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**Programme Specification**

**Title of Course: BA Hons Popular Music**

**Date Specification Produced: February 2017**

**Date Specification Last Revised:** **August 2018**

This Programme Specification is designed for prospective students, current students, academic staff and employers. It provides a concise summary of the main features of the programme and the intended learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if they take full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the teaching, learning and assessment methods, learning outcomes and content of each module can be found in the Course Handbook on Canvas and in individual Module Descriptors.

**SECTION 1: GENERAL INFORMATION**

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| **Title:** | BA Hons Popular Music |
| **Awarding Institution:** | Kingston University |
| **Teaching Institution:** | N/A |
| **Location:** | Kingston Hill campus |
| **Programme Accredited by:** | N/A |

**SECTION2: THE PROGRAMME**

1. **Programme Introduction**

The core philosophy of the BA Hons Popular Music degree is to develop musical and academic skills through the exploration of creative practice. These skills are acquired through composing, performing, recording, discussing, listening to and writing about a broad range of popular music, allowing students to build and develop a diverse set of transferrable skills. As well as learning new approaches, techniques and styles within the creation of popular music, the degree will also enable students to develop their own strong musical identity. From day one, study on the BA Hons Popular Music programme introduces three core strands that run throughout the course – songwriting / composing, performing, and creative work within the studio, with students encouraged to seek innovative and imaginative ways to explore development within these mediums.

The course will appeal to aspiring performers, songwriters, composers, producers, teachers, journalists, music therapists and community musicians, as well as anyone wishing to develop skills to work within the live sound, event management, broadcast, publishing and audio post-production industries.

The course will be taught at the Coombehurst complex at Kingston Hill where the Music Department currently has use of four designated buildings. These house a range of specialist facilities to help support study including the prestigious Visconti Studio, the centre of Kingston University’s research and teaching project *The Heritage and Future of Analogue Recording and Production*. There are also three further state-of-the-art recording studios, two Mac-based computer labs, an equipment loans room, and a range of teaching spaces and soundproof rehearsal rooms. The Coombehurst complex is a lively, stimulating environment, well-suited for music making.

Students will be taught through lectures, workshops and seminars by highly experienced academic staff who are active performers, composers and producers. Classes run throughout the day and evening, with regular concerts, gigs and recitals taking place during the academic year. Music industry guest speakers and performers, brought to the University via a series of masterclasses, will be a significant feature of the new programme and help enhance the process of learning. Every student will be allocated an academic advisor who will supervise their progress through the degree course, and small group and one-to-one teaching will be built in to each level, ensuring a high level of support for all students.

The campus’ proximity to London means the BA Hons Popular Music will capitalise on London's vibrant multicultural music scene, working with partners including the Science Museum and the British Library. Partnerships with venues and organisations local to Kingston upon Thames will also provide opportunities for students to engage with and enrich the local community. The Music Department has a strong reputation with local venues including The Fighting Cocks, The Cricketers, The Ram Jam Club and Woody’s with students regularly organising and taking part in performances at these. Further to this, Kingston’s Rose Theatre is used as a performance space throughout the year with Collegiate Music working closely with our students / professional musicians to stage a series of monthly lunchtime concerts including Jazz First Tuesdays and Variety Café Wednesdays. The International Youth Arts Festival (IYAF) based in Kingston upon Thames every summer reinforces the focus on both popular music performance and music technology at a very high level, with many of our music students actively involved in this exciting event.

From September 2017, the Departments of Dance, Drama and Music will merge to form a new single Department of Performing Arts, with increased opportunity and encouragement for students to collaborate across disciplines. A public-facing showcase at the Rose will celebrate students’ work annually in June with strong emphasis on inviting families and friends of those about to graduate, as well as a range of music industry professionals and potential employers.

