

# Nordoff-Robbins

Master of Music Therapy:  
Music, Health, Society



Validated by  
**Goldsmiths**  
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Approved by  
**hpcp** health & care  
professions  
council

[nordoff-robbins.org.uk](http://nordoff-robbins.org.uk)

**NORDOFF  
ROBBINS**  
Enriching lives through music therapy



## Welcome to Nordoff Robbins Master of Music Therapy

A career in music therapy is a highly rewarding path for musicians to follow, using music in strategic ways to help the people who need it most in all sorts of places and contexts. Choosing the right place to study is an important decision, particularly as there is more than one approach to music therapy.

The Nordoff Robbins MMT programme is an internationally renowned Masters-level programme, validated by Goldsmiths, University of London, run from training bases in London and Manchester, and from 2019 in Newcastle (subject to HCPC approval and Goldsmiths validation). Successful completion of this two-year full time course gives you eligibility to apply to the Health and Care Professions Council for registration as a music therapist - the UK legal prerequisite for working in the profession.

Our prospectus is designed to give you a good overview of the Nordoff Robbins MMT programme, including the Nordoff Robbins approach, testimonials from former students, course requirements, and opportunities for career progression post-qualification.

Please do get in touch with us if you've any questions about the programme, or attend one of our open days – we look forward to hearing from you.

Dr Simon Procter  
MMT Programme Convenor



# Why study with Nordoff Robbins?

Training with us means joining the leaders in the field. We've been training music therapists since 1974 and we're also the largest single employer of music therapists in the UK after the NHS, so we know the skills that make music therapists employable. It's a world of rapid change; our services, training and research teams are closely linked, so our programme conveys the most up to date skills, training and thinking.

Through our Graduate Employment Scheme we aim to employ at least 50% of our graduates, and in recent years we have employed significantly more than this. The employment statistics of our alumni are outstanding and speak for themselves.

The Nordoff Robbins approach to music therapy is sometimes described as "music-centred". It is active and interactive – and while we are best known for our improvisational work, all forms of music-making can have a role. We see music therapy as socio-musical work – it requires a high level of musical awareness and skill and a wide-ranging

understanding of how music and music-making impact on a person's experience of health and wellbeing, individually, in groups and communally.

In training, we pay a great deal of attention to what people are doing musically and what their musical-relational experience might be. We work to equip our students with specific skills as well as a range of ways of using them. We provide both supervision and musicianship workshops in groups of no more than five people to ensure that everyone gets finely focused tuition. This results in a course that can be highly challenging and has high standards, but produces practitioners with real skills.

With us, you will learn effective ways to engage musically with people whose life experience, illness, disability or social exclusion makes it hard for them to participate in everyday life. You will develop musical-personal skills to engage with people both individually and in communal settings, helping them to access meaningful experiences and interactions with others.



## How do we teach you?

Each teaching base has its own tutors: they work as part of a national team headed by the Programme Convenor, who participates in teaching across all the bases. At Nordoff Robbins we have rich and diverse methods of training. You will benefit from theoretical studies to help you understand the core ethos behind the Nordoff Robbins approach to music therapy as well as broader, connected disciplines, and practical placement learning, which will be central to everything you do.

We provide dedicated supervision to support you through your practical work, giving you the confidence to develop your music therapy skills and your ability to perceptively analyse, and learn from your own music therapy practice.

We approach our learning with complete openness and we encourage our students to share and discuss their work with others, enriching everyone's

learning experience. We hold big group learning sessions where we can hear from guest speakers, but we also dedicate time to small and focused group learning.

Through the programme, we are dedicated to ensuring you will:

- Gain music therapy expertise to meet wide-ranging needs
- Learn from psychology, musicology, sociology, culture and health studies
- Learn about theoretical and research material from the music therapy field
- Gain the presentation skills to explain the impact of your work
- Gain entrepreneurial skills necessary for setting up and developing work
- Have an opportunity to connect with other professionals whose work overlaps with yours.

## What does our course look like?

The programme is divided into three parts of unequal length, across which you will:

- Spend two consecutive teaching days a week engaging in workshops, seminars and supervision
- Spend one day a week on a work placement at a school, hospital, hospice, mental health centre or other setting (there are three placements throughout the entire course)
- Have one day a week allocated for private study
- Attend four compulsory intensive weekends in training bases around the country

# Part one

One term - September to December

**Module 1:** A fully integrated foundation module introduces:

- The core concepts of the Nordoff Robbins approach
- The practicalities of working in a professional environment

During your Part One placement, you will be apprenticed to an experienced music therapist. You'll spend a full working day with them each week, during which you'll observe their sessions, joining in as appropriate, and even run your own sessions under their guidance, and learn and discuss their ways of working in that particular setting.

