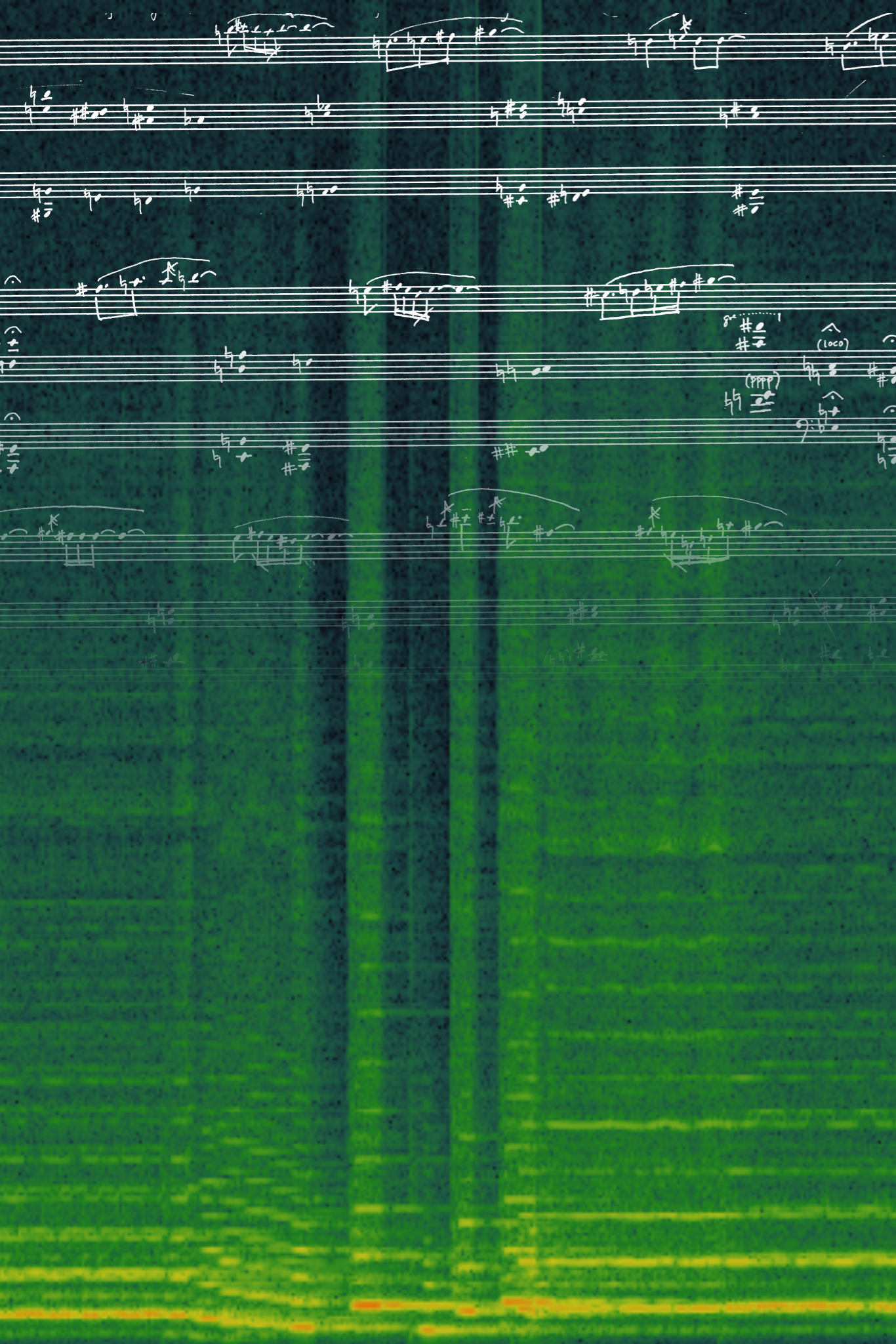


Maynooth University Music

# MA in Composition



# For the 21<sup>st</sup>-century composer

The **MA in Composition** at **Maynooth University** provides a supportive yet stimulating environment in which to develop your individual compositional style. The focus of the course is the creation of a **professional portfolio of compositions across a range of media**, supported by **regular one-to-one tuition** from the experienced composers in the Department of Music. Core modules in contemporary compositional technique and the study of works and writings of other composers help broaden your compositional focus and allow you to develop your own voice in the exciting world of contemporary music. These activities are complimented by **regular talks** and consultations with **visiting professional composers** and **opportunities for performance** of your works by visiting performers and student ensembles.

Available either as a full-time or part-time programme, the MA in Composition is convened by **Dr Ryan Molloy** and **Dr Martin O'Leary**. Supporting compositional tuition in electroacoustic media is delivered by Dr Gordon Delap, Dr Iain McCurdy and Prof. Victor Lazzarini. All five composition staff are highly-experienced composers with national and international exposure.