1. **Aims of the Field / Course**

The aims of the BA Hons Popular Music are to:

* equip students with a broad range of skills and knowledge in the creation of popular music: performing; composing; recording and mixing; critical listening.
* extend students’ knowledge of popular music repertoires by exposing them to a wide range of genres, styles and traditions.
* enable students to develop skills in using techniques, technology and other resources for creative work, both individually and as members of a team.
* to evaluate and refine their work and to demonstrate professionalism in its presentation to an audience.
* enhance and develop students’ skills in writing critically about popular music and the techniques and technology used in its creation.
* develop students’ knowledge and understanding of the ways in which social, political, cultural and historical contexts affect popular music.
* equip students with the skills and knowledge they need to carry out research and to introduce them to current issues in popular music.
* encourage the development of students’ intellectual and imaginative powers; their understanding and judgement; their problem-solving skills; their ability to communicate and their ability to perceive music within a broad intellectual context.
* provide students with a broad range of key and transferable skills that will enable them to take up further study or work in a wide range of popular music based and related fields.

1. **Intended Learning Outcomes**

The field/course provides opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding specific to the subject, key skills and graduate attributes in the following areas. The programme outcomes are referenced to the QAA subject benchmarks for Music (2016) and the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (2014), and relate to the typical student.

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| **Programme Learning Outcomes** | | | | | |
|  | **Knowledge and Understanding**  On completion of the course students will be able to demonstrate: |  | **Intellectual Skills**  On completion of the course students will be able to: |  | **Subject Practical Skills**  On completion of the course students will be able to: |
| A1 | confidence with working in the studio environment using a range of equipment and software, and an understanding of a range of techniques for recording, sound manipulation and processing. | B1 | organise material and consider it from a critical and analytical perspective; select, synthesise and deploy appropriate forms of evidence and draw conclusions. | C1 | apply technology to musical purpose through performing, arranging and improvising. |
| A2 | knowledge and experience of a broad popular music repertoire. | B2 | identify musical structures and patterns and, in an inventive and individual way, manipulate musical ideas conceived either by themselves or by others. | C2 | employ techniques of recording, editing and production, demonstrating skill in the use of studio and other audio equipment. |
| A3 | understanding of the historical, social, cultural, political, philosophical and economic contexts of popular and other musics and the ability to relate processes of change to these contexts. | B3 | analyse, manipulate, interrogate and create musical materials and present results and findings in a coherent and communicable form. | C3 | demonstrate mastery of a range of techniques of audio manipulation and sound processing. |
| A4 | awareness of key developments in popular music research and of research methodologies appropriate to music topics. | B4 | work creatively with others to devise and refine a performance and to demonstrate engagement with a variety of popular musical styles through creative work. | C4 | recognise and describe popular musical structures, processes, compositional devices, textures and styles. |
| A5 | a well-developed awareness of the contemporary workplaces for Popular Music graduates. | B5 | reflect critically on the rehearsal and performance of popular music. | C5 | collaborate effectively in creative group work, having developed powers of sustained concentration and focus in rehearsal. |
| A6 | a broad understanding of musical processes and of theoretical and notational systems in music. | B6 | link theory to practice and demonstrate personal expression in the production of popular music. | C6 | demonstrate knowledge and experience of live sound technology and associated job roles. |
|  |  | B7 | apply insights and discoveries from one area of musical study to another. |  |  |

In addition to the programme learning outcomes identified overleaf, the programme of study defined in this programme specification will allow

students to develop a range of Key Skills as follows:

