

# catalyst

2026

MASTER OF ARTS

# Creative Production (Music)

Reshape your creative practice through  
artistic research

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**Teaching Institution:** Catalyst – Institute of Creative Arts and Technology

**Final Award Title:** Master of Arts

**Location:** Berlin

**Mode of study:** Full time (1 year) or Part time (2 years)

**Language of instruction:** English

**Awarding Institution:** Plymouth Marjon University

# Overview

## Reshape your music practice through artistic research

Master your craft, desired specialisation or passion project through an iterative practice-based research approach in our Creative Production (Music) MA. You'll widen and deepen your frames of musical and conceptual reference, while exploring your own creative voice and artistic projects. Throughout this intense and rewarding production period filled with substantial creative work, you'll be fully supported by workshops, guest sessions, seminars, individual mentoring and collaboration with a diverse group of peers.

The one-year (or two-year, part-time) course provides a clear but flexible framework for negotiated and self-directed learning. You'll be introduced to a tried and tested approach to research that puts artistic production and performance front and centre. We'll stimulate your curiosity, give you a set of tools with which to explore and develop your personal research ideas and concepts, empowering you to then apply those ideas using our state-of-the-art facilities. This wider range of research in sound, music and the arts positions your work for the audiences, institutions and opportunities that matter to you.

Join an inspiring community of students from around the world who will act as mentors, peers, collaborators, audience and fellow travellers. With deep critical reflection and input from this truly international community, you'll get to define or redefine the next chapter of your practice, whilst asking yourself this essential question: What will you use this time to create?

**“My favourite part of learning here was the access to the incredible studios. It helped uncover my creativity and explore different aspects of my musical and artistic journey.”**

– Sofi Paez, pianist and Creative Production (Music) MA alumna



## What is creative production?

Creative production is an intentionally broad term. Within the realm of music, it covers – but isn't limited to – music production, recording, composition, programming, performance, sound design, improvisation, instrument design, sound art, sound for games, sound for film, field recording, artistic research, critical theory, new media, cross media, or interdisciplinary work. For us, creative production refers more to the iterative process of production and reflection, rather than the specific outcomes you aim for or the media you choose to work with.

Through exploration and innovation, your capabilities as a music producer, sound engineer, electronic music artist, performer, composer or sonic artist will develop and excel, if that is your chosen route. Equally, you can undertake projects with practitioners from other artistic fields to grow your own practice and creative industry profile. You bring your field of interest and your inspiration as a starting point, and we'll help you develop from there!

## Your postgraduate journey

The MA takes you through a cycle of imagination, creation, critique and growth. You'll progress from advanced practice into a specialised focus, and from there into professional engagement at an international level. Your journey progresses through five modules:

### Module breakdown:

#### 1-Year (Full time)

Semester A		Semester B	Semester C
CRPM01 Imagine (30 CATS)	CRPM02 Contextualise (30 CATS)	CRPM03 Investigate (30 CATS)	CRPM05 Synthesise (60 CATS)
		CRPM04 Present (30 CATS)	

#### 2-Year (Part time)

First year:

Semester A	Semester B	Semester C
CRPM01 Imagine (30 CATS)	CRPM02 Contextualise (30 CATS)	CRPM03 Investigate (30 CATS)

Second year:

CRPM04 Present (30 CATS)	CRPM05 Synthesise (60 CATS)
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Please note our credit system. Our courses are validated in the UK, meaning we use CATS (Credit Accumulation Transfer System), rather than ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). Generally, the number is doubled: 30 CATS = 15 ECTS.

### **Imagine (Proposal)**

→ The first part of the course will focus directly on the production of a detailed research proposal, a research contract and a work plan, agreed between you and your supervisor.

### **Contextualise**

→ A comprehensive review and exploration of current practices within your field. You will critically examine existing concepts, literature, practices and methods, then place your own research in that context while identifying themes and trajectories for your own research.

