Postgraduates collaborate closely with our creative staff and an exceptional peer group. The bespoke approach to studying enables you to take full advantage of the vast array of expertise that walks into the building every day.

Professor Neil Heyde, Head of Postgraduate Programmes

WELCOME

TOP POSTGRADUATE DESTINATION
The Royal Academy of Music has the largest body of postgraduate musicians in the UK, bringing together talented musicians from across the globe. Our uniquely collaborative performance environment is designed to help you fulfil your potential, and the networking opportunities provided by our vibrant community are second to none. The Academy’s busy performance calendar provides opportunities to work alongside talented peers, under the direction of world-leading musicians.

CELEBRATING THE INDIVIDUAL
While the size and energy of our community are vital to our success, we also celebrate and nurture individuality. We provide one-to-one tutorial supervision for all students, which is unique in the sector, and our highly flexible programmes of study can be tailored to suit your interests and career ambitions.

Your Principal Study lessons (90 minutes per week in most departments) will be supported by a wide spectrum of artist development and professional skills training. We understand that managing a musical life is complex, so we also provide individual supervision to help you manage your studies and establish your creative niche. In addition, we offer personal support and pastoral care throughout your studies.
I was already working professionally when I made the decision to return to my studies. Although I felt confident in my ability, my goal was to keep developing and challenging myself as a musician.

To begin with, I did find it difficult – being dependent on someone else's opinion again felt like a step backwards in a way, but I'm happy to say that I don't have any regrets at all. I can see a big improvement in my playing and have had the most amazing professors, who have helped me to develop my technique and expand my musical imagination. It has certainly proved to be a rewarding chapter in my life.

For me, studying at the Academy has been about much more than my flute lessons. There are so many opportunities for every student, including elective ‘pathway’ courses, second-study instrument lessons, Baroque music, chamber music, conducting, and amazing orchestral projects with renowned conductors.

I love the open-minded environment I’ve discovered here. I’ve learnt so much, not only from my teachers but also from my peers.

In 2014 I moved to London from Israel to study with Professor Joanna MacGregor, the Academy’s Head of Piano. This was one of the best decisions I ever made. I completed my MMus and Advanced Diploma and have stayed on for my doctoral studies.

It can be difficult to navigate your own path through the competitive musical world, but I have found the Academy to be a warm and supportive place. I have met illustrious visiting professors, composers, festival directors and other key figures from the industry, and have created long-lasting connections that are now central to my concert career as well as my PhD research.

The Academy puts an emphasis not only on excellence and professionalism but also on creativity and originality. I have always been encouraged to explore new ideas, projects and collaborations – for example, following my involvement in a concert dedicated to the British composer Michael Finnissy, I commissioned him to complete Schubert’s unfinished ‘Reliquie’ Sonata, which I premiered for my Advanced Diploma in Performance. I’m now expanding this into a broader PhD research project that explores Schubert and living composers.

The Piano Department is full of activities and opportunities that encourage you to work harder and progress. The world-class teaching and the excellent performance spaces and recording facilities have all helped to make these years as productive and valuable as I could have hoped for.

ANNA KONDRASHINA

‘My amazing professors have helped me to develop my technique and expand my musical imagination’

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DEVELOPING YOUR OWN PATHWAY

It is critical that postgraduate study is not simply more of what you have already done, but a genuine springboard to a career. We recognise that trajectories can be very different, so we offer both one- and two-year pathways for most MA and MMus students.

We can also respond flexibly to changing needs during your study – a significant number of students move between the one- and two-year options as circumstances alter and new opportunities are discovered.

RESPONSIBILITY AND CHALLENGE

Studying at the Academy is a demanding journey. Working as a musician is a privilege but also requires exceptional commitment and dedication. You have a dual responsibility: to develop and deepen understanding of musical traditions, and to contribute your own creative ways of making music.

We support your development by giving you unique performing opportunities, bringing out the best in you and rewarding your success. You will leave the Academy ready to challenge the world as an artist.