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# Part two

Three terms - January to December

**Module 2a:** Music Therapy Competencies and Knowledge – equips you for the practice of music therapy including:

- Gaining and consolidating basic skills in communicative and social musicianship
- Learning to make productive use of supervision
- An introduction to key literature, resources and concepts relating to the Nordoff Robbins approach.

**Module 2b:** Professional Competencies and Knowledge – equips you to practise music therapy in a variety of contexts and support the development of:

- Knowledge about people's pathologies and life situations
- Effective liaison with other practitioners and professionals
- Working in varied types of organisation with different values
- Communicating your work effectively in different contexts and to different audiences
- Essential academic skills, including an introduction to research.

**Module 2c:** Music, Health, Society: Practical and Critical Perspectives – equips you with a broad practice-based understanding of how music therapy fits with other forms of provision, including:

- Awareness of music therapy’s interface with the broader arts and health spectrum
- Developing the skills to maintain, develop and extend music therapy in the ever-changing work environment
- Public policy relating to the arts and health
- Understanding the “social turn” in music therapy, thinking about community and society and their role in people’s experience of health, illness, disability and exclusion.

Your Part Two placement runs for one day per week, for the full year. Over this time, you will work towards offering a music therapy service that is truly appropriate to the host institution and its service users. This requires considerable flexibility as well as thought and reflection.

A member of the host institution’s staff will be assigned to lend support as you develop the ability to work independently, display initiative and clear thinking around the value of music within the setting, and a real grasp of theoretical learning through this practical work. Your work will be supervised back at the training base each week and there is regular, effective communication between your placement supporter and your tutors.

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## Part three

Two terms - January to June

Part Three is divided into three modules – **3a, 3b and 3c**, which correspond to the modules in Part Two, but with a higher degree of understanding and competence, including the opportunity for you to conduct your own small research project.

At this stage, you will be taking those final, all-important steps to qualification, where you will need to demonstrate the understanding, skills and competencies you need to work as a professional music therapist.

For your Part Three placement you will get the exciting opportunity to set up your own music therapy provision in a new setting, where music therapy is not yet established. You will have the creative freedom to tailor the placement to suit your aspirations, choosing the location and the client group you wish to work with (subject to it meeting our approval criteria). We will help you all the way with this, and will come with you on the initial visit to support you and build good links.

Throughout the placement, you will have the chance to demonstrate the value of music therapy in this setting.

# Nordoff Robbins Graduates



## Louise Gregg

The centrality of music and people within the Nordoff Robbins approach is what made the MMT the right choice for me. The course was practical, thorough, robust, challenging and fulfilling at every turn, with music as the constant central point.

Having placements from the outset was so beneficial, as we could put everything we learned into real life contexts. Similarly, the weekly supervisions were excellent for coaching on specific moments from placement. Learning with and from the rest of the cohort was such a privilege, and valuable beyond words.

In addition to all of that, the greatest strength of the program is the tutors; they are highly skilled, and so insightful and committed to figuring out each student, to draw out their strengths. I have gone on a long process and grown so much over the two years, and I wouldn't have been able to do that without the tutors on the course. At the end of the program I felt fully equipped to apply for the graduate employment scheme with Nordoff Robbins, and am now excited to be working four days a week as part of the Nordoff Robbins family.

## Oliver Kluczewski

I took a professional side step and left the world of arts venues and music festivals to train as a music therapist. I wanted to work with people directly through music, and was attracted to the Nordoff Robbins approach – celebrating a person's potential, regardless of the challenges they may face. The training course lets you take musical leaps of the imagination, and experience music making like you never have before. You are on placement from the first week, working alongside professional music therapists, and musical immersion runs right through the training.

There is such a high standard of delivery and care for the work at Nordoff Robbins, and the tutors really want the best for you. One of the great things about the training, work and culture of music therapy is a sense of constant wonder and exploration. We are always learning and always developing our craft with the singular aim of being the best we can for the people we represent. I applied for the Graduate Scheme towards the end of my training, and I now work full time as a music therapist in a variety of settings.





## What else do we offer to support you?

We know that many of our students are active professional musicians and teachers with busy working schedules. Our flexible programme means you can continue to earn a living while you study. You will have:

- A choice of training locations; London and Manchester, with Newcastle starting in 2019 (subject to HCPC approval and Goldsmiths validation)
- Convenient placement locations: as the largest single employer of music therapists after the NHS, we have a huge national network to tap into when organising placements
- A flexible study timetable: each week you spend two consecutive days at your teaching base, a day on placement and have a day for private study.

We also have great facilities and opportunities to join in with broader musical life at our Nordoff Robbins bases, including:

- Fully equipped teaching rooms with a broad range of instruments, recording and presentation equipment

- A plentiful stock of core texts held at each teaching base
- Our 'Learning Resources Centre' at the London Centre with specialist music therapy library, and books on order at short notice for students elsewhere
- Access for all students to the exceptional library at Goldsmiths, University of London and remote access to Goldsmiths' electronic library – a huge resource which contains most of the relevant journals and other e-resources you will need
- Access to 'The Hub' - our student portal with teaching materials, where you can submit your assignments, use the designated 'private study' area, and connect with other students and tutors
- Being part of the Nordoff Robbins community: wherever you are based, you will be welcomed into our local and national "family", with opportunities for involvement in journal clubs, music-making, organisation-wide events and fundraising activities.



