



Bass • Drums • Guitar • Piano

Course Outline (2025)

© MMTP 2025

Giancarlo Ranzani
January, 2025
Cornaredo (MI)

Edtp:
Segmenty
Cornaredo (MI)

A digital copy of this brochure and related information can be downloaded
from the MMTP website: www.mmtprogram.com

Contents

Introduction	1
The concept of Music Master Teacher	2
The course rationale	4
The MMTP in the professional context	6
The study program	9
Qualification	12
The teaching team	14
Attendance	14
Assesement	15
Entry requirements	15
Conclusion	16
Contacts	17
Our motto	18

Introduction

There has never been a better time to be a music teacher in Italy's private music education sector. Until the not-too-distant past, music education in Italy was far less developed and widespread. As a result, the demand for music lessons has been steadily on the rise. However, the growing popularity of new music genres, the proliferation of diverse curricula and methodologies, together with the rapid advancements in technology are transforming music education faster than ever before. Owing to this, the need for more effective teaching methods – pushed by an increasingly competitive and well-informed industry – poses new and complex challenges, on the part of both those musicians whose professional ambition is to pursue a career in music teaching, and those whose career is already established.

The former tends to be concerned with putting his/her career on the right track from the outset, so as to avoid the common and errors that cause a career to move in the wrong direction; therefore, losing valuable time, damaging one's reputation, and incurring financial resources that jeopardise the expectations of a solid career. The latter, albeit may already hold a stable position, values the importance of further expanding his/her existing knowledge for the purpose of remaining at the leading edge of the profession.

In this context, what makes a successful music teacher grow is to become increasingly aware of is the first step toward professional growth. For established educators, this awareness helps them refine and advance their careers, while aspiring teachers gain insight into the key factors that lay the foundation for a future-proof career in music education. (please visit <http://www.mmtprogram.com/About.aspx> for further discussion on the dichotomy between trained and untrained teachers,)

With this in mind, the Music Master Teacher Program (MMTP) is specifically designed to equip participants with the skills and knowledge that, in our view, define a highly professional music teacher today. We refer to such a teacher as a Music Master Teacher.

Our program is available on four instruments: bass, drums, guitar, and piano. These instruments form four dedicated departments within the MMTP, each with its own specialized program:

- BMTP** (Bass Master Teacher Program)
- DMTP** (Drums Master Teacher Program)
- GMTP** (Guitar Master Teacher Program)
- PMTP** (Piano Master Teacher Program)

The concept of Music Master Teacher

“The MMTP has been designed to address all the key aspects that define a Music Master Teacher.”

There is shared consensus among educators across all disciplines that teaching requires expertise both in pedagogy and in the subject being taught. These two aspects, when intertwined in a dialectical relationship, form a powerful and inseparable unit. In music circles, however, the oft-stated cliché ‘a good player does not make a good teacher’ is commonly thrown around in discussions apropos music education. This highlights the essential role of educational training alongside musical proficiency. The aforementioned locution reflects the common reality in which these two areas of expertise – musical skill and pedagogical knowledge – are often treated as separate rather than integrated.

As a result, the term music teacher is commonly applied both to those who teach without formal pedagogical training and to those whose teaching is informed by a deep understanding of educational theory and methodology. To distinguish between these two approaches, we introduce the term Music Master Teacher, which will be used hereafter to emphasize the difference between traditional music teaching and a more comprehensive, pedagogically informed model.

In its present basic form, the term Master Teacher is used to characterise a teacher who possess significant experience as well as professional status, i.e., a teacher who has been teaching for several years, who is familiar with curricula, and holds relevant credentials. More specifically, the title traditionally implies a range of distinctive qualities, including enthusiasm, strong communication skills, and professionalism. Furthermore, it denotes key attributes such as

empathy and impeccable conduct. However, at its most refined level, the term is also associated with two overarching aspects: research skills and curriculum development.

Within the framework of this program, research skills refer to the ability to source, critically analyse, and evaluate educational approaches and teaching methods. This includes to test them in different teaching settings to identify what enhances learning and what may need refinement. When curricular knowledge is integrated into this process of research and reflection, it ensures that students systematically receive a refined, well-structured music education.

With these principles in mind, the Music Master Teacher Program (MMTP) has been designed from the ground up to embody all the defining qualities of a Music Master Teacher.



The course rationale

“The Music Master Teacher Program pioneers a transdisciplinary teacher training initiative.”

