**Guidance for using MuseScore to edit late 16th- and early 17th-century music**

MuseScore version 4, a sophisticated free-to-use music processing program is now available at <https://musescore.org/en>. As the example below shows, the program can be used for editing late 16th- and early 17th-century music, to a level that is acceptable for examining purposes, though a couple of things need to be improved in it (see emboldened text below) before it could be used for published editions.



First task: for the basics, read through the online handbook in order to understand the basic principles of the program.Most of what is you will need is covered in the handbook. There are very few features missing, but perhaps these will be implemented in an update. They are:

1. A keyboard shortcut for the elision sign in Lyrics.
2. Inserting unusual mensuration/proportion signs in a prefatory stave (see 2, below).
3. Deleting initial brackets from an incipit without also deleting them from the edited version.

What follows are reminders to myself of how to implement some features of an edition of early 17th-century music that are not covered in the online handbook. NB I am working on a Mac, so some keyboard shortcuts will differ for Windows users (see handbook).

1. Preparing an incipit (prefatory stave).
   1. First, input into the first bar the rests and notes that you wish to see in the incipit, using a modern time signature. Delete the brackets at the beginning of the bar. **As things stand these will be repeated in the incipit and cannot be deleted from that without also deleting brackets in the edited version.**
   2. Either retain the time signature 3/2 or, as I have done, substitute it by the mensural signature.
   3. Select the first measure and insert a horizontal frame (from Add – Frames -insert horizontal frame). This may now either be left immediately before the first measure if the voice/instrument names are present in the source or moved before the voice/instrument names if they have been added by the editor.
   4. Select the frame. Open the Layout palette and click on the final icon (‘insert one bar before selection’). The incipit will appear. Its contents then need to be adjusted to represent those of the source. You will need to re-enter and, if required, adjust the time signature for the ‘edited’ bar 1.
   5. Adjust the clefs to those of the source. Change the ‘edited’ version to modern clef and make invisible the cautionary clef that have been added to the incipit. To make it easier to see what you have made ‘invisible’, open the View menu, go to ‘Show’ and uncheck the ‘Show invisible’ command. This is particularly useful when checking that you have made brackets and barlines invisible in the incipit.
   6. Add the time signature 3/2 and then, if desired, change this to a mensural signature by right clicking on the time signature and creating the new signature from the ‘time signature properties’ menu.
   7. Select the incipit and Right-click to open ‘Bar properties’. Click on ‘Exclude from the bar count’.
   8. **In the case of the Rovetta example, the composer (or printer) used the signature dotted C3 for Tenor 1 and plain C3 for the other two parts. So far as I can see, the only way round this problem is to right click on the signature in the Tenor 1 incipit and select the appropriate signature from the ‘other’ drop down menu in the ‘Time signature properties’ menu. Tenor 2 and Bc. signatures can be created as for the ‘edited’ version, though this means that they are in a different font from Tenor 1.. This still leaves the 3 to be added to the Tenor 1 signature. Select a rest or note in its incipt and Add – text – staff text’ and the number 3 and position it against the mensural sign, adjusting its size under its ‘properties.**
2. Adding coloration brackets (see bar 9, for example). Select the note on which the bracket is to be place. Open ‘View – Master palette’ and select ‘Symbols’. In the search box type ‘tuplet’ and select the relevant bracket. (Tip: leave adding these brackets until all the music is entered since the Master palette can then be left open at the relevant page.
3. Add ligature brackets. To produce these, and *Musica ficta* and to produce traditional vocal beaming all require plugins to the program. See the plugins page at <https://musescore.org/en/plugins>. To install a plugin, copy the .qml file to the MuseScore folder (on the Mac this is stored in the main Documents folder). You can then access the plugin from the Plugins menu. While you are at the plugins page, install all three that you will need – Musica ficta, Ligatura, Traditional vocal beaming – ensuring that you choose the 4.x. version Whhen you have copied the plugins to the MuseScore folder, return to the program select ‘Plugins – Manage plugins’ and then, having selected the plugin, click on ‘enable’. Repeat for all three.  
     
   To insert a ligature bracket SHIFT click on the two or more notes that the bracket should span to select them. From the ‘Lines’ palette, open ‘More’ and select ‘Line’. This will place a single line above the range of notes. Click on the line to select it. Open the Plugins menu, and under ‘Composing/arranging tools’ select ‘Ligatura bracket’. To adjust the placement of the end of the bracket, click on the line and then click on the right-hand box and adjust the length using the arrow keys.
4. Add musica ficta. First, add the sharp, flat or natural sign BEFORE the note to which it applies. Then select the note, go to the Plugins menu – Composing/arranging tools -Music ficta’.
5. Figured bass. This is covered in detail in the handbook, but NB On the Mac, sharp is opt-3. Hard space, needed to space figures beneath a single note (e.g. 5 6), is opt-space.
6. To use the elision sign in lyric underlay, type in the first of the elided syllables, select ‘’Properties – Insert special characters’ or SHIFT fn2, either of which brings up the special characters palette. Select the elision sign and then close the Special character’ palette. Add the next syllable. This is slightly fiddly at the moment, but it works.
7. Continuation lines in lyrics: CTRL + SHIFT + \_ (ALT + SHIFT + \_ on Mac).
8. To change to traditional note beaming of lyrics (i.e. separating quavers, etc, when they set single syllable), select the part(s) to which this should apply and then select ‘Plugins -Traditional Vocal Beaming’.

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