

**DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:  
MU 4469 SELECTED TOPICS IN COMPOSITION**

**3/0/3**

**UK LEVEL:6  
UK CREDITS:15**

(Formerly: MU 4369 SELECTED TOPICS IN COMPOSITION, SONGWRITING AND ARRANGING  
(Revised Fall 2022))

**PREREQUISITES:**

MU 2014 THEORY AND MUSICIANSHIP I  
MU 2159 THEORY AND MUSICIANSHIP II  
MU 3215 THEORY AND MUSICIANSHIP III  
MU 3329 THEORY AND MUSICIANSHIP IV

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:**

An exploration of creative musical techniques and practice through the study of compositional ideas, techniques and example works as chosen by the instructor. A full range of compositional styles and methods is open for investigation, together with approaches that integrate composition into new media practices.

**RATIONALE:**

The course provides a focused exploration of musical composition that draws together skills and understanding built via the compositional exercises in the later theory and musicianship courses, as well as compositional elements found in other courses across the program. Students will explore a wide range of approaches and techniques within the selected topic, with the intention of developing a broad palette from which they can begin to explore their personal musical style.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- After successfully completing this course students should be able to:
1. Explain the creative ideas and practical techniques of studied works.
  2. Demonstrate practical fluency in a range of different techniques through original exercises.
  3. Evaluate musical techniques and creative strategies within their own approach to creative practice.
  4. Create individual musical pieces with related performances and reflective evaluations of these works.

**METHOD OFTEACHING AND LEARNING:**

- In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used:
- lecture and seminar sessions exploring compositional concepts and case study musical works;
  - structured take-home compositional exercises;
  - seminar-based listening, score reading and discussion of case study musical works;
  - informal in class musical performances of musical extracts and instrumental passages;
  - use of a learning management system (Blackboard) where instructors post lecture notes, assignment instructions, announcements and additional resources;
  - students are encouraged to make full use of their instructor’s office hours, where they can ask questions, see their assigned work results and/or go over lecture material;
  - support from the Student Academic Support Services (SASS), who offer one-to-one and group workshop sessions to support the development of academic and study skills.

**ASSESSMENT:**

<b>Summative:</b>	
First assessment: • Submission of a folio of composition exercises aiming to explore a wide range of different approaches, techniques and mediums.	<b>40%</b>
Final assessment: • A folio of original compositions as agreed with an approach, scope and content agreed with the instructor.	<b>60%</b>
<b>Formative:</b>	
Class Presentations	<b>0</b>

The formative assessments prepare students for both summative assessments.  
Learning Outcomes 1, 2 & 3 are assessed in the first assessment  
Learning Outcomes 2, 3 & 4 are assessed in the final assessment

	Students are required to resit failed assessments in this course.
<b>INDICATIVE READING:</b>	Varies according to selected topic. Expected to be a combination of books and articles on composers, compositional techniques and a wide range of musical scores and recordings.
<b>INDICATIVE MATERIAL:</b> <i>(e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)</i>	<b>REQUIRED MATERIAL:</b> Varies according to selected topic, but extensive use will be made of the digital audio recordings and scores held by the ACG library.
<b>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</b>	Students will be expected to make use of a learning management system (Blackboard) and have an active ACG email account. All written work should follow current MLA standards for formatting, style and citation.
<b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b>	Microsoft Word (or similar word processing program) and an internet connection for access to online music databases, digital audio recordings and support websites (available through the ACG library).  The course instruction will use MuseScore ( <a href="http://www.musescore.org">www.musescore.org</a> ) for notational needs given its free availability. Students may also make use of other notational packages for their personal compositional work if they have a strong preference or prior experience of them.  The full range of software in the music studios is available for works involving technology, ranging from Apple's Logic and Reaper through to MaxMSP, VCV Rack etc.
<b>WWW RESOURCES:</b>	There are a wide range of resources available online. Students will be directed to the following kinds of sites: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The home pages of music publishers (Universal Edition, Boosey &amp; Hawkes etc.) for composer resources (biographies, listening resources, score examples, interviews etc.).</li> <li>• Oxford Music Online for authoritative reference material on composers and techniques.</li> </ul>
<b>INDICATIVE CONTENT:</b>	<b>Overview:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content varies according to selected topic</li> <li>• Includes examination and analysis of musical works (both from written scores and via aural analysis).</li> <li>• Key elements drawn from musical works and developed into a repertoire of musical techniques and creative approaches to composition.</li> <li>• Examples will be drawn from range of different composers and musical styles as specified by the course instructor when the selected topic is identified.</li> </ul>