The pedagogical notion underpinning this course is that music education should adapt to, and be grounded in, the context of its time. As a corollary, teacher training should strive to provide music teachers with the adequate range of theoretical knowledge, teaching experiences, and instrumental skills aligned with the present-day music landscape.

Notably, music teachers are faced with the daunting prospect of teaching music to students of different age or music genres are rooted in a music culture different that the one teachers are enculturated. This include music of non-European origins that steam from distinct aesthetics values and learning paradigms – such as it is typically the case with African-diasporic music (e.g., jazz, Afro-Cuban). In our experience, we have found that most of our colleagues express frustration with the lack of a teacher training program specifically designed from the standpoint of equipping them with the breadth and depth of knowledge needed to emerge and thrive in the new avenues of music teaching.

In this context, many teachers enter the profession relying on self-directed teaching strategies shaped by their own experiences. As a result, they often distance themselves from leading educators who are depositary of invaluable expertise and can offer a crucial roadmap for those embarking on a career in music education. By doing so, these teachers miss the opportunity to engage with educators who have effectively explored the nexus between learning theories and the various branches of music-related knowledge.

To this end, it is important to note that while entering the profession without formal teacher training may not pose immediate challenges, the lack of comprehensive knowledge is unlikely to make for a copacetic and sustainable and solution in the long run. Therefore, since teacher training is crucial for addressing the critical issues faced by music educators in today's increasingly complex and socially interconnected music ecosystem, music teachers recognize the responsibility to acquire a solid grasp of educational knowledge.

In response to this, the Music Master Teacher Program pioneers a transdisciplinary teacher training approach that integrates a body of knowledge combining evidence-based learning theories with innovative music methodologies, well-balanced curricula, ethical guidelines, business practices, and more. To accomplish this, we have team up with academic experts and music specialists to furnish participants with interdisciplinary learning experiences. As such, all members of our team hold qualifications in their respective disciplines from recognized music conservatories or academic institutions, and possess proven expertise in their field of knowledge.



The MMTP in the professional context

“The MMTP is an optimal vehicle for gaining a formal qualification.”

The core purpose undergirding the MMTP is to address a wide range of educational and theoretical issues that have been identified as lacking within the music teaching community. On one hand, we recognize that community-based teaching, or private sector teaching, is by far the most common learning environment in which music skills and knowledge are transmitted – especially in the realm of popular music. On the other hand, because it operates privately, teaching in these settings is not subject to state-regulated standards or requirements.

As a result, many teachers begin their careers with little or no prior knowledge of how to confront the complexities of music and instrumental teaching. In this scenario, teachers often create their curricula by piecing together various manuals from the profusion of publications dedicated to developing instrumental skills, without assessing their relevance or considering how to adapt the material to the specific characteristics of their students.

Pedagogical concepts, in fact, remain largely ignored by trade publications aimed at music teachers, except for those dedicated to early childhood education. This disconnect between the challenges the profession presents and, by extension, the lack of teacher training programs that provide the necessary knowledge to manage them, has become the driving force behind the conceptualization of this teacher training initiative, which is envisioned as a solution to this gap.

We expect the types of music performers or music teachers who will benefit from this teacher training course can be categorised into two main groups. First, musicians who possess playing ability, to varying degrees, and now intend to focus more on the educational side of the music business (a trend that has been accentuated by the reduced opportunities that have burdened live music in recent years) but are unfamiliar with the intricacies of music education. Second, existing music teachers who appreciate teacher training as a worthwhile investment to enhance their employability or attract more students.

In this regard, it is important to note, for example, that formal qualifications have been gaining steam in the private sector, including among musicians specializing in popular music. The MMTP serves as an optimal vehicle for obtaining such qualifications, as participants will develop both the practical and academic skills necessary to pass the exams that lead to a teaching diploma during the course. Thus, the program offers a pathway to pursuing a formal qualification. These diplomas, awarded by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), are mapped against the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

Lastly, we strongly believe that our program will engage music teachers who are committed to furthering their professionalism ever more by interacting with an interdisciplinary team and remaining open to new ways of thinking about music teaching – embodying the spirit captured by the maxim, “Think forward or get left behind.” As teachers ourselves, we comprehend

that furthering our professional development and nurturing our intellectual understanding of learning processes makes teaching more satisfying and stimulating.



