your prospective supervisor(s) before you apply, an interview (which can be held on Zoom or Skype) may be required before a decision can be made.

BT 11 March 2022

## Application guidelines for Music - PhD Musical Composition

Follow the 'Apply now' links from the Degree Finder page to understand the layout of the online application form at an early stage. You can follow this link without committing to an application.

The 'Programme' section of the online application form asks for a personal statement. This should describe your suitability for and your expectations of a degree here with us. You are also asked to detail your qualifications and relevant prior experience, to give a summary of your proposed research project, and to name your proposed supervisors.

In order to provide this information in the application form, you will need to have prepared a proposal, or around 1,500 to 2,000 words, which sets out what you aim to undertake as part of your doctoral studies. Musical Composition PhD applications require this written proposal as well as a portfolio of your musical compositions. These documents are uploaded as part of the online application.

### What do the proposal and portfolio need to include?

Composition applications must include a **portfolio of work** which should be available online either in the form of your own website/blog or as downloadable files stored in the cloud. You can include this link in the written proposal document.

The portfolio is the most important part of the application for the PhD in Musical Composition. Members of the admissions panel will study your portfolio to understand how they might work with you, and how you might benefit from the PhD. Please take utmost care in selecting and presenting your compositions, offering the admissions panel an opportunity to appreciate your stylistic and creative development, range of skills and potential.

To prepare the **written proposal**, consider the following:

**AIMS:** Succinctly and clearly explain your aims and objectives. Identify a particular research question or area of creative focus prompting this proposed project of work, and convey its significance.

**CONTEXT:** Convey the artistic, intellectual, and academic context of the project.

**METHODS:** Explain the creative processes and methods that you will use, and how you intend to develop them. Indicate why they are the most appropriate and, if relevant, most innovative methods. Outline the techniques and exemplars that will guide your compositional output.

**IMPACT:** Explain how your work might have academic, artistic or social impact – to whom do you expect it to be most useful? (See <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/innovation/impacts/> to understand why and how the UK Research Councils talk about 'impact'.)

**CLARITY:** Ensure that your proposal is succinct, clearly written and free of jargon (it should be readily understood by a non-expert).

### **What should the portfolio of work include?**

The portfolio should include **three to five substantial pieces of composition**. It should indicate the values and methods of your work to date. The focus of the portfolio should be on your best and most recent work. It should include representative examples of work undertaken as part of a formal programme of study, any work carried out while in practice, and self-initiated projects undertaken outside formal studies. The portfolio may also provide corroborating evidence of your professional experience, as well as independent creative thinking. It can contain music in any format, as scores, recordings or other creative content.

### **(How) should I work with my prospective supervisor?**

Your research proposal/portfolio has to communicate your intentions; it will also indicate your readiness for doctoral study, and your suitability for our particular department.

If you begin a dialogue with your prospective supervisor before applying, they may ask to see your proposal/portfolio. They may offer you feedback. If they are willing to look at a further draft they may want to see how well you have understood and applied their advice. The decision about when (or whether) to submit the formal application is yours.

If you have not already had personal contact with your prospective supervisor(s) before you apply, an interview (which may be held on Zoom or Skype) may be required before a decision can be made.

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