

Conservatorium van Amsterdam

Study Guide 2023-2024

Master of Music

Pop Department

Part 2: Course Descriptions



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Schematic overview of the programme components

The programme consists of the following subjects. Students must attain all 120 credits inside two years in order to graduate:

Element	Credits (EC):
Principal study	44
POP contact	16
Managing Your Talents	15
Research	15
Electives, projects and 'free space'	30

The credits are spread over two years of the programme as follows:

	Principal Subject		POP-Contact		Managing Your Talent		Research		Individual credits		EC per year
Year 1	Instrument, Composition, Production, Theory, Innovation	22	Classes, redaction, preparation, participation in 2/3 productions	8	Visie ontwikkeling	3	Research Proposal & Research	15	Electives	5	
					Entrepreneurship	4			Individual project	5	
									Free space	5	
Subtot.		22		8		7		15		15	67
Year 2	Instrument, Composition, Production, Theory, Innovation	22	Classes, redaction, preparation, participation in 2/3 productions	8	Patterns of Performance	8	Thesis & Presentation		Electives	5	
									Individual project	5	
									Free space	5	
Subtot.		22		8		8		0		15	53
Total		44		16		15		15		30	120
%		36.7		13.3		12.5		12.5		25.0	100

Courses

Below you will find detailed descriptions of all elements that make this master's programme. The description of the course objectives refers to the competencies as formulated in the General Part of the Study Guide.

	Principal study
Description	<p>The aim of the principal study is to offer professional artists and musicians who are keen to work on deepening their professional practice from Bachelor level a broad range of lessons and support in order to develop the competencies within their professional practice on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>The course focuses on creating new material and productions, with the package of lessons comprising a mix of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instrument Composition Production Innovation Theory <p>Students use the A-MACK system, which has already been mentioned, for an intensive self-reflection that forms the basis for the discussions on formulating the programme of study. The 5 basic ingredients mentioned above therefore form a tailor-made study programme with different relationships and associated assessments within the course. Needless to say, we strive for a balance between the course, the industry and the artist/student.</p> <p>The student learns, from his or her 'spider in its web' approach, to gather a good team around himself/herself and manage that team, to achieve a high level of artistic quality and organizational scope.</p> <p>The tailor-made aspect of the teaching programmes is a combination of instrumental skills, the creation of new material by means of composition, production and arrangement, supporting it with theoretical knowledge and developing innovative approaches or products and performances.</p>
Course objectives	See the competency matrix (appendix)
Level	MA I and MA II
Lecturer(s)	Dependent on the principal study: see the list of teachers.
Credits	44
Mode of instruction	Individual lessons
Assessment method	A-MACK
Contact hours	Weekly throughout the entire course
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	POP-Contact
Description	<p>Students organize three POP-Contact evenings every year, with support from the teaching staff. These evenings are prepared by the Master students in a series of production lessons and research. Every student must take part in at least 4 of these events during the Master's course and make an active contribution to them.</p> <p>The aim of POP-Contact is to initiate dialogue between students and important key people in the industry, as well as allowing them to present their work as musicians in a creative manner. It involves sharing knowledge and networks for a direct mutual relationship and the first steps are taken towards gaining feedback for their creative projects.</p> <p>They present their own music or innovative projects, based on topical themes. The interactive setting, the preparation for interviews and the active participation in the production all provide multiple new insights for the students. The students use the weekly meetings to reflect on cultural developments, politics and the music industry, in conjunction with their own work.</p> <p>Guest speakers from previous courses include people who work at Mojo, Universal, DOX, Friendly Fire, Lowlands, Buma, Popronde, de Grote Prijs and Stichting Grap.</p>
Course objectives	See the competency matrix
Level	MA I and MA II
Lecturer(s)	Rita Zipora, Jack Pisters
Credits	4 ECTS per module; total of 16 ECTS must be acquired over the 2 years
Mode of instruction	<p>Each module consists of 8 production meetings and one evening programme.</p> <p>3 modules are organized each year. Each student must be actively involved in 4 POP-Contact modules over the two-year Master's course.</p>
Assessment method	Attendance, performance assessment, observation in practice, peer assessment.
Tutorial time	Weekly meetings in year I and year II
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Managing Your Talents: Development of Vision
Description	Master students choose a mentor who will give feedback on their own Master's programme and act as a sounding-board. Mentors from a wide range of specialists can be consulted and they will support the student's development and assist with their challenges. In this way, students learn how to build up their own think-tank, which will take the best advantage of the opportunities, in conjunction with the artistic management team at the Conservatorium.
Course objectives	3.2.1, 3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5, 3.2.6
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Course leaders and a range of teachers
Study points	3
Mode of instruction	Meetings with the mentor
Assessment method	Self-assessment; verbal feedback from teachers and the course leaders
Contact hours	1 hour per month
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Managing Your Talents: Entrepreneurship
Description	Master students are entrepreneurs, first and foremost, and in that capacity will have to cope with marketing, media and management. Most publicity operates like a 'billboard', with audiences passing by and taking a brief glance at it. A brief snapshot, illuminating just one small aspect, is important when it comes to making a first impression and an initial acquaintance. The question of what impression is made, and whether it is a good one, is an essential feature of this module. This is why the module covers on the one hand <i>Vision</i> , where the students start to uncover their own core values and the story they want to narrate, and on the other hand <i>Marketing</i> , which deals with how to tell that story. There are also group lessons for a close examination of the functions of <i>Media</i> : how to deal with interviewers, how to ensure that you make your point clearly, what to do in a PR crisis and how to develop a suitable 'public image'.
Course objectives	3.2.1 3.2.2 3.2.3 3.2.4 3.2.5 3.2.6
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Various teachers
Study points	4
Mode of instruction	Lectures