### **Investigate**

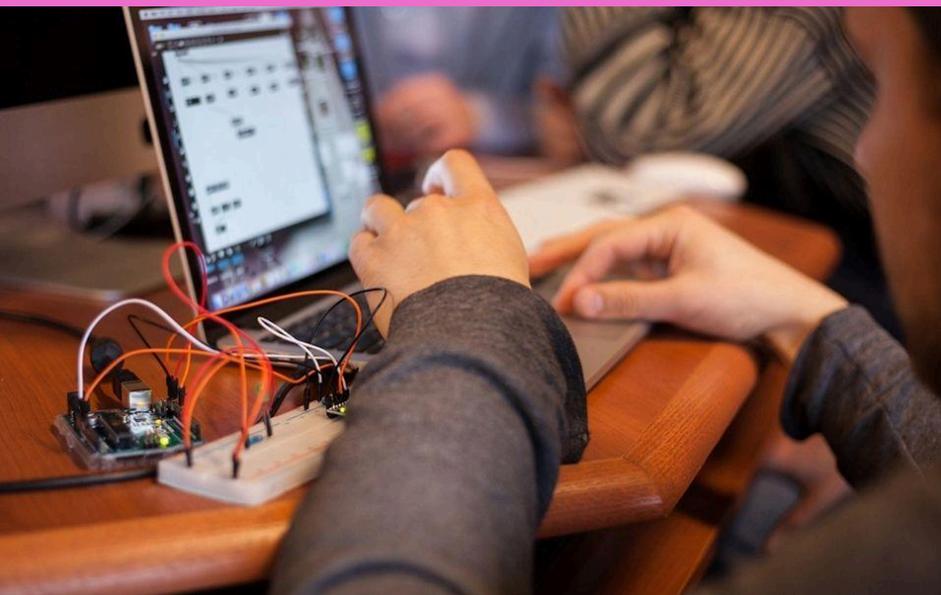
→ Go further in depth in one or more aspects of practice-based artistic research by diving deeper into activity relating to your own negotiated project's unique needs. You'll devise unique or iterative approaches and are expected to show significant development of some core elements of your project.

### **Present**

→ Hone in on the creation, presentation and documentation of performance-based or other other public-facing work. You'll engage in practice-led research directly integrated into your creative professional practice; experimenting, observing, and refining your practices, techniques and methods in outward-facing, real-world contexts. This module bridges previous output with the final Synthesise module

### **Synthesise**

→ For this final module you are required to engage in an extended and focused production period in order to bring your year's research and experience together into a Master's-level artistic project. This as a final piece (or pieces) of work, represents, in a tangible artistic form, the culmination of your prior learning, the research and artistic work undertaken



## By the end of the course, you'll have:

- **A refined artistic vision** – strengthened creative concepts, a distinct approach to production, and deeper connection to your work.
- **Advanced practice-led research skills** – the ability to navigate different aspects of musical inquiry and develop innovative techniques.
- **Projects backed with professional mentorship and critique** – guidance from experienced practitioners and industry experts to realise the full potential of your work.
- **Confidence in independent creative leadership** – the skills to manage complex projects, collaborate effectively and take ownership of your artistic direction.
- **Grow your network** – in a leading space for creative arts, opening opportunities to live, create and build your practice in one of the world's most vibrant music cities.
- **A professional portfolio and positioning** – a body of advanced, high quality and thorough academic work, opening up doors for further doctoral studies, funding applications and further qualifies you as a sound and music expert in your field.



## **Berlin as your professional base**

Berlin is your launchpad. The city offers a unique mix of experimental hubs, artist-run spaces, globally recognised festivals and international residencies. We often tell our people joining this programme that they aren't students – they're entrepreneurs. So you won't only immerse yourself in Berlin's creative landscape, but rather actively contribute. When it's ready, your work will need an audience – and Berlin offers them in abundance.