The study program

The program is structured over three terms of study, each comprising a set of modules. The three terms are named as follows: (i) Principles of music education and practices, (ii) Music and instrumental studies, and curriculum design, and (iii) teaching, research, and academic writing. The objectives of these three sections are anchored in the overarching aim of the MMTP: to support teachers in developing the expertise necessary to critically assess the three key factors that define a master teacher: knowledge, practice, and research skills. Below is a synopsis of the three phases of the program:

Phase 1: Foundations of Music Education and Related Disciplines. The first part of this phase introduces participants to a series of topics related to teaching approaches. These include an overview of current teaching methodologies, influential figures in music education, and learning processes. The modules encourage participants to deeply enquire how learners acquire skills, how to approach teaching effectively, and which methodologies to employ to promote successful learning. This phase also covers aspects related to physical health, highlighting healthy habits that help prevent potential injuries (e.g., muscular or hearing-related) and concludes with an examination of essential entrepreneurial skills, ranging from marketing to finance. Together with an appropriate lifestyle, these skills are considered vital for building and sustaining a successful teaching career.

Phase 2: Music and Instrumental Teaching Approaches, and Curriculum Design. The primary focus of this section is to develop the core principles of curriculum design, in the conviction that there is no single path to music teaching, nor one

¹ Please note: The program structure and components reflect the curriculum as of 2025 and may be subject to future revisions.

approach that suits all. It requires investigating the principles of curriculum design, encouraging teachers to revise existing curricula, as well as creating their own curriculum materials tailored to the diverse needs of students. This phase begins with an evaluation of various approaches to music teaching and music-related subjects. . In this scheme, music theory and harmony are discussed as part of music literacy; the role of improvisation and composition in music education are scrutinized as vehicles of the creative studies; while approaches to areas such as tone production, repertoire, stylistic interpretation etc. are aspects examined in the instrument-specific module of this term.

Phase 3: Reflective Practice, Principles of Research, and Teaching Mastery.

We recognize that music master teachers are defined by their commitment to lifelong learning. They are never satisfied with their current knowledge and never believe they have reached the peak of their professional development. These teachers fully recognise that the success of their career depends their musical and performance expertise as much as on their ability to handle a wide range of pedagogical and professional challenges. As a result, master music teachers continuously seek new opportunities to update and test their knowledge, staying open to the latest methods in both technical and musical development, while also engaging with research-based literature and practice to stay informed on current advancements in music education. To this end, this phase of the program introduces participants to three key areas in education.

Firstly, several principles and operational phases of research in music education will be exposed. These include how to source, read, and interpret research-based papers. Although this is often overlooked by music teachers, developing

research skills and applying them regularly establishes versatile competencies that position teachers to write independently, present their educational projects or teaching units more effectively, defend their choice of teaching strategies, and develop problem-solving strategies in a more efficient and organized manner. Additionally, the writing and communication skills, along with the higher-level analysis encouraged in this module, form the bedrock of knowledge that support candidates in achieving ABRSM teaching diplomas.

Importantly, this is not to suggest that upon completion of the course, participants will be fully equipped to produce scholarly literature. Rather, they will become proficient in sourcing relevant literature and critically evaluating research to deepen and expand their knowledge base on topics of personal interest. This process is where our vision of transitioning from a music instructor to a music master teacher is cultivated.

Secondly, teaching practice and lesson presentation are integral to this phase. Participants will develop teaching demonstrations and presentations – under supervision – guided by the teaching principles explored in previous modules. Finally, participants will actively engage in teaching demonstrations, receive feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching, and learn to self-assess their strengths and areas for improvement.



Qualification

The MMTP factors in the importance of holding a formal qualification, viewing it as major asset for advancing one's teaching credentials. The MMTP achieves this by guiding its participants towards an exam that will certify the skills and knowledge that they will have gain throughout the course. The exam leads to a qualification rated according to the European Qualification Framework (Level 5, 6, 7), and whose prestige is recognised nationally and internationally across a broad range of music teaching settings.

The exams are administered and accredited by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM). There are three levels of diplomas available, each aligned with the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as follows:

- ARSM in Music Teaching (Associate of the Royal Schools of Music)
EQF Level 5
- LRSM in Music Teaching (Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music)
EQF Level 6
- FRSM in Music Education (Fellowship of the Royal Schools of Music)
EQF Level 7

The holder of an ABRSM Diploma is legally entitled to use the post-nominal letters corresponding to the level of the diploma (ARSM, LRSM, or FRSM) after their name.