See [www.maynoothuniversity.ie/music/our-people](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/music/our-people) for more information.

# What to expect from our postgraduate composition tuition...



Regular private tutorials with  
Composition Staff.



Access to a wide range of modules  
from across our MA programmes.



Arranged readings with visiting  
performers and priority allocation of  
tutorial time with visiting composers, as  
available.



Dedicated collaboration with a performer  
from the MA in Performance and Musicology  
programme in the creation of a new work  
specifically for their performance programme.



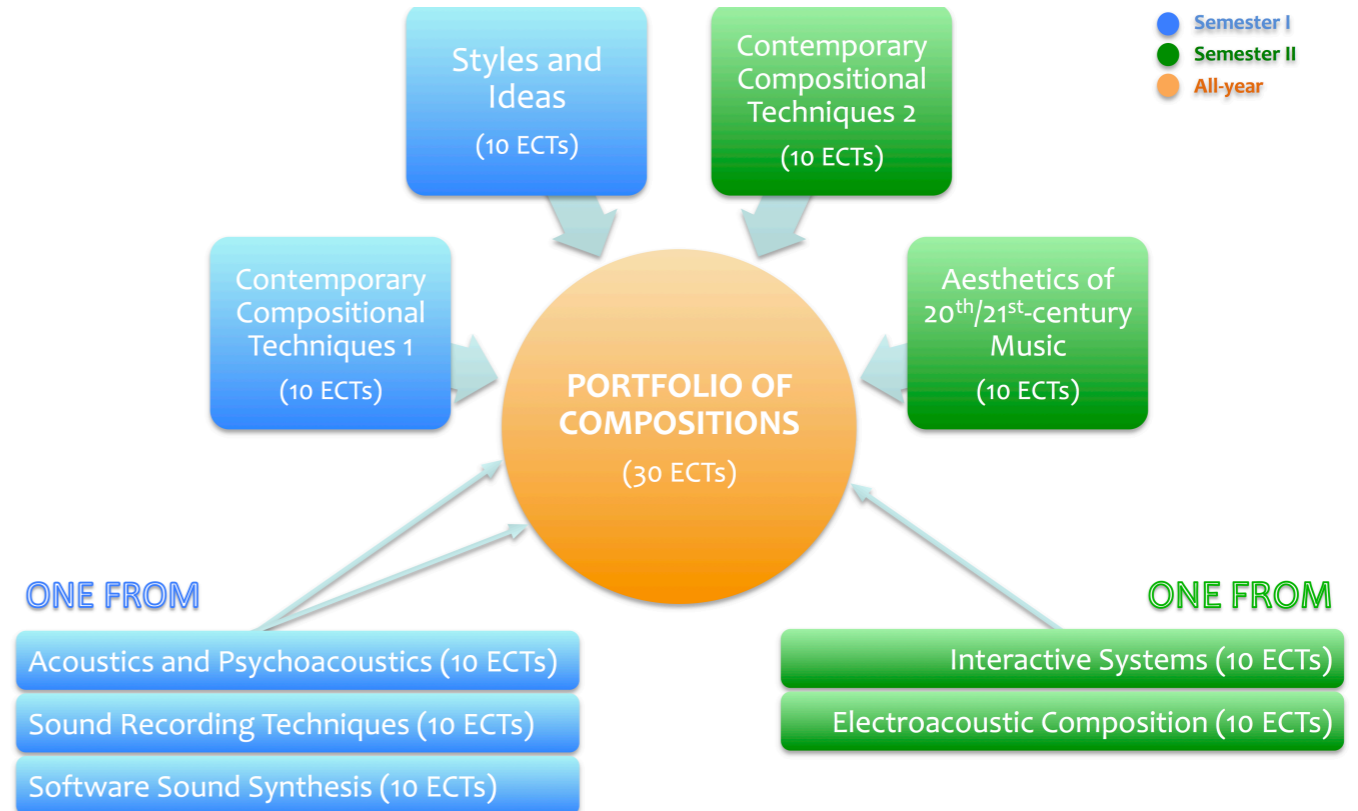
Opportunities for performance through  
collaboration with students and staff  
performers in the Department.



## COURSE STRUCTURE

The core of this course is the creation of a portfolio of compositions supported by modules in contemporary **compositional techniques**, contemporary **aesthetics** and a range of options from the **MA in Creative Music Technologies** (e.g. electroacoustic composition).

Your suite of modules can be **tailored** further by exploring the offerings of our other taught MAs in the Department of Music, e.g. MA in Musicology, MA in Irish Traditional Music, Diploma in Church Music, etc. (See overleaf.)



*Standard structure for the MA in Composition*

## CAREERS

Recent graduates have gone on to enjoy successful careers as composer (for media & art-music), arranger, performer/improviser, music copyist, essayist/critic, and have moved into related fields such as arts management and broadcasting, amongst many others.

