

“You’ll have to start early if you want to be on time for the F sharp!” Language and the study of music: Implications for international students studying in tertiary music programs in Australia

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Writing about music is fundamental to the study of music in a university. This may not be surprising to most people familiar with study in tertiary institutions in Australia. However, many aspiring young musicians coming from overseas to study music in Australia are not prepared for this aspect of their music education. Their lack of preparedness is, first, in understanding what the academic requirements are in tertiary music courses, and second, in meeting those requirements. Regardless of whether a student is studying in a Performance, Composition, Technology, Pedagogy or Musicology strand of the degree, they will be required to write academic papers on or related to music. This paper investigates the nature of language in music study, the nature of pre-tertiary English courses and how courses might better prepare international students for a tertiary music program.