



Allan Colver, Jeremy Teasdale, and Caitlin Hedley - the first students to graduate from Northumbria University's Music BA (Hons) degree

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New music degree celebrates first graduating class

The first cohort of students from one of the UK's newest BA Hons Music Degrees has this month graduated with a final recital and celebratory event held at Northumbria University.

Launched in September 2020, the Northumbria University Music BA (Hons) degree was the one of the first new music degrees to be established in several decades.

This year's graduating students performed their final recitals on 16 May 2023, and enjoyed a leavers' event in the University's Great Hall with the whole music department, their families, and friends.

Designed as a 'music degree for the 21st century', the degree combines the study of performance and music history with a strong focus on employability.

Particularly distinctive is the focus on training for aspiring instrumental and vocal teachers, while giving students the knowledge and the practical skills required to work across the music industry and beyond.

The degree makes the most of Northumbria University's connections with key cultural institutions in Newcastle.

Students have visited the [Literary and Philosophical Society's](#) (Lit & Phil's) historical library to get hands on with the musical past, as well as performing in spaces such as [Newcastle Cathedral](#), with which Northumbria has a long-standing partnership.

One of the graduates, Caitlin Hedley, has also been a choral scholar and part of the Newcastle Cathedral Consort - a joint venture between the Cathedral and Northumbria University.

Another of the graduating students, Jeremy Teasdale, studied 19th-century composer Emma Maria MacFarren, who gave the first ever music recital at the Lit & Phil in 1868.

For his dissertation, Jeremy researched the surviving copies of her works and will perform them at a free lunchtime concert at the Lit & Phil on Friday 2 June.

The concert will take attendees back to that day and will feature her caprice-nocturne *The Music of the Sea* alongside a selection of other surviving works.

[Tickets are available to book online.](#)

Founding Head of Music, [Professor David Smith](#), said: "After the closure of so many music departments over the years, it has been a privilege to work with

colleagues in setting up a new music degree here at Northumbria, and an even greater privilege to have worked with such amazing students.”

[Dr Katherine Butler](#), Assistant Professor, and a music historian in the Department of Humanities at Northumbria University, said: “The degree is designed for students who are passionate about music and wish to broaden their knowledge of music and develop their skills in performance and teaching.

“The course allows students to explore a wide range of musical genres and styles through small group, research-led teaching. Students can study a variety of modules in performance, music education, theory and harmony, and music history, as well undertaking teaching or work placements, carrying out their own independent research projects, and giving recitals.

“It has been a delight to see the first cohort of students complete the degree. Huge congratulations to all this year’s graduates.”

To find out more, visit Northumbria University’s [Music Foundation Year](#) and [Music BA \(Hons\) degree](#) webpages.

This year's scholarships are still open for 2023/24 entry, including [Choral Scholarships](#) and [Instrumental Scholarships](#). Applications for scholarships will close at 4pm on Friday 01 September 2023.

UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2022 (Times Higher Education Awards)

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