

NORDOFF ROBBINS DOCTORAL PROGRAMME

FAQS

1. Do I need to be a UK national in order to apply for the programme?

The programme is open to anyone of any nationality who has completed an appropriate professionally recognised training (see Prospectus). We currently have students on the programme who are nationals of Norway, Germany and the US. Students from EU countries do not need a visa to study in the UK. Goldsmiths, University of London assist with visas for non-UK nationals for occasional study visits to the UK in order to fulfil the requirements of the programme.

If you are not resident in the UK you should, however, consider the additional time, expense and commitment that this will entail. Certain aspects of the programme require attendance in person at the Nordoff Robbins Centre in London. A contract is made on registration to attend a minimum number of programme events in person, with participation at other times by Skype.

2. Can I study for only the MPhil stage of the programme?

The title 'MPhil/PhD' represents a single, composite study programme (the norm in UK research degrees format). There is a required transfer process (usually after 24 months) between the MPhil status to which you initially register and the full PhD status (see Section 4, **Student Progress**, in the Prospectus). However, we have designed this programme for candidates intending to work towards full PhD status, so it is not normally possible to do just the MPhil stage. If, however, your final thesis is not considered PhD standard, you may be offered an MPhil as the final award.

3. Must I have a Masters level degree in my professional field?

Read the entry criteria for the programme in Section 6 of the Prospectus. If you don't have the appropriate level of qualification, or it's in a different academic area this doesn't always mean you can't apply to the programme. But you will need to provide very convincing evidence that you are capable of working at the academic level of the programme and that your research area fits with the programme culture. You can talk to the Programme Convenor about this.

4. What evidence of my 'ability to pursue study at MPhil/PhD level' is considered appropriate?

You may, for example, be able to show evidence of designing and carrying out an informal pilot project related to the research area you now wish to pursue within the MPhil/PhD programme. Ideally this evidence would be substantiated by research or theoretical publications in a peer-reviewed journal or book. You may also be able to secure a recommendation of your suitability for the programme from an academic supervisor or co-professional you have worked with on a research-oriented project.

5. Why do I need to have worked for a minimum of 5 years after training before applying for the programme?

We describe this programme as 'practice-orientated' rather than a purely academic track. Most students on the programme are experienced practitioners in music therapy or an associated music practice who want to deepen their practice and thinking through a research pathway. In our experience it usually takes at least 5 years of practical experience after professional training in order to find confidence as a practitioner and locate a research area that you are genuinely interested in, and committed to. This usually assures that this research area will sustain your interest through the long period of a part-time doctoral programme (that can last up to 7 years). The '5 years' is a guideline not a rule, so again you can talk to the Programme Convenor about your personal situation.

6. Do I need prior research training and/or research experience?

The programme is primarily designed for candidates who have already developed some level of awareness and competence concerning basic research issues in the disciplinary fields covered by music therapy and music, health, society. This may be through a research module in a Masters-level training, or else through their personal reading and experience of colleagues doing research. However, in certain circumstances it may be possible for you to build up this necessary foundational level partly through the programme's Intensive Research Induction, along with guided individual study.

7. Can I use research I've already done (or publications I have already written) as part of the programme?

No. The programme requires that you develop a newly-established research project (though of course may often build on your past clinical / practical, theoretical and research achievements). However, no formal credit will be given for previous publications or completed research projects.

8. In which research areas does the programme specialise? Are there any areas that it does not cover?

The programme promotes a range of approaches to music therapy / music and health research, inspired by the research perspective of the Nordoff Robbins research tradition (see Prospectus, Section 1). However to some extent the limits of the research expertise and resources the programme can offer are determined by the practical, theoretical and methodological expertise of the current supervisory staff (see Prospectus). These supervisors cover a wide range of practical, theoretical and research interests in the music therapy / health / society field. If your areas of interest overlap with theirs, then this is probably a suitable choice for you. As with most courses you should certainly 'shop around' when looking for an appropriate place for your project.

9. What if the practical or research area I'm interested in as a researcher is not covered by the available supervisors to the programme?

In most cases it is likely that in research terms one of the available supervisors will be able to help you despite not necessarily having worked extensively in your specific area. In circumstances where this is not possible we will tell you.

10. What if my proposed methodology is not covered by the available supervisors to the programme?

Our response is the same. If we cannot provide the necessary level of expertise or research equipment you require then we will tell you and advise where possible on alternative programmes that may be more suitable for your needs.

11. Can I use my own research supervisor or current professional team with whom I'm working on an informal/pilot research project now?