TAILORED STUDY

We will help you to identify your individual needs and work with you to meet them.

If you are not sure about the right programme for you, use the form at ram.ac.uk/study/programmes, contact the relevant department via ram.ac.uk/departments or email postgrad@ram.ac.uk

‘The lively atmosphere and the healthy curiosity, open minds and energy of the students wash away any cynicism. The future seems to be in good hands’

Magnus Lindberg
I read Music as an undergraduate, after which I worked as a freelance musician. A strong desire to increase my artistic and technical ambition as a composer led me to return to my studies – I completed the Academy’s MMus in Composition and have started a doctorate.

The Academy has supported, inspired and challenged me where I’ve needed it most. I have particularly benefited from opportunities to write for a wide range of players and ensembles, and to hear all of my pieces performed. I’ve been involved in various composition projects, each of which has included workshop time during the writing process. This has been so valuable as it has allowed me to try out ideas and get feedback from players. These experiences have made me a more well-rounded composer, greatly improved my overall musicianship and had a positive impact on the way I teach and rehearse music, present my ideas and direct projects.

The Composition Department has lots of connections with external artists and organisations, and encourages students to develop work beyond their study. In one of my favourite projects I represented the Academy at Leeds Lieder Festival, writing a piece for its Composers & Poets Forum. I collaborated with a poet and have since worked with her on two more projects, one of which was a commission for a charity.

My Master’s research project also allowed me to gain experience in leading my own work with an external group. The supervision and guidance I’ve received at the Academy have given me the confidence to pursue similar projects on my own in the future.

LOUISE DREWETT

‘The Academy has supported, inspired and challenged me where I’ve needed it most’

I completed my undergraduate degree at Shanghai Conservatory of Music and moved to London to continue my cello studies at the Academy. I have been truly inspired by the environment, the teachers and my peers. Studying here has broadened my creative imagination, allowing me to express myself more openly, interpret music more confidently and embrace a wider range of musical styles.

In my first year I had several performance opportunities with the Academy Symphony Orchestra, including Mahler’s Symphony No 9 conducted by Semyon Bychkov, and Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky with Oliver Knussen. I was also in the orchestra for Royal Academy Opera’s Bizet double bill. I’ve had the privilege of attending masterclasses with amazing musicians such as Steven Isserlis, and I’ve made friends from all over the world, which has taught me a lot about different cultures.

I’m now continuing my studies on the Advanced Diploma course. I’m lucky enough to have a Bettas School cello on loan from the Academy Museum. It was made in around 1800 and has a beautiful, warm tone. I love the way it responds when I play.

Since starting my studies at the Academy, I have been working hard to improve in every discipline – solo performance, chamber music and orchestral playing. I aspire to become a musician with the flexibility to excel in a variety of classical music fields.

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‘The Academy has supported, inspired and challenged me where I’ve needed it most’
and focused career aspirations, including those with a well-established career. You will work on a substantial research project, supported by a supervisor and a team of creative staff at the Academy. This will typically be driven by your creative activity as a performer or composer, but will also require critical context and reflection.

The Academy offers a PhD degree over three or four years, although students can exit with an MPhil after two. Students begin on MPhil status and apply for an upgrade to PhD after two years of study. You will be allocated 30 hours of supervision per year, which can be divided between academic and practical supervision. The fourth year of study is a writing-up year and is charged at a lower rate.

**PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

Whether you’re studying at postgraduate or doctoral level, your programme will be packed with variety and creative opportunities.

**MASTER OF ARTS (MA) IN PERFORMANCE OR COMPOSITION**

This is the core postgraduate programme, taken by the majority of Academy students. You will be able to tailor your studies to reflect your interests, develop performance initiatives and build a professional network. The MA is normally a two-year programme, but in certain cases students can complete it in one year.

**MASTER OF MUSIC (MMUS) IN PERFORMANCE OR COMPOSITION**

This builds on the core MA, adding a Master’s Project. The MMUs is the standard postgraduate programme for composers. It is normally a two-year programme, but in certain cases students can complete it in one year.