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| **Key Skills** | | | | | | |
| **Self-Awareness Skills** | **Communication Skills** | **Interpersonal Skills** | **Research and information Literacy Skills** | **Numeracy Skills** | **Management & Leadership Skills** | **Creativity and Problem Solving Skills** |
| Take responsibility for own learning and plan for and record own personal development | Express ideas clearly and unambiguously in writing and the spoken work | Work well with others in a group or team | Search for and select relevant sources of information | Collect data from primary and secondary sources and use appropriate methods to manipulate and analyse this data | Determine the scope of a task (or project) | Apply scientific and other knowledge to analyse and evaluate information and data and to find solutions to problems |
| Recognise own academic strengths and weaknesses, reflect on performance and progress and respond to feedback | Present, challenge and defend ideas and results effectively orally and in writing | Work flexibly and respond to change | Critically evaluate information and use it appropriately | Present and record data in appropriate formats | Identify resources needed to undertake the task (or project) and to schedule and manage the resources | Work with complex ideas and justify judgements made through effective use of evidence |
| Organise self effectively, agreeing and setting realistic targets, accessing support where appropriate and managing time to achieve targets | Actively listen and respond appropriately to ideas of others | Discuss and debate with others and make concession to reach agreement | Apply the ethical and legal requirements in both the access and use of information | Interpret and evaluate data to inform and justify arguments | Evidence ability to successfully complete and evaluate a task (or project), revising the plan where necessary |  |
| Work effectively with limited supervision in unfamiliar contexts |  | Give, accept and respond to constructive feedback | Accurately cite and reference information sources | Be aware of issues of selection, accuracy and uncertainty in the collection and analysis of data | Motivate and direct others to enable an effective contribution from all participants |  |
|  |  | Show sensitivity and respect for diverse values and beliefs | Use software and IT technology as appropriate |  |  |  |

1. **Entry Requirements**

The minimum entry qualifications for the programme are:

From A levels: 112 points from a minimum of 2 A2s, to include 40 points in Music or Music Technology

BTEC National: BTEC National Diploma with DMM profile

Access Diploma: A relevant Access award is acceptable, provided that some practical music skill and knowledge of music technology can be demonstrated

Plus

GCSE: Candidates are normally required to hold five GCSE subjects grades A\*–C including Mathematics and English Language (or comparable numeric score under the newly reformed GCSE grading).

Students who have appropriate prior certified learning (e.g., those who have successfully completed level 4 or 5 of a course of study comparable with the Kingston BA Hons) may be accepted to levels 5 or 6 of the course.

A minimum IELTS score of 6.5 or equivalent is required for those for whom English is not their first language.

1. **Field/Course Structure**

This programme is offered in full-time and part-time mode, and leads to the award of BA Hons. Entry is normally at Level 4 with A-level or equivalent qualifications (See section D). Transfer from a similar course is possible at Level 5 with passes in comparable Level 4 modules – but is at the discretion of the course team. Intake is normally in September.

**E1. Professional and Statutory Regulatory Bodies**

*N/A*

**E2. Work-based learning**

Work placements are actively encouraged as part of the Level 5 21st Century Musician module. Although it is the responsibility of individual students to source and secure placements, the music department mediates approximately 20 each year through its expanding network of industry partners including London and Surrey-based commercial/community studios where students can work on recording or production. Richmond Music Trust and the Dementia Project at Kingston Hospital offer placements connected with music therapy and Kingston Music Service facilitates attachments to its team of instrumental tutors working in schools or with extra-curricular groups. Students also benefit from the University’s relationship with the International Youth Arts Festival and from close-proximity to Twickenham Studios where students have enrolled on its own work experience scheme.  In-house opportunities such as the KU Student Ambassador scheme and volunteering for musicians via the Kingston Hub-Drive project are also available. Occasional internship opportunities may also be offered for Level 6 students to help in the operation and management of Visconti Studio, and in providing technical and engineering support for external studio bookings.

The work placement allows students to reflect upon their own personal experience of working in an applied setting, to focus on aspects of this experience that they can clearly relate to theoretical concepts and to evaluate the relationship between theory and practice.

**E3. Outline Programme Structure**

Each level is made up of four modules each worth 30 credit points. Typically, a student must complete 120 credits at each level. All students will be provided with the University regulations and specific additions that are sometimes required for accreditation by outside bodies (e.g. professional or statutory bodies that confer professional accreditation). Full details of each module will be provided in module descriptors and student module guides.