Assessment method	Assignments, review
Contact hours	8 x 2-hour sessions
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

**Managing Your Talents: Patterns of Performance
(3 elements, a total of 8 study points must be obtained)**

Musicians regularly encounter a recognisable pattern of obstacles in their lives as performance artists. They may be either internal or external. There are physical, psychological and social structures to be discovered that relate specifically to the practice of a creative profession as a musician. Patterns of Performance applies three different disciplines to offer students understanding, knowledge and strategy for conquering the specific obstacles facing the artistic profession. A mix of group discussions, lectures and workshops tangibly combines theory and practice and encourages the students to develop their own background resources that will support their professional life artistically, socially and physically.

	Managing Your Talents: Patterns of Performance – <i>Intervision</i>
Description	A creative profession demands collaboration of the highest order. A musician often has to fulfil different roles in a band. It is really complex to be a band leader and at the same time a creative worker of equal strength to the others. Wide-ranging and challenging social situations within a team demand specific and effective methods of communication. Intervision is a method of communication that supports creative entrepreneurs when discussing artistic challenges. The 10-step process covers clarification, questioning, answering and advising. Problems are illuminated from a range of perspectives in a strictly structured group discussion, which then prompts a development. Intervision is a fairly quick and brief exchange rather than a debate, feedback or assessment. After a few Intervision sessions with the other Master students, each student may request a special Intervision session for his or her own project or with their own band. (free space)
Course objectives	3.2.2, 3.2.3, 3.2.4, 3.2.5 and 3.2.6
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Blanka Pesja
Study points	2 (offered 2 x per annum)
Mode of instruction	Joint meetings in year I and year II
Assessment method	A-MACK reflection
Contact hours	Choice from 4 of the 10 sessions
Information	Blanka Pesja blanka.pesja@ahk.nl

	Managing Your Talents: Patterns of Performance – Presence
Description	<p>Having a strong stage 'presence' means being able to grab the audience's attention and keep it. This is all about making a strong impression and leaving that impression behind. One associates the quality of 'presence' during a performance with a raw, primal feeling on the one hand and supernatural or even religious power on the other hand. It can encompass the image of both the hero and the devil. An artist with a strong stage presence raises the level of a performance to a higher plane.</p> <p>Master students will be given the opportunity to work on their stage presence in four workshops directed by a professional actor. These will focus on live performances by the students. These intense and, to some extent, confrontational workshops will clarify the mystery surrounding 'stage presence'.</p>
Course objectives	3.2.1 3.2.2 3.2.3 3.2.4 3.2.5
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Frank Lammers
Study points	2 (offered 2 x per annum)
Mode of instruction	Workshops
Assessment method	Review & Performance assessment
Contact hours	4 workshops each year, covering year I and year II
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Managing Your Talents: Patterns of Performance – Pressure
Description	<p>Functioning under pressure is a given fact. Knowing how our brains work is fundamentally important for dealing positively with stress. Four lectures will discuss important elements of neuroscience: motor function, injury prevention, emotions and thought patterns. As well as learning about the latest findings in neuroscience, students will be informed about the general basic principles of the brain, including musical and 'performance-specific' functions. The focus will be on change processes. Having a basic understanding of the brain will allow students to design their own personal change strategies for better managing their own personal development.</p>
Course objectives	3.2.1. 3.2.3 3.2.4 3.2.5 3.2.6
Level	MA I or MA II
Teacher(s)	Beorn Nijenhuis
Study points	2 (offered 1 x per annum)