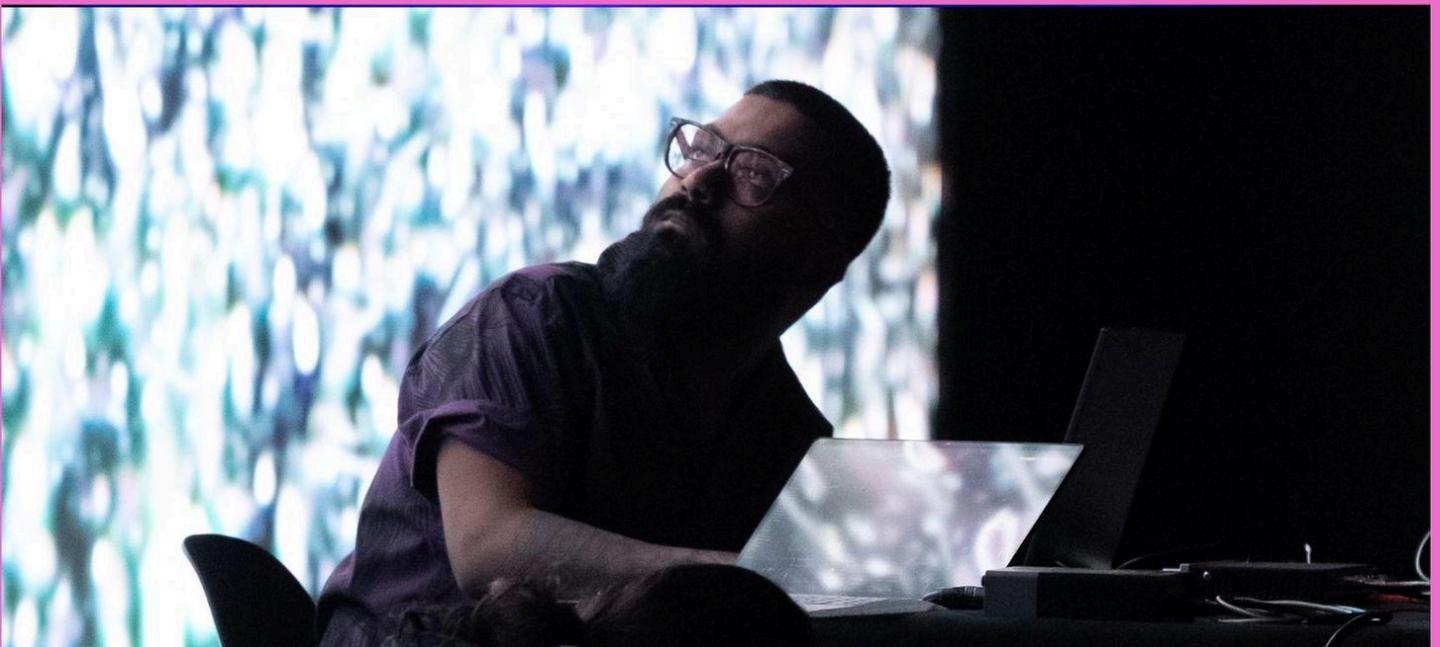
As one of the world's most progressive and experimental music cities, Berlin's ecosystem is both legendary and accessible. Its institutions range from the internationally revered Berliner Philharmoniker to UNESCO-recognised techno culture. Alongside these global heavyweights, you'll find countless alternative venues, artist-run initiatives and niche spaces – from historic clubs like SO36 to contemporary hubs such as GRETCHEN and Morphine Raum.

For practitioners, this means two things: your work can be tested in the same city that hosts world-leading festivals and institutions and you can carve your own space in one of the most dynamic and evolving creative networks on the planet. Berlin is also a city with funding opportunities for the arts, from institutions like Goethe Institute, as well as other universities, foundations, residencies and exhibition spaces. Each year we enjoy programming for major experimental arts festivals like Atonal and CTM or homegrown institutes like Floating University.

**“Most importantly, it is what you do with the resources that are given to you that makes each study experience unique. This is a space where [you] have a certain autonomy and can explore [your] creative desires. You're in charge!”**

– Pablo Diserens aka Òtone, music producer and Creative Production (Music) MA alum

**[[Click here to book a visit →](#)]**



filmmakers on set, visual artists rendering, writers workshopping, all under one roof. MA students are also encouraged to collaborate beyond the school. Your work isn't just shaped by what you do, but also by what's happening around you.

