

## **Your Degree in Music...What Next?**

A degree in Music aims to instill personal creativity and individualism. Graduates will tend to be creative people, in tune with their minds, bodies, and emotions.

### **What skills have I gained from my Music degree?**

**Attention to Detail;** able to identify patterns in behaviors and processes which may or may not work to the benefit of a company.

**Good physical dexterity, memory and concentration;** developed in practice and performance.

**Communication;** developed through performing and engaging listeners.

**Technical skills and expertise;** using technology to create and record music and studying acoustics.

**Critical Thinking;** giving and receiving criticism, learning from mistakes and striving for improved performance.

**Independence;** creative, and comfortable with themselves

**Organisational skills;** producing performances based on planned growth (time to learn the music) makes musicians good project managers, able to organise and plan ahead toward individual or group performances/goals.

**Teamwork;** musicians come to understand that it is only through working effectively with others (accompanists, conductors, and/or other performers) that a performance will be successful.

**Time Management;** participating in the daily work required to excel in music, whilst managing college, work, performing etc.

**Performing under pressure** - overcoming nervousness in order to perform well during exams, concerts and auditions.

*Other desirable qualities, characteristics required for employment in the Music sector:*

- A passion for Music in several forms.
- Provide Creative ideas
- Individualism

- Ability to network.
- Self-directed learning and work.
- Adventure & Curiosity
- Commitment & Resourcefulness
- High self-esteem and personal focus.
- Problem-solving & lateral thinking
- Project management, Organisational and time-management skills.
- Awareness of governmental financial and career supports e.g. The Arts Council/Music Funding/Grants.

## What can I do with my Music degree?

On graduating with a Music degree, graduates are equipped with both technical and specialised skills, as well as transferable skills that are marketable in other environments. Ideally, final year is spent researching further training and career options for either **graduate employment** or **further study**.

Your music degree will provide you with a fantastic platform from which to enter a range of interesting sectors.

## Job options

### *Jobs directly related to your degree include:*

- Music therapist
- Musician
- Private music teacher
- Secondary school teacher
- Sound technician, broadcasting/film/video
- Composing and Arranging
- Film, Video & TV Scoring
- Ethnomusicology
- Journalism
- Librarianship
- Solo & Ensemble Performance
- Music Production & Recording
- Music Technology
- Musicological Research
- Arts Administration
- Publishing

### *Jobs where your degree would be useful include:*

- Arts administrator
- Broadcast engineer
- Community arts worker
- Event organiser
- Radio broadcast assistant
- Radio producer
- Theatre stage manager

Remember that many employers accept applications from graduates with any degree subject, so don't restrict your thinking to the jobs listed here.

***There are many other areas of work that you could go into, such as;***

- Advertising, Marketing & PR
- Banking, Finance & Accountancy
- Charity, Not-for-profit & NGO
- Culture, Music & Performing Arts
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Management Consulting & Business
- Retail & Sales
- Teaching & Education

***Typical employers***

Music graduates work in a range of professions inside and outside music. If you choose to follow a music career you may have to take on several roles with different employers. For example, you could combine teaching with freelance performance work, as well as doing contract/session work on particular projects.

Music graduates can be found working for a variety of employers on both a freelance and contract basis.

***Employers include:***

- schools and colleges
- orchestras
- music retailers
- media organisations
- the armed forces
- commercial organisations
- a range of employers in the cultural and creative industries

## **How to find a job in the music industry**

Going to gigs, networking and following labels on Twitter should be on your to-do list if you want to break into the music industry.

***Gain an understanding of the industry and the range of opportunities available***

The music industry is forever evolving. Ensure you are well read and up to date on what's happening and be aware of the changing trends that affect the business.

There are many specialist music websites where you can learn more about the industry, and find ads for placements and jobs.

Along with the main industry trade magazine Music Week, for a daily digest that gives news and insight into the industry try Record of the Day and CMU Daily. These sites all post job opportunities.

The music industry is highly competitive, so it's important to regularly look at the careers sections featured on company websites as well as keeping an eye on all their social media channels.

For example, while Universal Music advertises vacancies on its Working For Us section, their labels often also tweet new internships and job opportunities, follow Universal Music UK, @umusicuk.

As well as the individual labels on Twitter. It's also worth using sites such as LinkedIn to build your network of industry contacts.