The skills developed in the MA in Composition are **transferable** to many diverse areas of employment beyond the creative industries, including primary, secondary and third-level education, research based careers (e.g. research and consultative work, not only in the arts but also general public sector organisations), and administrative or managerial roles. Many companies look for creative, independent employees and their particular skillset; the key skills developed throughout the MA in Composition feed directly into these.



## CORE MODULES

### **MU645A Composition Portfolio** (Semesters I & II; 30 ECTs)

The composition portfolio is the centrepiece of the MA in Composition. Students develop five or six original compositions totalling 30-40 minutes of music with one-to-one guidance from their supervisors.

### **MU633 Contemporary Compositional Techniques I** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

This module provides a detailed survey of many 20th- century compositional ideas and techniques. Students submit written assignments and small compositions for assessment.

### **MU634 Contemporary Compositional Techniques II** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

This module explores many of the innovative techniques used in late-20th- and early-21st-century Art music. Topics include, for example, microtonality/acoustic phenomena, spectralism, extended techniques, gestural composition and modern scoring techniques., etc. Students submit a small number of guided compositions or analyses for assessment.

### **MU635 Aesthetics of 20th/21st Century Music** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

The 20th and 21st centuries have been witness to an incredible growth and acceptance of differing, contradictory and overlapping aesthetic viewpoints in all art, especially music. This module engages with and explores numerous aesthetic outlooks from a wide range of artistic and regional backgrounds and genres.

### **MU637 Styles and Ideas** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

This module challenges students to approach the music they find interesting or problematic in an academic and critical manner through discussion of scores and recordings of compositions, as well as the writings of composers themselves. Assessment includes presentations and a journal documenting discussions and reactions to the presentations and topics raised in the module.

## OPTIONAL MODULES *from MA in Creative Music Technologies*

### **MU610A Acoustics and Psychoacoustics** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

This module focuses on the nature of sound and sound perception, and presents basic concepts involved in the phenomena of sound.

### **MU611A Software Sound Synthesis** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

This module focuses on the study of the basic techniques of synthesis including detailed study of computer music languages (sound compilers). Topics include the basic elements of synthesis: additive, subtractive, distortion, granular techniques and physical models.

### **MU612A Sound Recording Techniques** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

This module introduces the studio to students and provides basic information needed to safely handle studio equipment.

### **MU617A Interactive Systems** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

This module is concerned with exploiting computer resources for the potential use in live contexts. It has a particular focus on SuperCollider and Max/MSP software, which are taught from the perspective of providing transferable skills, i.e. a background in object-oriented programming.

### **MU619A Electroacoustic Composition** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

This module studies the ideas, concepts and techniques involved in electronic music composition.

## OTHER OPTIONAL MODULES\*

*from other taught MAs in the Department*

### **MU647 Music in Ireland** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

### **MU648 Interpreting Analysis** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

### **MU649 Gendered Musical Bodies** (Semester II; 10 ECTs)

### **MU660A Research Methods** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

### **MU661 Musical Texts** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

### **MU673 Fieldwork & Source Studies** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

### **MU674 Theory & Practice in Irish Traditional Music** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

### **MU676 Irish Musical Critique** (Semester I; 10 ECTs)

## HOW TO APPLY

- All applications are processed online via PAC: [www.pac.ie/maynoothuniversity](http://www.pac.ie/maynoothuniversity).
- The PAC course code for Composition is MHT56 (full-time) or MHT57 (part-time).

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

- An honours degree normally with a minimum of Grade 2.1 in music.
- In exceptional circumstances, evidence of equivalent professional experience will be considered.
- A successful interview demonstrating attainment equivalent to (minimum) high 2.1 Bachelor Degree. International applicants should contact [ryan.molloy@mu.ie](mailto:ryan.molloy@mu.ie) for full details of the overseas interview processes.
- Submission of a body of compositional works (2-3), with recordings if available, which best demonstrate the interests and accomplishments of your creative output to date. This submission should be uploaded to PAC at least five days prior to the interview date.

\* N.B. All optional modules are subject to availability, and to meeting the individual module's prerequisites for entry and the relevant permissions from the course coordinator & module convenor.

# CONTACT

For more information or application queries, please contact the programme director:

## **Dr Ryan Molloy**

Department of Music  
Logic House  
Maynooth University  
Maynooth  
Co. Kildare

**t: +353 1 708 3730**

**e: [ryan.molloy@mu.ie](mailto:ryan.molloy@mu.ie)**

All applications are made through the centralised PAC system. More information can be found at:

[www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/postgraduate-studies/how-apply](http://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/study-maynooth/postgraduate-studies/how-apply)

DISCLAIMER: All details are correct at the time of publication.  
The University reserves the right to amend them at any time.