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| **Level 4** (all core) | | | | |
| **Compulsory modules** | **Module code** | **Credit**  **Value** | **Level** | **Teaching Block** |
| Performing Popular Music 1 | MU4301 | 30 | 4 | Year long |
| Popular Music Revolutions | MU4302 | 30 | 4 | Year long |
| Recording Popular Music | MU4303 | 30 | 4 | Year long |
| Creating Popular Music | MU4304 | 30 | 4 | Year long |

This course permits progression from Level 4 to Level 5 with 90 credits at Level 4 or above. The outstanding 30 credits from Level 4 can be trailed into Level 5 and must be passed before progression to Level 6.

Students exiting the field/course at this point who have successfully completed 120 credits are eligible for the award of Certificate of Higher Education in Popular Music.

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| **Level 5 (at least 60 credits = core)** | | | | |
| **Compulsory modules** | **Module code** | **Credit**  **Value** | **Level** | **Teaching Block** |
| The 21st Century Musician | MU5301 | 30 | 5 | Year long |
| Performing Popular Music 2 | MU5303 | 30 | 5 | Year long |
| **Option modules** | | | | |
| Audio Post-Production (Pop) | MU5302 | 30 | 5 | Year long |
| Mixing and Production Styles | MU5304 | 30 | 5 | Year long |
| Music, Culture and Politics | MU5305 | 30 | 5 | Year long |
| Songwriting | MU5306 | 30 | 5 | Year long |

This course permits progression from Level 5 to Level 6 with 90 credits at Level 5 or above. The outstanding 30 credits from Level 5 can be trailed into Level 6 and must be passed before consideration for an award or progression to Level 7 (if appropriate).

Students exiting the programme at this point who have successfully completed 120 credits are eligible for the award of Diploma of Higher Education in Popular Music.

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| **Level 6** (at least 60 credits = core) | | | | | |
| **Compulsory modules** | **Module code** | **Credit**  **Value** | **Level** | **Teaching Block** |  |
| Professional Project | MU6301 | 60 | 6 | Year long |  |
| **Option modules** | | | | | **Pre-requisites** |
| The Analogue Studio | MU6302 | 30 | 6 | Year long | MU5304 - Mixing & Production Styles |
| Commercial Music | MU6304 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Music and Technology in Education | MU6305 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Live Sound & Event Management | MU6307 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Special Study: Music Journalism | MU6308 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Special Study: Jazz Studies | MU6306 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Special Study: Arranging and Scoring | MU6303 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |
| Special Study: Practice Research | MU6309 | 30 | 6 | Year long |  |

Level 6 requires the completion of the compulsory module and two option modules.

1. **Principles of Teaching, Learning and Assessment**

Level 4 will focus on the study of inspiring and remarkable moments in popular music history; explore performance techniques across a diverse range of styles; develop skills for songwriters and popular musicians to produce high quality demos; and develop key compositional skills through examining the building blocks of popular music.

Level 5 will continue to build on performance skills and encourage further diversity through exploring a range of performance practices. Students will also explore careers in music for the music graduate and develop a comprehensive understanding of the business of music, supporting this with a work placement. Students will choose two further areas of study from a range of optional modules that include creating sound and music for a range of media (film, TV and game); songwriting; mixing and production styles; music and politics.

At Level 6, students will take a 60-credit capstone module where they will work with a supervisor to develop a project that demonstrates a mastery of their professional skills within a focused area. Again, two further optional modules with be selected with the possibility of undertaking work on commercial music, markets and audiences; live sound and event management; music journalism and London; careers in music education; or to work on a special study in the unique analogue Visconti Studio.

Group lectures will be used where the communication of factual material is central. Seminars and small group tutorials will allow students to discuss the core topics being covered, as well as associated reading and research they are undertaking to help develop their knowledge. Workshops / practical music-making sessions also form a key mode of delivery for modules where, following staff exposition of a topic, students obtain hands-on experience of performing, composing, songwriting, recording and developing ancillary musical skills. A significant proportion of students’ individual study time will be devoted to work in the University’s recording studios and computer laboratories, learning specialist techniques and software skills. Throughout the programme, there will also be great emphasis placed upon the importance of being able to work collaboratively, reinforced via group work during seminars and staff-led practical music making sessions. The books, scores, journals, audio/visual and electronic resources provided in the University’s Learning Resources Centre will provide a valuable resource for all modules. E-resources and computer software packages will also aid students’ individual study of music theory, harmony and analysis, as well as aural training. The University’s online learning management system, Canvas, will be used for provision of general module information, class notes, reading lists and web links.