## Expert guidance, support and peer network

You'll be supported by a team of practising artists, producers and researchers who bring real-world wisdom into the classroom. They're not only educators – they're collaborators, mentors and active professionals who understand the challenges of today's creative industries.

You'll benefit from a balance of structured learning and open exploration: tutors will ask tough questions, offer honest feedback and help you refine your unique artistic voice. One-to-one tutorials form a key part of your journey, giving you the space to reflect, set goals and keep your project on track. Visiting industry leaders bring in fresh perspectives, ensuring your work stays connected to developments in the music and sound universe.

Our specialist music technicians are a key part of your day-to-day experience. They're here to make sure technology never holds you back creatively. They'll help you:

- Set up advanced studio configurations for tracking, mixing or mastering
- Integrate hybrid workflows using both analogue gear and digital tools
- Recommend the best microphones, signal chains and equipment for your projects
- Maintain and troubleshoot studio spaces, keeping your sessions running smoothly
- Support your creative goals with expert advice on gear, routing and acoustics

**“I think sometimes we engage in art in a very individualistic way, but discovering how this MA creates a sense of community... it has been a superb experience”**

– Alexei Galar, composer, sound designer and Creative Production (Music) MA alumnus



## Your creative community

Alongside this, you'll learn with and from other advanced practitioners – your peers. Together you'll form a network of collaborators, critics and supporters who will shape your creative practice long after graduation. You'll join an international, multidisciplinary community of producers, musicians and sound artists where collaboration is encouraged. You'll work with your classmates day to day, pushing each other's ideas as well as sharing skills. Our campus is designed to encourage interdisciplinary experimentation. As your proposal develops, students from our School of Film & Visual Media, School of Acting and School of Creative Human Development will all be eager to collaborate with you, too.

On campus, you'll share spaces with students joining from over 70 countries, each bringing different styles, influences and ideas. Whether you're getting specific on the potential of performance utilising modular synthesis, sharpening the direction of your practice or choosing to deepen your expertise you'll be part of a creative network that reflects the diversity of today's music industry.

## Supervision

Both one-to-one and group meetings with your supervisor are the core of the programme. The individual meetings will serve to support successful research, whereas the group sessions will serve as forums for project development, production management, engaging in critical peer feedback rounds, industry-focused seminars and guest lectures. Leading the one-to-one and group sessions on the Creative Production (Music) MA are Richard Scott (PhD), Renée Coulombe (PhD), Doron Sadja and Andrea Perkins (MFA), who use their combined breadth of musical and practical experience to help you get the most out of your studies.

## A future-proof creative toolkit

This programme doesn't stop at artistic development, but rather prepares you for professional success in a variety of ways. You'll gain practical support in:

- Funding applications and pitching
- Proposal-writing for festivals, commissions and residencies
- Portfolio curation tailored to industry and artistic contexts
- Career strategy coaching and long-term positioning

Our school also helps develop the soft-skills and mindset that help you grow sustainably as an artist. These soft-skills are some of the most valuable tools you'll gain while with us, and transferable to any challenge or creative direction you decide to pursue.

Alongside your academic and creative development, Catalyst offers a range of support services to help you navigate challenges, build confidence and stay creatively focused:

- **One-to-one counselling and coaching** – confidential sessions with qualified professionals to support emotional wellbeing, anxiety, creative blocks, conflict resolution and life transitions
- **Flourishing Fortnights** – immersive two-week workshop series focused on topics like creative collaboration, healthy boundaries, communication and emotional self-awareness
- **Self-Development & Leadership Course** – an optional deep dive into how you perceive yourself, others and your creative role in the world
- **Practical wellbeing support** – help accessing medical resources, therapy referrals, diagnosis pathways and other essential life services
- **Everyday check-ins** – a wellbeing team that's visible, approachable and part of the day-to-day campus life



## Course structure and learning outcomes

### 1-Year (Full time) workshop structure

Semester A		Semester B	Semester C	
Creative Sound Practices			Professional Practice II	
Professional Practice I	Contexts of Listening			
Supervision				