Following the release of the new ABRSM teaching diploma syllabi in 2024, the MMTP team has reviewed all available options for certifying the MMTP course, albeit indirectly. All sources potentially compatible with the course objectives and accessible privately to participants were scrutinized and analyzed comparatively. This process led to the conclusion that ABRSM exams – both in terms of the exam types and assessment rigor – offer the highest degree of alignment with the academic scope and depth of our program.

In this context, the ABRSM syllabus represents a departure from syllabi previously known in the international examination sector. Unlike other systems, ABRSM exams focus on music education and research skills, rather than grade-based instrumental instruction. Consequently, similar to academic music degree courses, ABRSM diplomas confer a more university-like level of expertise in the broad field of music education, free from association with any specific instrument type or music genre (e.g., acoustic guitar). This distinction allows teachers to evolve into instructors across multiple genres, rather than being limited to one, and frees them from being tied to a specific instrument type or music genre-specific qualification when, in fact, may teach more than one genre.

Importantly, ABRSM exams cater for practitioners across the teaching spectrum, as exams are welcome across a variety of settings, including class-based instruction, ensemble tuition, and individual/group lessons. Last but not least, ABRMS enjoys a well-established and global reputation within the music community being widely regarded as the international leader in music exams. Notably, ABRSM is a partner of the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music (founded in 1822), which are ranked first and second, respectively, in the 2024 QS World University Rankings for music conservatories.



The teaching team

The MGTP aims to ensure a high quality learning experience. On this principle, it provides participants with the opportunity to interact with a team of specialists and experts from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Each specialist and expert is assigned to a subject based on their qualifications and experience in their field of expertise.

Attendance

The MMTP program is delivered through a three years program. Each year is delivered through a combination of in-person tuition and remote learning. The in-person components will consist of two intensive sessions, where all modules will be introduced, and participants will have the chance to meet one another and interact with the lecturers. Throughout the rest of the year, participants will continue their studies with remote support.

Assessment

In Phases 1 and 2, the assessment system consists of completing small written assignments for each module throughout the year, followed by a summative assessment. This structure allows course leaders to monitor participants' progress and their ability to apply what has been discussed during tutored or supervised sessions. Phase 3 will involve a combination of practical and written work, with participants working on a project of their own choosing.

Entry requirements

The entry requirements for the course include:

- A letter of intent (250 words)
- Grade 5 in music theory (or equivalent)
- Grade 8 (or equivalent) in one's primary instrument, or alternatively, a video performance of two contrasting pieces that demonstrate technical proficiency and mature interpretative skills in the selected genre
- Participants must be actively teaching at least three students throughout the duration of the course.

Conclusion

When we think about a music teacher, we often tend to evoke the image of an instructor as someone who shows us the mechanics of playing and passes down a set of theoretical constructs. Obviously, there can be no doubt these aspects are of paramount importance, and their importance cannot be overstated. At the same time, we advance it is equally crucial that we think of a music teacher as someone whose interest reaches beyond the essentials of performance and music theory, and who is passionate in obtaining theoretical clarity over the key themes in the contemporary music educational, becoming able to connect music playing to innovative teaching methods, music playing to global music education, music playing and special needs, and so forth.

In this framework, the MMTP is designed to guide music teachers at the convergence of several disciplines, many of which have become increasingly interconnected in recent years. For example, the field of music therapy demonstrates the productive intersection of music and medical knowledge. And although commonplace in other disciplines, this interdisciplinary approach remains largely neglected and unexplored in the realm of music instruction in community settings. Therefore, the ultimate aim of the MMTP is to challenge and expand the current understanding of music teaching. Upon this rock, the MMTP is built, grounded in a vision that strives to transform music education and teacher professionalism. And we invite musicians who are dedicated to the professionalism of music teaching and passionate about their continuous development to join the course and strive to become the best educators they can be.

Finally, courses with a strong educational focus often give rise to concerns about high university tuition fees – especially when full-time attendance is required – and about programs that primarily emphasize abstract scientific knowledge, or practical skills limited to early childhood education or Western art music. In contrast, the MMTP aims to offer university-level education at a fraction of the cost, providing community music teachers with a top-notch teacher training program that is financially sustainable. To this end, the MMTP team strives to deliver the program that is accessible to most music teachers.

Contacts

Any enquiry regarding the GMTP program
should be directed to

info@mmtprogram.com

follow us:



Our motto

“The Music Master Teacher Program is an educational initiative that unites a team of music specialists and academic experts to deliver a teacher training course designed to significantly enhance the quality of music education and elevate the professionalism of music teachers in community settings and beyond”





“Pushing the boundaries of music education”



www.mmtprogram.com