Your final Master’s Project can be a concert with commentary, a recording-based project, a dissertation, or a combination of these. A concert based around your own research, compositions or performance interests might include a practical focus on the development and delivery of the event, or you might pursue more conceptual or contextual areas in a substantial written document.

Students wishing to prepare applications for a doctorate will normally choose the MMUs, as the Master’s Project helps prepare students for the independent work required at doctoral level.

**PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMA (PROF DIP)**

This programme is for students looking for an additional year of tailored study that will give them a competitive edge when building a career. Its highly focused combination of one-to-one tuition and professional development activity is built around the needs of each student. Applicants will normally hold a Master’s degree, but the programme is available to all applicants of the appropriate standard.

**ADVANCED DIPLOMA (ADV DIP)**

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**PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

Whether you’re studying at postgraduate or doctoral level, your programme will be packed with variety and creative opportunities.
PROFESSIONAL SKILLS AND ARTIST DEVELOPMENT

To make a life in music you will need to develop many personal, practical and technical skills. We can offer you the best chance to succeed in your chosen career.

Young musicians today are entering a competitive and dynamic profession in which it takes more than being a superb performer to sustain a career. We want you to leave the Academy fully prepared for life as a working musician. We are at the forefront of delivering a postgraduate experience that will empower you – the next generation of artists – to make the most of your individual skills in the professional realm.

Our Artform Development strand is an integral part of your programme, preparing you practically, creatively and strategically for the road ahead. Through a series of lectures, one-off events and individual guidance, we cover topics including the creation of industry-standard promotional material, curating your web presence, how to practise, starting and running ensembles, the audition process, how to work with promoters, and tax for the self-employed.

You train to think strategically about your artistic identity: how you might nurture and have confidence in your individual talents, and integrate them into your future professional life.

This will be a two-day artist development event in January, with sessions on all aspects of skills development, a health and wellbeing event in the Autumn, year-round talks by music professionals working across genres, and one-to-one career coaching.

OPEN ACADEMY

Each year, the Academy’s Learning and Participation Department works with around 6,000 people beyond our enrolled students and staff.

As the importance of participatory music programmes in areas including education, health and wellbeing continues to grow both in the UK and internationally, it is crucial that our students have the opportunity to obtain skills and experience in this exciting and expanding area of work.

Open Academy works closely with artistic and community partners to produce creative projects in which you can explore making music in a wide range of contexts. These include workshops with children and young people in mainstream schools and special educational needs and disability (SEND) settings, people receiving treatment in hospitals, residents and staff of care homes, and people attending day centres. All of our projects are led and supported by experienced professionals, giving you the opportunity to explore and develop your musicianship, skills and confidence in different environments.

Postgraduate students can explore this field of work as part of their professional portfolio by choosing the Open Academy Pathway.

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My Academy story began with a chance meeting. In June 2014, while studying for a Bachelor’s degree in Geology at Delhi University, I dropped a friend off at the Neemrana Music Foundation for a masterclass with Dr Robert Alderson, a visiting vocal professor from the UK. I had not had any formal musical training but sang in my church choir and was a member of an a cappella group at university, so on a whim I decided to attend the class. Afterwards, Dr Alderson heard me singing with friends outside, and before I knew it he had taken me under his wing. After finishing my degree I moved to Manchester, where I had six months of intensive training with him before being offered a postgraduate place at the Academy with a full scholarship.

I had a lot of catching up to do – I had to learn, among other things, basic piano-playing skills, music theory and aural perception in order to make my time here less bumpy, and frankly it’s an ongoing process! But I learnt from the very best teachers and students, and all the hard work has undoubtedly been worth it. I spent this summer in the chorus at Glyndebourne and have accepted a place with the Staatsoper Hannover for 2019-21.

My teachers have been so supportive and have helped me develop the skills, artistry and, most importantly, the courage and confidence to take on the challenges of a career in opera.

DARWIN LEONARD PRAKASH

‘I learnt from the very best teachers and students, and all the hard work has undoubtedly been worth it’