No. Only the supervisors listed in Prospectus are approved by Goldsmiths, University of London to supervise students registered on the Nordoff Robbins programme. However, it may be possible to use additional research advisors for specialist areas of your research. This aspect would be open to discussion with your primary supervisor. It is usually better to begin a doctoral programme with a freshly-designed project (see also Answer 7 above).

12. Can I do the programme as a full-time candidate?

Although in principle the programme can be taken as both a full-time and part-time candidate we encourage you to take the part-time track in order to combine research with your ongoing clinical work as a practitioner or trainer.

13. How much time commitment will the programme entail as a part-time candidate, both at home in private study, and on the required attendance aspects at the Nordoff Robbins Centre, London?

For part-time status you normally need to spend 1-2 days per week private study on your research (in addition to any practical work you do as part of the research study). The number of days you spend will vary throughout the programme, depending on whether you are reading, designing a project, collecting data, or writing-up. Additionally, you are required to attend in person the research seminars at the Nordoff Robbins Centre in London four times a year (each seminar lasting two days, usually a Friday/Saturday, sometimes a Thursday/Friday). Individual supervisions happen usually about 4-6 times a year. The programme expects full-time candidates to devote five days a week for 48 weeks a year to a research degree programme.

14. Can I continue working and living somewhere else?

Yes. We encourage you to continue your practical work in a way that your research remains informed by practice, but which does not leave you with too little time or energy to pursue the research programme! If you are living in another country you must demonstrate that your plan to study on the programme is realistic and that you can be available to attend required seminars and supervisions in the UK along with other students.

15. Is any financial help available from Nordoff Robbins?

No. Nordoff Robbins has no specific funding for doctoral students and is not eligible as an independent non-university organisation for UK or international government-level postgraduate grants. Full funding for the programme must therefore be organised personally by students. Nordoff Robbins has kept programme fees low to help students.

Sometimes students obtain assistance from charitable trusts, or are sponsored by their workplace. Limited financial assistance is offered annually to students on the programme for relevant conference attendance or to assist with research-based travel costs.

16. English is not my first language. What problems will I have pursuing this programme? Is any language help provided by the programme?

Several current students are participating in the programme with English as their second language. The language of the final written thesis is English. So we need to make sure that you can cope with studying and writing at this level in English. As part of your application you will need to demonstrate your ability to pursue the programme in English – both written and spoken (see Prospectus, Section 6). If your application is short-listed you will be given a spoken interview to assess your level of spoken English. Whilst the training gives as much help as is possible to enable you to get the most from the programme, it is not able to address more basic problems of speaking / understanding / writing in English.

17. How much of Goldsmiths' student resources will be available to me on this validated programme?

Nordoff Robbins is a validated institution of Goldsmiths University of London but not a faculty of that university. Consequently, only the resources that we have negotiated for use as part of the validation of the Nordoff Robbins Research Degrees Programme will be available for use by students. This is typically quite enough for doctoral students (including full electronic library resources that can be accessed anywhere). Ask the Programme Convenor for more information about this if necessary.

18. What do I do first? Arrange the research, or apply to the programme?

We strongly advise that you first talk informally about your plans informally to the Programme Convenor. It would be unwise to begin planning your research in any practical way before this (e.g., putting a proposal through a Research Ethics Committee). The application process (see Prospectus, Section 6) is primarily designed for you to show your suitability for the academic level of the programme rather than to show that you already have a fully developed research project (this is usually gradually worked out during the first year of your study).

19. How difficult will it be to get onto the programme?

Goldsmiths requires that we take no more than six candidates onto this programme at any one time. This means that applications are necessarily competitive. We are committed to ensuring that the selection process will be as fair and transparent as possible.

20. For which degree award title do I qualify (PhD in Music Therapy, PhD in Music, Health, Society)?

The degree title is determined by two factors: one is the subject research area of your PhD work and the second is your professional qualification (see table below). Thus, a registered music therapist has both two access routes and two exit title possibilities, depending on the research subject area. This means that a *music therapist* undertaking research in the subject area of music, health, society leads to the degree title of *PhD in Music, Health Society*; whereas research in the music therapy subject leads to a *PhD in Music Therapy*. The same does not hold for a student without a music therapy entry qualification. Here, whatever their research subject area, only one exit title route is available, which is the *PhD in Music, Health, Society*.

TWO ACCESSES		ONE RESEARCH PROGRAMME		TWO TITLES
Masters' level * qualification in Music Therapy (*or equivalent)	➔	Provides support and guidance in doctoral level research in music therapy and music, health, society.	➔	MPhil/PhD in Music Therapy
Masters' level * qualification in music, health, society - related disciplines (*or equivalent)	➔		➔	MPhil/PhD in Music, Health, Society