

Do I have to come to the residential weeks?

We strongly recommend attending the residential, since this is the part of the course in which each year's work is introduced in a face-to-face context, as well as providing practical workshops, guided research experiences and the opportunity to build a supportive learning community for the ensuing months of remote study. However, if your circumstances prevent you from travelling to Sheffield, an online alternative to residential attendance is available, in which scheduled teaching, group workshops and one-to-one tutorials will replicate the onsite experience as closely as possible. Onsite and online teaching will take place during the scheduled weeks, and you would need to participate then (in person or remotely) in order to be involved in the group workshops and discussions. If participation with the rest of the cohort is impossible for you, then most teaching materials will be available online afterwards, and you will be able to make arrangements with the programme director to have a one-to-one tutorial at another time.

I am a teacher living overseas, and the residential dates are not in my school holidays. Are the dates flexible?

No. The residential courses are normally held in the second half of August, as these are the dates which most students can attend, because they fall in UK school holidays. Unfortunately for some overseas students, the dates are not compatible with their academic calendars, but we cannot rearrange the dates or provide additional residential for a small number of students.

Do I need to have an undergraduate degree in music before I can get a place on the course?

No, this is not a requirement if you can give other evidence of substantial experience in music. Skill in performance is welcome but not required; more important for this course is an interest and basic competence in engaging with music intellectually, in understanding 'how it works' both in itself and in its social and cultural functions.

For the MA in Traditional and World Music, knowledge of music theory and notation is not required, although it will enable you to engage with a wider range of readings if the technical aspects of musical sound organisation are of interest to you. For the MA Music Psychology in Education, Performance and Wellbeing, the level of technical knowledge of music that is needed is about equivalent to the ABRSM Grade 5 Music Theory exam.

You will also need a firm foundation of academic skills in finding and processing information, in writing clearly and in supporting an argument with evidence. For this, a Bachelor's degree in a humanities or social science subject, at or above the British 2:i standard or an international equivalent, is usually a sufficient qualification. Applications are evaluated case by case by the programme directors, and there is considerable flexibility in treating relevant life or work experience as 'equivalent' to formal credentials, though such experience might need to be demonstrated through additional application materials.

I am a retired music teacher and am very interested in the course, but I have not studied for over 40 years. Is it too late for me to do an MA?

Not at all. If you haven't studied for many years you may need to re-acclimatise to academic life, but we are accustomed to working with such students and have had many mature students who have successfully completed distance learning MA courses. The University has online resources to help students develop good study habits and writing skills.

How good does my English have to be?

The University and the UK immigration authorities require overseas applicants to hold a suitable English language qualification. For our distance learning courses this is an overall IELTS score of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each component, or equivalent. Exceptions can sometimes be made where students have already studied in English elsewhere. Further information can be found here regarding English language entry requirements - www.sheffield.ac.uk/postgraduate/info/englang.

The English Language Teaching Centre also provides an [English language support hub](#) to offer online help and support for registered students at the University.

What is the closing date for applications?

Applications are accepted until the course is fully subscribed, but you are advised to apply at least by June of the year of entry, and earlier if possible.

How much time will I need to study per week?

You should expect to spend several evenings, or two or three half days on your course work each week - perhaps increasing as deadlines approach or at particular points in your dissertation research. Keeping in regular contact with your cohort and tutors through the discussion board is important, and most students benefit from establishing a routine that protects time for study amongst the other demands in your life.

Do I need a computer to do the course?

Yes. All assignments must be word processed and submitted online, so you will need a computer or sufficient access to one in order to complete essays and your dissertation. You will also need internet access to be able to use the online resources. For some assignments you will need to use software for music notation or sound editing (free open access programmes can be used).

How much will I spend on books?

There are few 'set' books for the course, but we do recommend certain key texts. It is possible to rely on libraries if you have a good local source, otherwise many students purchase books through internet bookshops at reduced rates. Most of the recent research that you will need to consult is available in online journals and ebooks, which will either be

linked through to the course materials, or accessible through the University's extensive library catalogue.

Is it likely that I would need to borrow books from my local university library?

Yes, establishing a link with your local library is definitely a good idea. Most university libraries will give you reading rights, but borrowing rights are at their discretion, and an annual charge is not unusual. Sheffield University is also a member of the [SCONUL Access scheme](#). SCONUL Access is a co-operative venture between most of the higher education libraries of the UK and Ireland. It enables staff, research students, full time postgraduates and part-time, distance learning and placement students to borrow material from other libraries.

Can the University Library send me items I need through the post?

The University library offers a [postal request service](#) for distance learning students in which books can be posted to your home address. There is no administration charge, but you will need to pay for the cost of return postage.

What additional support is provided for distance learning students

There are various additional support services for students, these include;

- The [Academic Skills Centre](#) who provide lots of online support resources to help support you through your course.
- The [Disability & Dyslexia Support Service](#) offers a wide range of support and advice to disabled students.
- The [Student Wellbeing Service](#) helps support students' emotional health and wellbeing.

When I have completed my MA studies, can I continue to a PhD also by distance learning?

Yes. Each year, several of our students go on to PhD studies, either straightaway or after a few years break. We are experienced in supervising PhDs at a distance, and the University has 'joint location' and 'remote location' schemes: more information about these is available here: [Research Away from the University](#). You may also wish to view our [student and alumni profiles](#).

Do I become a qualified Music Therapist after completing the Music Psychology in Education, Performance and Wellbeing (Distance Learning)?

Many of our students indeed have an interest in Music Therapy and use the degree to go into that direction. However, it is important to realise that our MA will not qualify you as a music therapist, even though it can offer a useful foundation to a music therapy

specialisation. Further steps will be necessary to actually become a practicing music therapist.

The differences between our degree and an MA in Music Therapy is that music therapy is clinical and practical. Music making with patients is a central part of it. Our degree is instead academic, research oriented and concerns uses of music, responses to music, and music perception primarily in healthy participants, although we also consider special populations. Our degree provides a solid basis from which you can specialise into areas that relate to music therapy: you could use the dissertation to do research that includes an area of music therapy and you could discuss music therapy research and practices in assignments that you do for the course.

What work can the distance learning programme I am interested in lead to?

Music Psychology in Education, Performance and Wellbeing (Distance Learning):

We have many examples of graduates from this programme who have changed the focus of their existing work (moving from primary to secondary teaching, or from teaching to teacher training), or used their research skills with arts organisations and advocacy groups including Youth Music, Yorkshire Youth Music and Making Music. Several students each year also go on to study at PhD level, leading into an academic career of research, teaching and/or publishing.

Traditional and World Music (Distance Learning):

Graduates of this programme have enhanced their careers and musical lives in various ways. Those who were already music teachers have expanded their portfolios and generated new teaching resources. Those who were practicing musicians have broadened their repertoires and range of techniques. The more academically inclined have gone on to PhD study and academic careers. No less importantly, those who took the course as a leisure or retirement interest have enriched their musical skills and contacts as an end in itself.