### **The Profession**

- Understand and know the profession
- Everyone knows what everyone else is doing in orchestral life
- Be tactful – you never know if the person you are politely criticising may be a future fixer or section principal whose backing you may need some day!

### **Networking**

- Personality and ‘who you know’ are very important
- You need to have the personality to deal with knockbacks – need to be accustomed to this
- Build up contacts during your study (teachers/student colleagues/careers advisors)
- Talk to them
- Find out what avenues they can help you develop
- Luck comes from chance meetings and contacts with those in the business
- The more you meet with people, the better chance you have of that lucky break!
- Commit yourself to new ventures – don’t always play safe looking for a place in that Chamber Orchestra – there are NEW Orchestras springing up all the time
- Join new ventures with your contemporaries

### **Time**

- Use time effectively
- Go to as many concerts as possible!
- Gain an idea of the standards you are going to encounter in the profession
- Network with them

*Starting off a career can be daunting, worrying and uncertain but can also be exciting!*

### **Work Experience**

It is important to gain as much experience in different musical genres as possible. As well as giving you more knowledge in the area, it will allow you to decide which direction you would like your career to take.

Listening to live music and performing allows you to assess musical ability, interact with audiences and be exposed to new musical ideas.

Some university courses include work placements in areas such as music education and instrumental teaching, recording and studio work, composition and events management. It may also be helpful to pursue opportunities with music-related employers, for example schools or venues that regularly host musical acts.

If you are seeking a career in a different area, it is useful to gain experience. You can do this through university involvement, paid opportunities or volunteer work. These experiences can often be combined with your current study by working in the evenings, on weekends or during the summer holidays.

Also, don't narrow your chances by being too specific about which part of the business you are looking to get into. Your aim should be to get a foot in the door and gain experience, so don't limit yourself.

Try and get as much relevant work and voluntary experience as possible. Internships are often a good stepping stone to a permanent job. Universal Music UK runs a scheme that takes 20 interns a year and gives them year-long placement across the company, paying the London living wage.

***Attend as many conferences, networking events and tech talks as you can***

Getting out and about, meeting people at gigs, events and general networking is important. You never know who you might meet.

Universal Music UK also looks to help anyone interested in a career in the industry with its Utalks. These are a series of informal sessions around the UK to give people interested in working in and around music the chance to speak to people working on the frontline, from A&R to marketing and, of course, digital. (Ref: <http://careers.guardian.co.uk/find-job-music-industry/print> (May 2012))

## **Musician**

A musician performs music for the enjoyment of an audience. Musicians perform music live on-stage or in recording studios. Their music is used in a variety of media areas such as TV, radio and film. They can play one or more musical instrument to an exceptionally high standard and perform as a soloist or a member of a band or orchestra. Many musicians specialise in a particular musical genre. Opportunities can be full-time, part-time or on a freelance basis and are very much dependent on the musician's skills and abilities due to the competitive nature of the industry.

### **Work activities**

- Attending regular rehearsals to prepare for performances and generate ideas for new musical pieces.
- Performing in concerts and recording in studios.
- Taking care of instruments; setting up and tuning ahead of performances.
- Undertaking administrative tasks in terms of fees and publicity.
- Maintaining and extending a network of venues.

## **How to become a Music Therapist in Ireland**

Qualified Music Therapists use music in conjunction with their insight and training in therapeutic relationships, to support people who have additional needs because of medical, psychological, physical or emotional problems.

They encourage their clients to use musical instruments and make sounds, to express themselves and develop their potential, as a way of relieving a particular problem. Music is used to help the client to listen, move and communicate; encouraging self-expression and development, and allowing a therapeutic relationship to develop.

Music Therapists work in a range of settings including nursing homes, residential care facilities, community settings, rehabilitation centres, schools and hospitals. Usually in consultation with other professionals and the client, Music Therapists decide on the goals of therapy and develop, and implement appropriate programmes to address the client's needs.

The therapist has to decide with each client whether it will be better to work on a one-to-one basis or in a group setting. Outcomes of the work are evaluated and reported to colleagues within the multidisciplinary team.

### ***Personal Qualities & Skills***

You will need to be mature, understanding, sensitive and emotionally secure. Clients may progress very slowly or fail to progress at all, so patience and resourcefulness are important.