Mode of instruction	Lecture
Assessment method	Self-assessment, Paper
Contact hours	4 x 1.5 hour lectures covering year I and year II (offered each year)
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Research: proposal, research, thesis and presentation
Description	<p>The aim of the research element of the Master of Music in Pop is to challenge the student's curiosity. It coincides with the vision of the teaching staff at the Conservatorium to have practising musicians acting as ambassadors for their profession in a range of situations, whether playing, orally or in writing. The practice of music benefits from an organized exchange of new ideas.</p> <p>Students will already have submitted a research proposal when registering for the Master's course. Based on this initial proposal, a member of staff can be selected during the first year of study who will support the student by way of personal meetings for further elaborating the research proposal. Students meet regularly to Assessment method each other's ideas and provide each other with feedback.</p> <p>The research is undertaken during the first year of study. Students are given time and space to explore tangential areas while preparing the research. This demands an attitude of openness. The supporting member of staff will encourage the student to try out a number of angles of approach during the research. The student should end up with a key issue and should clearly delineate the theme of the thesis.</p> <p>The student works on the thesis during the second year of study. Meetings can be set up with the supporting staff member to keep the writing process on track and to have a sounding-board while working out the theme.</p> <p>The presentation of the research is an important element for concluding the Master's course. The thesis has to be available. The process from initial statement of intent to research question and from research results to the final thesis must be explained clearly and consistently. The Master student must generate new understandings from and about music in practice. It is also important for the thesis presentation to be anchored in the student's own musical profile.</p>
Course objectives	3.2.1 3.2.2 3.2.3 3.2.4 3.2.5 3.2.6
Level	MA I and MA II

Teacher(s)	George Vermij, Jack Pisters, Blanka Pesja, Michiel Schuijjer, Yaniv Nachum
Study points	15
Mode of instruction	Individual meetings with the supporting staff member; undertaking research (literature-based or empirical); writing a thesis; presentation.
Assessment method	Thesis and presentation
Contact hours	A total of 420 hours of study to be spent on this element. Meetings with supporting staff member as required.
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl, Blanka Pesja blanka.pesja@ahk.nl

	Electives
Description	If there is a specific requirement for study, a Master student can add certain courses to his/her personal development pathway. The aim may be, for instance, to expand knowledge of the student's personal theme or offer new perspectives on the implementation of the student's personal artistic vision. Students may select a personal programme of lessons, as they see fit and in consultation with a mentor they choose, if this supports their artistic and/or commercial development. Expanding the student's theoretical knowledge is also possible by way of taking extra Master level courses from other departments of the Conservatorium or one or more of the other courses within the University of Amsterdam.
Course objectives	Dependent on choice
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Various teachers
Study points	5
Mode of instruction	Various Mode of instruction, depending on the course chosen
Assessment method	Various Assessment methods, depending on the course chosen
Contact hours	Various, depending on the course
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Projects
Description	Master students will express their personal artistic plans in one or more projects. The projects that are chosen should reflect the student's artistic and compositional vision. As such, the personal projects are a direct manifestation of the chosen area of professional practice. Examples might include putting forward one or more bands, releasing an EP, and so on.
Course objectives	Dependent on choice
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Various teachers
Study points	5
Mode of instruction	Various
Assessment method	Review
Contact hours	By arrangement
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl

	Free space
Description	Free space offers Master students an opportunity to spend part of the time involved in their studies on (professional) activities outside the Conservatorium. It is possible, for instance, to gain extra experience in professional practice by pursuing an internship, attending workshops or organizing a foreign residency. Master students can also find scope within the free space for their own interests in other media such as film, video or the graphic arts.
Course objectives	Dependent on choice
Level	MA I and MA II
Teacher(s)	Various teachers
Study points	5
Mode of instruction	Various tests
Assessment method	Self-assessment & assessment by supporting staff member or lecturer.
Contact hours	By arrangement
Information	Jack Pisters jack.pisters@ahk.nl