Module Descriptor

Title	Popular Music: History And Politics		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	
Code	MUSC07015	**SCQF Level**	7
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Business and Creative Industries**		
Module Co-ordinator	Jayne Stynes		

Summary of Module

As a module Popular Music: History & Politics traces the development of contemporary forms of popular music by analysing the historical impact of key developments within art, performance and popular music within a socio-political context.

Through a series of interactive lectures and seminars, students will effectively experience the development of these strands of popular culture, with the links between these elements serving to provide participants with the capacity to gain a cohesive and crossdisciplinary overview of popular music and the creative arts as they stand in the twentyfirst century. Students will, be expected to articulate their knowledge and understanding of the critical theories and key themes that emerge from the module by means of a written essay, or through an assessed presentation.

This process will thus help to lay the foundation for students to engage with further, more intensive, interaction with Popular Music Studies in subsequent modules within their own subject areas.

Topics covered include the following: Art Movements, Aesthetics, Audiences, Creative and Cultural Industries, Film and Music Genres, Media Recordings, Performance, and Subcultures. Movements, events and genres such as Rock Against Racism, Disco and Dance Culture, Rap and Hip Hop, Riot Grrrl.

Module Delivery Method	On-Campus[1] ☒	Hybrid[2] ☐	Online[3] ☐	Work -Based Learning[4] ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☒ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☐ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☐ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☐	Term 2	☒	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	To demonstrate the historical impact of key developments within art, performance, and popular music from a socio-political perspective.
L2	To describe critical issues and demonstrate engagement with discourse on key developments that serve to historically shape art, performance, and popular music.
L3	
L4	
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 7** Understanding the relevance of music and music making to societies past and present. Exploring musical repertoires and their cultural contexts.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 7** Skills of research and exploration; gathering, synthesis and evaluation of evidence, including the ability to quote from and acknowledge written sources in the study of popular music history. The ability to examine assumptions in the light of evidence.

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 7** Present and evaluate collaborative music practice. Address defined music briefs using a range of performance approaches.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 7** The ability to employ reasoning and logic in order to analyse data, and to formulate relevant arguments and hypotheses in the study of popular music history and the social impact of music in a range of genres and eras. The ability to plan, implement, evaluate, and reflect critically on work in progress.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 7** Ability to work as an integrated member of a team, forming arguments for musical and socio-political debate. Skills in public presentation including an awareness of audience characteristics and responses.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching	
In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.	
Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	30
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	6
Independent Study	164
Please select	
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Fairchild, C. (2025) The Capitalist Imaginaries of Popular Music. Bristol: Intellect Books.

Sloan, N. and Harding, C. (2019) Switched on Pop: How Popular Music Works, and why it Matters. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Cateforis, T. (ed.) (2018). The rock history reader. London and New York: Routledge.

Inglis, I. (ed.) (2017) Performance and popular music: history, place and time. New York: Routledge.

Stanley, B. (2015) Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! The Story of Modern Pop From Bill Haley to Beyonce. London: W.W. Norton & Co.

Echols, A. (2010) Hot stuff: Disco and the remaking of American culture. New York: WW Norton & Company.

Whiteley, S. (ed.) (1997) Sexing the groove: Popular music and gender. New York: Routledge

*JS

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

Equality and Diversity

The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code.

(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Arts Media**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Arts & Media
Moderator	Rebecca Wallace
External Examiner	Katherine Williams
Accreditation Details	JAMES, SMIA
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☐ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1.2

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)
Assessment 1
Written Assignment (ASSIGN) An overview and plan of the proposed essay or presentation topic Word count: 750 words Weighting: 20% *JS
Assessment 2
Written assignment (ASSIGN) An essay or 15–20-minute presentation, which provides a critical analysis of a creative/music related entity from popular music history Word count – 2000 words Weighting – 80%
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1

Assessment Type	LO1	LO2	LO3	LO4	LO5	Weighting of Assessment Element (%)	Timetabled Contact Hours
Written assignment 1	☒	☐	☐	☐	☐	20%	

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Written assignment 2	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	80%	

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	When	Who
Updated Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure	19/10/2023	C Winter
Updated UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code	19/10/2023	C Winter
General housekeeping to text across sections.	12/12/23	D Taylor
Update to Indicative Resources and Assessment (wording only)	04/03/25	J Stynes
No changes	**March 2026**	**J Stynes**