### 2-Year (part time) workshop structure

First year

Semester A		Semester B	Semester C	
Creative Sound Practices			Professional Practice II	
Professional Practice I	Contexts of Listening			
Supervision				

### 2-Year (part time) workshop structure

Second year

Semester A		Semester B	Semester C	
Creative Sound Practices (optional)			Professional Practice II	
Supervision				

## Supporting workshops and modules

This programme uses a clear framework outlined in “Your postgraduate journey” on page 3. Besides the guiding three pillars of Proposal, Investigation and Final Project, you will deepen your understanding of musical theory and practice in workshops. Rather than a one off event or single class, our workshops continue throughout the semester. They facilitate you approaching your project from multiple perspectives.

### **Creative Sound Practices**

Three semester module

This module is the practical backbone of the programme. They will help shape this next chapter of your artistic journey using experimentation, collaboration and risk-taking as both a creative process and research method.

In weekly sessions you’ll test unfamiliar tools, perform without over-preparation and push past your habits to discover new possibilities in your work. The aim isn’t perfection, but curiosity – using play, collaboration and improvisation to feed directly into your individual research and artistic development.

Across the three semesters, you’ll take part in a lively mix of workshops, labs, discussions, performances and field trips. Themes move fluidly between modular synthesis, spatial sound, creative coding, field recording, improvisation and sound installation. Rather than mastering one technique, you’ll learn how tools, ideas and processes can themselves become creative materials – to be bent, hacked and reimaged. By embracing experimentation and collective feedback, you’ll build a personal methodology that connects technical exploration with critical reflection and helps shape your evolving artistic identity.

### **Professional Practice I**

Half semester module

- Explore what artistic research means in practice and learn to design and execute independent inquiries that connect your creative vision with rigorous methods.
- Critically analyse your chosen field, synthesising knowledge from diverse sources to situate your work within contemporary artistic and theoretical conversations.
- Evaluate and apply creative and technical approaches that strengthen your process and advance your artistic outcomes.
- Formulate and structure your research questions, aligning them with your artistic aims, goals and desired impact.
- Use documentation, mapping and self-tracking techniques to assess your progress, make evidence-based decisions and identify new directions for innovation.

This opening module lays the groundwork for your studies, introducing you to the language, tools and mindset of artistic research. Through reading, discussion and hands-on experimentation, you'll learn how to shape ideas into structured inquiries that bridge theory and practice. You'll analyse case studies, encounter the work of other practitioner-researchers and test out methodologies that fit your own creative process. In doing so, you'll develop a sharper sense of where your work sits within wider artistic, cultural and academic contexts.

As you build your proposal and refine your methods, you'll strengthen both your conceptual understanding and your professional practice. You'll learn to critically evaluate your outcomes, track your development and articulate your creative findings with clarity and confidence. By the end of the module, you'll have the research skills, reflective habits and contextual awareness needed to carry your practice forward – ready to lead your own artistic investigation throughout the MA and beyond.

## Contexts of Listening

One and a half semester module

- Deepen your understanding of how music and sound operate within cultural, social and philosophical frameworks.
- Learn to connect abstract ideas with your own creative work, transforming reflection into artistic development.
- Engage with key thinkers and debates that shape contemporary sound and music studies, expanding your analytical language.
- Position your work within global artistic and theoretical conversations, enhancing the depth and relevance of your project.
- Explore diverse methodologies and perspectives, selecting those that best serve your individual research aims.

This is the theoretical context to the programme. It provides you with conceptual tools to analyse and articulate your creative practice. Building directly on Professional Practice 1, it introduces a wide range of ideas drawn from musicology, sound studies, philosophy and critical theory. Through collective listening, reading and dialogue, you'll explore how sound and music exist within cultural, social and technological contexts – and how these frameworks can inform, challenge and expand your own artistic thinking. The class will explore the art and work of thinkers like Pauline Oliveros, George Lewis, Jacques Derrida, Walter Benjamin, Rosi Braidotti, Roland Barthes, Nina Eidsheim, George Lipsitz, Isabella van Elferen, Jacques Attali, Judith Butler, Mark Fisher, Pierre Schaeffer, Suzanne Cusick and many others.