A high level of musical skill and creativity is a necessity. Ability to play keyboard, guitar and sing is required by completion of training.

### ***Required Qualifications***

To become a Music Therapist, you will generally require a degree in Music followed by a postgraduate qualification.

If your first degree is in a subject other than Music, you may be considered for a Music Therapy course if you can demonstrate a high standard of musical ability.

Applicants who have followed a different entry route e.g. a degree in Psychology or Sociology must be able to demonstrate a comparable level of musical skills to those with a Music degree.

A high degree of musicianship in at least two instruments is required for this profession. This can include voice, strings, brass, etc.... but many of the courses specify that piano or guitar must be one of the instruments.

### **Sources of Information**

- IACAT is the national registration body for creative arts therapists in Ireland – [www.iacat.ie](http://www.iacat.ie)
- [www.oireachtas.ie/documents/committees29thdail/jcastrag/reports/Music\\_Therapy.pdf](http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/committees29thdail/jcastrag/reports/Music_Therapy.pdf)
- [www.nimtt.org/careers](http://www.nimtt.org/careers)

### **Music Technologist**

Careers open to you with a degree in Music, Media and Performance Technology include:

- Multimedia Programmer-Artist
- Software Developer for Digital Art Applications
- Sound and Video Engineer
- Video Editor
- Audio-Visual Post Production
- Radio and Television Broadcasting
- Audio-Visual Artist
- Researcher in Media, Music and Visuals

This type of programme prepares students for careers in Audio and Video Technology and Arts. You will have developed your knowledge within an academic setting where experimentation and creativity are encouraged. Graduates will be equipped to create and develop interactive music and multimedia projects. They will have acquired a sophisticated understanding of the aesthetic and technical issues involved.

Despite the highly competitive nature of the industry, recent trends have shown strong potential for recording professionals in music studios, post production houses, radio stations, internet publishing houses, computer games manufacturers, retail sales and hire-services, education, film production and performance

Depending on their specialisation, music technicians can be responsible for operating the control panels used to mix music tracks. They also might need to set up equipment for recording sessions and concerts. During live performances, technicians are responsible for the proper setup of all instruments, amplifiers, speakers, microphones, mixing boards, projectors and spotlights, including running cables for power and sound transmission.

Technicians who work on movie or video productions must often synchronize music with video and lighting applications or reproduce sound effects and music for motion pictures. They are also responsible for the maintenance of recording and mixing equipment to ensure that the technology is utilized for optimum performance. All types of music technicians are expected to keep up with constant advancements in technology and methodology to ensure quality recording or presentation.

### **Career Outlook and Salary Information**

In the USA, BLS reports that sound engineering technicians can expect job growth of 8% from 2014-2024, which is slightly faster than the national average for all occupations. In 2015, according to the BLS, sound engineering technicians earned a median salary of \$53,330.

A knowledge of the science behind music and music production can prove a great asset in your career. Qualified technicians and producers are in demand in all areas of music, as are acoustic scientists.

The highly transferable skills you'll gain in communication and project management will also take you further up whichever career ladder you choose to climb.

### **Graduate Employment - Self-employed**

- *Funding*

The Arts Council offers a wide range of financial supports across art forms and arts practices, including music.

For self-employed practicing artists/musicians, the Arts Council of Ireland is the body charged with allocating governmental finances in this sector. It acts in partnership with the arts, providing advice and financial support to artists in all domains, and as an advocacy body for continued governmental and private funding.

<http://www.artscouncil.ie/Arts-in-Ireland/Music/>

### **Postgraduate Courses`**

- [www.postgradireland.com](http://www.postgradireland.com) for courses in Ireland
- [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) for courses in the UK.

Gaining a postgraduate qualification brings with it many benefits. It enables you to gain further, more specialised knowledge in your field of study. It can give you a specific technical, vocational or professional qualification and facilitate you in developing a range of key skills including; research, analysis, evaluation and written communication.

There are also many 'conversion courses' should you wish to change direction and move into a different career.

For further information, go to the 'Further/Postgraduate Study' link on the Students page of our website;  
<http://www.mycit.ie/careers>.

