

DMA in Music Performance

Qualifying Examination

The DMA Qualifying Examination occurs at the midpoint of the student's program and is an opportunity to consolidate what has been learned while providing focus and direction for what remains. It is a milestone intended to support the development of the student's Research Creation Portfolio.

The DMA Qualifying Examination acknowledges the wide range of competencies needed by musicians today. Since the Research Creation Portfolio of each student will be different, the exam is likewise calibrated to the professional and artistic goals of the student.

A successful exam will demonstrate proficiency of knowledge and research ability, and readiness to complete the Stream 1 or Stream 2 Research Creation Portfolio requirements.

Procedures and assessment

Students normally write the Qualifying Examination in the sixth term of registration (summer of Year 2). Students expected to write the exam will be invited to state when they wish to begin the examination, normally between May 1 and August 1.

The Qualifying Examination consists of two tasks set by the DMA Advisory Committee in consultation with the student and approved by the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Where appropriate, the Advisory Committee can seek approval for an exam consisting of a single task.

The format of the exam could include (but is not limited to) items from the following list:

- A selection of essay topics. Students will write one or two research papers of approximately 2500 words or 10 pages each
- A mock conference proposal along with a video presentation of the conference paper.
- A fully designed 1-term music course (including course syllabus, schedule of topics, description of assignments, sample assignment)
- A mock SSHRC doctoral award application
- A business plan for a CD or recording project (budget, distribution, artistic concept, sample recording, repertoire/composers you would commission, liner notes).

The Qualifying Examination will be sent electronically to students by the Graduate Program Assistant on the start date and must be submitted electronically to the Graduate Program Assistant by the due date (4:00 p.m. EST). The two-week period for completion of the exam is fixed. Students are responsible for correctly noting the due date and submitting their work on time.

The examination is assessed on its overall academic merit. Criteria of assessment include engagement with relevant literature, calibre of writing, strength of argumentation, creativity of thought, clarity of organization, careful presentation, and proper use of scholarly apparatus.

The completed exam is sent by the Graduate Program Assistant to the members of the DMA Advisory Committee. Each member of the committee reviews the exam, and the Chair of the committee coordinates a discussion among committee members to determine the outcome. The possible outcomes are:

- ⇒ Pass
- ⇒ Conditional Pass (pending supplemental work within a time frame determined by the Advisory Committee)
- ⇒ Fail (a student may be invited to repeat a failed exam or to withdraw from the program)

The Chair of the DMA Advisory Committee reports the decision of the committee to the office of the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Each member of the committee is invited to give feedback to the student in writing or in person. A note is added to the student's record when this program milestone has been completed.