When studying performance at Level 4, students will receive a mixture of instrumental tuition including small group music making sessions, have access to a range of online instrumental tutorials made specifically for music students at Kingston University, as well as receiving 6 hours of one-on-one peripatetic tuition on their first study instrument. At Level 5, the one-on-one tuition is increased to 12 hours. Students who specialise in performance at Level 6 will also receive 12 hours of peripatetic teaching. Alongside this, students will participate in the activities of at least one of the University’s staff-led performing ensembles; this experience will contribute to the development of their aural awareness, their knowledge of musical style and tradition and their skills in music reading and ensemble performance. Peer feedback, established in Music at Kingston over many years, will be used in the teaching of composition and performance, and will serve to deepen students' awareness of criteria used to make judgements on work in these areas as well as to sharpen their powers of critical listening.

All students are encouraged to make use of the individual support for written work and the seminars on academic writing available in the Faculty’s Centre for Academic Support and Employability (CASE), which is open throughout the week at Penrhyn Road. Students whose native language is not English are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the tuition provided by the University’s English Language Support Programme.

1. **Support for Students and their Learning**

Students are supported by:

* A Module Leader for each module
* A Course Leader to help students understand the programme structure
* Personal Tutors to provide academic and personal support
* A placement tutor to give general advice on placements
* Technical support to advise students on IT and the use of software
* A designated Course Administrator
* An induction week at the beginning of each new academic session
* Staff Student Consultative Committee
* VLE/Canvas – a versatile online interactive intranet and learning environment accessible both on and off-site
* Lynda.com – an online platform offering self-paced software tutorials
* A substantial Study Skills Centre that provides academic skills support for both UG and PG students
* Student support facilities that provide advice on issues such as finance, regulations, legal matters, accommodation, international student support etc.
* A Student Achievement Officer who provides pastoral support
* Support for students with disabilities
* The Union of Kingston Students
* Careers and Employability Services Team who will provide support for students prior to undertaking work placement(s).

1. **Ensuring and Enhancing the Quality of the Course**

The University has several methods for evaluating and improving the quality and standards of its provision. These include:

* External Examiners
* Boards of Study with student representation
* Annual Monitoring and Enhancement
* Periodic review undertaken at subject level
* Student evaluation including MEQs, Level Surveys and the NSS
* Moderation policies
* Feedback from employers

1. **Employability Statement**

Studying Popular Music develops practical and creative as well as theoretical and academic skills and develops the self-discipline necessary for focused and specialist independent study. In addition, specific employability skills, designed to prepare students for work are embedded into modules right across the degree course and this makes our graduates well qualified to enter a wide range of rewarding careers. CV writing is covered at Level 5 (21st Century Musician), along with a work placement and the creation of a Personal Development Plan. Links to industry specialists are developed as part of the series of seminars in the Professional Project module at Level 6. The annual Spotlight on Music event, organised in conjunction with Careers and Employability Services, provides students with an opportunity to network with employees from a broad range of music professions. Popular Music students are required to work collaboratively in groups from Level 4 onwards. The ability to work well in groups, and to devise creative solutions in group settings, is a key transferrable skill and is much sought after by employers.

Graduates from the course will be able to pursue a wide range of careers including those involving performing, songwriting, composing, teaching, journalism, publishing, broadcasting, music management, the audio post industry, arts management, live sound and event management, community musician, digital media, and the recording industry. Further study on a range of focused postgraduate academic courses, to vocational training such as courses in arts administration, music therapy or teacher training, would also be graduate destinations.

Music graduates are highly regarded, because of the number and range of transferable skills they possess, allowing them to secure work in a wide range of business and commercial environments. Kingston has traditionally had strong links with education and many of our graduates go on to work in this area. Music graduates are able to access all the career paths open to graduates of other arts disciplines.