Rather than teaching theory for its own sake, the course encourages you to use it as a living resource. You'll experiment with reflective writing, autoethnography and creative documentation, finding ways to let theory resonate through your process. The sessions evolve in response to student research, allowing emerging themes to shape the conversation. By the

end, you'll have developed a sharper critical voice, a deeper contextual awareness and the confidence to situate your creative work within contemporary artistic discourse.

## **Professional Practice II**

Half semester module

- Learn how to articulate and showcase your work for festivals, residencies, funding bodies and academic contexts.
- Create artist statements, portfolios, and digital materials that express your identity and creative intent.
- Gain insight into the freelance ecosystem, including booking shows and managing finances.
- Refine your ability to discuss your practice clearly and persuasively across different professional and public settings.
- Identify opportunities for funding, collaboration and further study, and position yourself within the wider creative landscape.

This module prepares you to share your work with the world. You'll learn to communicate your ideas clearly, connect with professional audiences and chart the next stage of your artistic career. That includes defining your identity as an artist, creating strong proposals and presenting your research to diverse platforms, including symposia, live performances, festivals and residencies.

The module includes highly practical professional skills that underpin a sustainable creative life – such as writing artists statements and funding applications, as well as managing freelance realities like invoicing, licensing and self-promotion. The module encourages you to think strategically about where your work belongs and how to position it in relation to your chosen fields.

### **Guest Artists**

Presentations from guest artists have included Nicolas Collins (composer, improviser, master hacker), Sabine Vogel (flute, electronics, composer, installation), Insa Langhorst (filmmaker, visual anthropologist), Bob Ostertag (synthesist, composer, improviser, theorist, activist), Kaffe Matthews (electroacoustic composer, sound artist), Sanja Starvic (live visual improviser), Marta Zapparoli (experimental sound artist, researcher), Kazuhisa Uchihashi (guitar and daxophone virtuoso).



# Admissions Guide

Here's everything you need to take the next step in your application:

## Get to know us better

**Virtual Open Days** → Get a virtual overview of what we're all about, held over Zoom.

**In-Person Open Day** → Get a first-hand feel of our school and educational programmes.

**Campus Tours** → Come see our facilities and creative spaces at one of our regular tours.

**Virtual Taster Workshops** → Join a programme-specific info event or masterclass

**Admissions Open Hours** → Book your one-to-one application support on-demand.

## Admissions Guidance

1. **Course fees & payment plans**
2. **Early Enrolment Bonus – save €3,000 off total tuition**
3. **Additional funding opportunities**
4. **Application deadlines & Visa requirements**
5. **How to apply**
6. **Contact us**

## 1. Course fees & payment plans

We believe creative education should be accessible, transparent and free from hidden costs. Our tuition plans are flexible – you decide to pay monthly, per semester, annually or in full with discounts. Extended payment options let you spread costs beyond your programme.

<b>Creative Production (Music) MA (Full-Time) Tuition Plans 2026-27</b>				
<b>Plan type - Full Time</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>€1,000 Early Enrolment Bonus</b>	<b>Payment Plan Duration</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>per Semester</b>	€6,028	€5,528	1 year 2 instalments	Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>Annually</b>	€11,693	€10,693	1 year	3% discount by paying each year upfront. Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>12 Instalments per Year</b>	€1,088	€1,005	1 year	Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>Extended Yearly</b>	€6,278	€5,778	2 years	Payments continue 1 year after graduation. No enrolment fee in final year
<b>Extended Instalments</b>	€565	€523	2 years	Payments continue 1 year after graduation. No enrolment fee in final year
<b>Creative Production (Music) MA (Part-Time) Tuition Plans 2026-27</b>				
<b>Plan type - Part Time</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>€1,000 Early Enrolment Bonus</b>	<b>Payment Plan Duration</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>per Semester</b>	€3,678	€3,428	2 years 4 instalments	Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>Annually</b>	€7,134	€6,634	2 years	3% discount by paying each year upfront. Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>Total tuition upfront</b>	€13,533	€12,533	One-time	8% discount by paying total tuition upfront. Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>12 instalments per year</b>	€696	€655	2 years	Enrolment fee €895 per year applies
<b>Extended yearly</b>	€5,237	€4,903	3 years	Payments continue 1 year after graduation. No enrolment fee in final year
<b>Extended instalments</b>	€478	€450	3 years	Payments continue 1 year after graduation. No enrolment fee in final year