# Opportunities for career progression post-qualification

We are passionate about training people, and we want to grow the availability of high-quality music therapy services across the UK. We really want our graduates to go and build successful careers as music therapists, and we are currently committed to employing at least 50% of our graduates – growing our services across the UK. In addition, our graduates work across a wide range of education, health, community and

social services, while some work in a self-employed capacity and others set up their own businesses.

There are opportunities for qualified music therapists to specialise in research or teaching, and with experience, to supervise other music therapists and take up managerial roles. We give you the tools you need to work effectively as musicians for people, to enable you to take your career in all sorts of directions.

## What kind of people are we looking for?

We welcome applications from musicians of all ages and from all musical backgrounds. Life experience is an advantage! You don't have to be classically trained, and you don't necessarily need to be able to read musical notation – but you do need a good ear, good musical awareness, a readiness and ability to go in unexpected directions and beyond your musical comfort zone, and the ability to accompany someone and lead them in a new musical direction. This requires a blend of personal and musical attributes, as well as the ability to think independently and effective writing skills.

In your application, we want you to show us that you are:

- A competent musician – with a standard of playing equivalent to at least Grade 8 on your first instrument. If this is not a harmony instrument, you need a standard equivalent to

Grade 6 on a harmony instrument. A good sense of practical harmony is an advantage. We don't require you to have taken these exams, as we judge your musicianship, and in particular your capacity for “musical companionship” with other people, at audition.

- Capable of working at Masters level – you will need to be able to think critically about things you read and hear, as well as about your own experiences. A Bachelor-level degree should prepare you for this, although we also assess this in the interview part of the audition. If you don't have a first degree, you will need to demonstrate this skill to us in some other way: we can advise you on this if required.
- Experienced in working with people with particular needs – working as a music therapist is highly rewarding but also personally demanding, so

it's important that you have some experience of working with populations who might access music therapy. You can then make an informed decision about whether it's right for you and assure us that you have considered your decision carefully. Your experience can be gained in a professional, voluntary or personal capacity, and we will ask you about this in the audition.

- Passionate about music-making with people – successful applicants have a sustained history of this, are passionate about what music and music-making have to offer people, and can articulate this clearly.
- Well-informed about music therapy and the Nordoff Robbins approach – we want to be sure that you have

thought honestly about whether this is the right choice for you, and how it might challenge you in various ways. You can gain this information from reading around the subject (there are suggestions on our website) and we will ask you about this at the audition.



## What do I need to know before applying?

Our current fee for EU students is £10,000 for the entire programme.

You should also budget for the following:

- **Personal psychotherapy:** As a music therapy student, you are required to undertake a minimum number of hours of personal psychotherapy while training. We can help you find a therapist who suits you, but you have to pay for this yourself. We recommend budgeting around £1500 for this.
- **Ad hoc travel and accommodation:** For any costs associated with getting to teaching bases, placements, and the twice-yearly intensive weekends (these take place at training bases around the country)

Please note: Nordoff Robbins students are not eligible for Postgraduate Loans, but can apply for Professional and Career Development Loans: [www.gov.uk/career-development-loans](http://www.gov.uk/career-development-loans)

**Unfortunately, due to UK visa restrictions we are currently unable to accept applications from non-EU students.**

Nordoff Robbins are fully committed to equal opportunities and supportive of suitably qualified and experienced people with disabilities who wish to pursue music therapy training. If you consider yourself to have a disability, please contact us before applying so that we can discuss the programme and how we can meet your individual needs in more detail.

# How to apply

Please complete the application form at [www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/train-be-music-therapist](http://www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/train-be-music-therapist), and email it to [education@nordoff-robbins.org.uk](mailto:education@nordoff-robbins.org.uk), accompanied by a video recording (see application form for details).

You'll also need to give a medical reference form (available at the link above) to your doctor and ask them to complete it and return to:

## Education Administrator

Nordoff Robbins  
2 Lissenden Gardens  
London NW5 1PQ

We accept applications all year round, but we advise you to apply by 20 January to be considered for the first round of auditions for entry the following September. If we don't fill all our places at the first round of auditions, we will then consider applications submitted after this date.

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## Get in touch

For more information, take a look at the training section of our website:  
[www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/training](http://www.nordoff-robbins.org.uk/training)





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**[Nordoff-robbins.org.uk/training](https://nordoff-robbins.org.uk/training)**

020 7267 4496

[education@nordoff-robbins.org.uk](mailto:education@nordoff-robbins.org.uk)



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