1. **Approved Variants from the Undergraduate or Postgraduate Regulations**

N/A

1. **Other sources of information that you may wish to consult**

The QAA benchmark statement for Music study in Higher Education can be downloaded from:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/subject-benchmark-statements/sbs-music-16.pdf?sfvrsn=1f9af781_10>

**Course page on the KU website:**

<https://www.kingston.ac.uk/undergraduate-course/popular-music/>

**Development of Field/Course Learning Outcomes in Modules**

This map identifies where the field/course learning outcomes are summatively assessed across the modules for this field/course. It provides an aid to academic staff in understanding how individual modules contribute to the field/course aims, a means to help students monitor their own learning, personal and professional development as the field/course progresses and a checklist for quality assurance purposes.

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| **Module code** | | **Level 4** | | | | **Level 5** | | | | | | **Level 6** | | | | | | | | | |
| MU4301 | MU4302 | MU4304 | MU4303 | MU5303 | MU5301 | MU5302 | MU5305 | MU5304 | MU5306 | MU6301 | MU6302 | MU6304 | MU6305 | MU6307 | MU6308 | MU6306 | MU6303 | MU6309 |
| **Knowledge & Understanding** | A1 |  |  | S | S |  |  | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  |  |  |  |  | S |
| A2 | S | S |  | S | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  |  | S |  | S |  | S | S |
| A3 |  | S | S |  |  |  | S | S |  | S | S |  |  |  |  | S |  |  | S |
| A4 |  | S |  | S |  | S |  | S |  |  | S | S | S | S | S | S |  |  | S |
| A5 |  |  |  | S | S | S | S |  | S | S | S |  | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |
| A6 | S |  | S |  | S |  | S |  |  | S | S |  |  |  |  |  | S | S | S |
| **Intellectual Skills** | B1 |  | S |  |  |  | S |  | S |  |  | S |  |  | S |  | S | S |  | S |
| B2 | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |  |  |  | S | S | S |
| B3 | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |  |  | S | S |  | S |  |  | S | S | S | S |
| B4 | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  | S | S | S | S | S |  | S |  | S |  | S |
| B5 | S |  |  | S | S | S |  |  | S | S | S | S | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |
| B6 |  |  | S | S |  |  | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |  |  |  | S |
| B7 | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |
| **Practical Skills** | C1 | S |  | S | S | S |  | S |  | S | S | S | S | S |  | S |  |  | S | S |
| C2 |  | S | S | S |  |  | S |  | S | S | S | S | S |  |  | S |  |  | S |
| C3 |  |  |  |  |  |  | S |  | S |  | S | S | S |  |  |  |  |  | S |
| C4 | S |  | S | S | S |  | S | S | S | S | S |  |  |  |  | S | S | S | S |
| C5 | S |  |  | S | S | S |  |  | S | S | S | S | S | S | S |  | S |  | S |
| C6 | S |  |  |  | S | S |  |  |  | S | S |  |  |  | S |  | S |  | S |

**Students will be provided with formative assessment opportunities throughout the course to practise and develop their proficiency in the range of assessment methods utilised.**

**Technical Annex**

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| **Final Award(s):** | BA (Hons) Popular Music |
| **Intermediate Award(s):** | Cert HE, Dip HE, Ordinary degree |
| **Minimum period of registration:** | 3 years full-time, 6 years part-time |
| **Maximum period of registration:** | 6 years full- time, 12 years part-time |
| **FHEQ Level for the Final Award:** | Honours |
| **QAA Subject Benchmark:** | QAA subject benchmarks for Music (2016) |
| **Modes of Delivery:** | Full-time |
| **Language of Delivery:** | English |
| **Faculty:** | Kingston School of Art |
| **School:** | Arts, Culture and Communication |
| **Department:** | Performing Arts |
| **UCAS Code:** | W315 |
| **Course/Route Code:** |  |
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