### Enrolment fee

This non-refundable fee of €895 per study year is due before the start of each academic year and secures your place. No enrolment fee is charged in the post-graduation year if you choose an Extended Payment Plan.

## Extended payment plans

In addition to single or installment payment options, we offer Extended Payment Plans. This spreads tuition payments over an additional year, resulting in smaller monthly payments that continue for one year after graduation.

## Enrolment confirmation & billing

- **Enrolment fee:** due within 14 days of receiving your offer.
- **Billing cycle:** tuition installments begin **1 July 2026** and are billed on the first of each month until your chosen plan ends.

## 2. Early enrolment bonus

Apply by our **priority deadline** to secure your place, save €1,000 off your total tuition and access visa support sooner.

- **Visa-required applicants:** apply by 28 February 2026
- **EU/visa-exempt or post-arrival applicants:** apply by 31 March 2026

## 3. Funding opportunities

As an accredited higher education provider, our students are eligible for a variety of national and international financial aid schemes. This includes the German state funding stream BAföG, which is open to citizens of Germany, EU countries and some non-EU citizens too. Depending on which country you are a citizen of, this may also open up funding from other programmes supporting further-education. **[Read more about the various funding opportunities on our website.](#)**

## 4. Application deadlines

### Visa-required applicants

- Priority: 28 February 2026 (includes bonus & visa support)
- General: 30 April 2026 (subject to processing time and availability)

### EU/visa-exempt or post-arrival applicants

- Priority: 31 March 2026 (includes bonus & guaranteed spot on preferred course)
- General: 5 June 2026 (granted on a rolling basis)
- Late: until 28 August 2026 (subject to availability)

## Visa requirements

- **Visa-required:** If you require a visa before entering Germany (e.g. citizens of India, Brazil, Mexico, China, Turkey), you must apply at a German embassy before arrival. Our Visa Support Service (included in the enrolment fee) supports you with paperwork, appointments and timelines. Visa processing can take 3–6 months, so early application is essential.
- **Post-arrival visa:** If you're from a country that allows visa-free entry (e.g. USA, Canada, Japan, South Korea), you can enter Germany without a visa and apply for your student residence permit after arrival.
- **Visa-exempt (EU/EEA/Switzerland):** If you're a citizen of the EU, EEA or Switzerland, you don't need a visa or residence permit to study in Germany.

## 5. How to apply

Our application process is straightforward – just follow these seven steps:

1. **Check deadlines** – especially if you need a visa to enter Germany or financial support.
2. **Prepare your portfolio** – requirements vary by course, check our “How to apply” page.
3. **Submit your application** at [catalyst-berlin.com/apply](https://catalyst-berlin.com/apply), including personal and educational details, a motivation statement, your portfolio and supporting documents such as transcripts or proof of language ability.
4. **Wait for our response** – we'll be in touch within around two weeks. Sometimes we'll ask for follow-up information or invite you for an interview. Keep an eye on your inbox.
5. **Confirm your place** – once you receive an offer letter, secure it by paying the enrollment fee within 14 days.
6. **Get ready for Berlin** – once your enrolment fee is paid, you're officially enrolled. Next you'll set up your payment plan, receive your welcome package and access preparation materials for your studies. We recommend finding accommodation as soon as you're sure that you're studying with us, and arriving one month before your classes begin.

## Contact & resources

Reach out to our Admissions team by email at [admissions@catalyst-berlin.com](mailto:admissions@catalyst-berlin.com) or book a call [here](#).