- ***Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, University of Limerick – MA Music Therapy***
  - [www.irishworldacademy.ie/postraduate-programmes/ma-music-therapy](http://www.irishworldacademy.ie/postraduate-programmes/ma-music-therapy)
  - The MA Music Therapy program addresses the higher education needs of graduates of both arts and/or sciences foundation degrees.
  - This course attracts applicants from a wide variety of musical and health science backgrounds.
  - Entry to the course is judged through a rigorous audition and in-depth interview process with a panel of experts from the fields of psychotherapy, music therapy and music performance.
  - The course requires a high level of music skills in performance on entry.
  - Experience in paid or volunteer work with people who have a disability or experience some sort of social disadvantage/exclusion is required.
- ***CSM/CIT – MA/MSc Music Technology –***
  - The Masters in Music & Technology have a very practical, hands-on approach. Our ethos is that this cross-disciplinary programme will foster a combination of technical know-how and confidence with creativity and musicality.
  - The Masters offers training and experience to enhance the talents and skills necessary to work in the creative industries of the future.
- ***NUIM – MA in Creative Media Technologies (Conversion Course) –***
  - The programme is concerned with a range of areas relating to music technology, including composition, sound recording and engineering, computer music programming, and acoustics.
- ***UL - Education & Health Sciences: Professional Master of Education (Music)***
  - The Professional Master of Education (Music), formerly Professional Diploma in Education (Music), is specially designed to meet the needs of graduates who wish to become teachers of music in secondary schools. Applicants must possess a relevant degree, In Music or Primary degree in Arts with Music as a major subject. In line with Teaching Council and HEA protocol at 2.2 honours level or higher.

## **Have a memorable CV**

Don't try too hard but remember it is a creative business. Your CV needs to make an instant impression – it's what's going to get you in the door for an interview. You ideally need to demonstrate your passion, an active interest, or projects you've pursued in your own time relating to music. This will give you a much greater chance of being invited in for a face-to-face meeting.

Your CV should detail not only your paid work history, but any relevant work experience, paid or unpaid, either with a business or projects you have undertaken yourself. You need to show the person looking at your CV that you are proactive, keen and have used your own initiative. Internships are often heavily admin-focused, so don't forget to include this particular experience you have gained. A solid understanding of the digital landscape is obviously something we look for in all our potential employees, because it has changed what is possible so radically in all content industries, particularly music.

Regardless of any role you do within the music industry, whether it's in one of the labels or with the central digital team, you should have a sound all-round general digital knowledge to reflect the way the business has evolved.

## Further Resources

Gradireland publications – Available at the Careers Service or download a copy of the relevant sector publications from [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com)

For career opportunities in the UK see [www.targetjobs.co.uk](http://www.targetjobs.co.uk)

The TARGETjobs publication and TARGETjobs magazines are available from the Careers Service or download a copy.

**Tip:** If you are unsure about what direction to take after your degree, the gradireland Careers Report is a useful tool for matching your personal information and preferences to potential careers. Log on and register at [www.gradireland.com](http://www.gradireland.com) to use the report.

**Tip:** If you want to find out more information about what is involved in any of the job titles listed in this document, check out the *A to Z Occupation List* on [www.careersportal.ie](http://www.careersportal.ie).

## Useful Websites

[www.creativecareers.ie](http://www.creativecareers.ie) - Links to jobs, creative spaces for rent/hire, intern and volunteer opportunities and training. Also has an excellent links page, providing a list of resources divided by heading for further research.

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/YoungPeople/> - Provides career information, entitlements and career tools for young people in the UK.

[www.vaireland.org](http://www.vaireland.org) - Voluntary Arts Ireland, a body that seeks to promote involvement in voluntary art, particularly cross-border. Job vacancies for the organization are also advertised here.  
<http://www.create-ireland.ie>

[www.musicnetwork.ie](http://www.musicnetwork.ie) Music Network's mission is to make high quality live music available and accessible to people throughout Ireland, regardless of their location or circumstance, while supporting the career development of musicians.

[www.morgensterns.com](http://www.morgensterns.com) - If you are looking for musicians for a concert, recital or to enhance an event,

<https://www.cmc.ie/> - Contemporary music centre, opportunities etc.

<http://ie.indeed.com/Music-jobs> - Jobs website

<https://journalofmusic.com/listings/opportunities> - Jobs and opportunities