



Leeds Conservatoire

Audition Requirements

2021 Entry

BA (Hons) Acting
BA (Hons) Actor Musician

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The audition process is your opportunity to demonstrate your skills as a storyteller and to introduce yourself to the Acting team. The process is in two stages, allowing the team to assess your skill, creativity and readiness for Conservatoire training.

The process also gives you the opportunity to make your own assessment of the programme and whether it is best suited to you.

We know that auditions can often be daunting affairs. We also know how hard applicants work in preparation for those auditions. So, we work incredibly hard to ensure our auditions are accessible to all and that applicants feel supported throughout the process. Our recall days are designed to reflect the quality of experience you can expect while training at Leeds Conservatoire.

We recognise that your time is precious and that multiple auditions can be prohibitively expensive. So, at Leeds Conservatoire, we do not charge for auditions. Where it is possible to host on site recalls we will do so in a single day to minimise travel costs. A refund of audition travel may also be available for applicants from low income households. You can find out more about refunding audition travel on our website.

Both on site and online audition recalls are full of creative master-classes, as well as group and solo performance opportunities. Each are designed to encourage you to do your best work.

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic, our current audition process is in two parts.

Round 1:

- You upload your audition materials for panel assessment.
- We provide the outcome of this round: a recall to Round 2 or a decline. If we have any questions about your application at this stage we may arrange an informal interview with you over phone or video call.
- Only in exceptional circumstances would an applicant receive a first-round offer.

Round 2:

- You attend an 'in-person' or 'virtual', group recall audition, participating in a series of workshops to assess your skill in a creative, ensemble environment.
- We share details of the programme, course content, timetables and training methodologies.
- You have the opportunity to ask questions of staff and current students about the course and life at Leeds Conservatoire.
- You receive an outcome of your audition: an offer of a place, a place on our reserve list or a decline.

What to submit for Round 1:

BA (Hons) Acting

- A short, introductory video. Tell us who you are, why you are applying to the course at Leeds Conservatoire and how you think it will serve your development.
- Two contrasting speeches from published play texts (maximum 3 minutes per speech).

BA (Hons) Actor Musician

- A short, introductory video. Tell us who you are, why you are applying to the course at Leeds Conservatoire and how you think it will serve your development.
- One speech from published play texts (maximum 3 minutes).
- A musical piece to perform on your primary instrument (maximum 3 minutes).

How to prepare:

- Dress in loose fitting, comfortable rehearsal clothes, ready to work. You don't have to be 'dressed up'.
- Clear a space with a plain background if possible, make sure you can be seen and heard throughout.
- Record each file individually and name it what it is when saving i.e. 'Monologue – John Smith'
- Despite being recorded you don't need to give a televisual performance, do what you would do for an audition panel in the room.
- Actor Musicians should try and include their hands playing their instrument if possible.

After your audition:

- Following the submission of your Round 1 materials, we will assess your materials and let you know the outcome.
- If you have been unsuccessful this time, you will get an update via UCAS track.
- If you are successful at the first round audition you will be invited to a recall audition which will either be in person or online depending on current government guidance.
- In exceptional circumstances you will be offered a place as a result of Round 1 which you will be advised of in your follow up interview. In this case you would still be encouraged to attend the recall day to learn about the programme and take part in ensemble activities.

FAQs General

What do we mean by contrasting?

In order to show your full range, we ask BA Acting applicants to prepare two speeches that are different from one another. You can contrast style, language, character or tone. If you have experience of classical plays and verse speaking (Shakespearean, Elizabethan, Jacobean, Greek) this provides an immediate contrast with a modern play. However, there are other options, so choose what makes you comfortable and best demonstrates what you can do.

Can I cut a longer speech?

Yes, it is expected that you would cut a longer speech to fit within the three-minute time frame. It is often simplest to make a cut to the beginning or the end of a speech. Any other edit should be done with care and be sympathetic to the story being told. Try and retain the through line of story and avoid bolting together the 'best bits' if it is unlikely the character would evolve so quickly.

Can I write my own piece?

We are excited to discover the full extent of your creativity. If you have written something you think is excellent, you are welcome to prepare it and submit it as an additional file. We will however, still require the preparation of two speeches from published texts.

How do I choose a speech?

When choosing audition material is it fundamental that you like the piece and enjoy performing it. So, take your time researching and choosing texts that excite you. Try and choose material that is easy for you to access, a role you can imagine yourself playing and a speech that demonstrates your skill.

The best way to discover speeches is to see plays, live or via a digital platform like NT Live or Digital Theatre.

Reading plays is the next best option and is great research for the aspiring actor. Even if a play doesn't have a speech for you, you may find a writer you love and can seek out other plays by them.

Speaking to performers, drama school graduates, teachers and youth theatre professionals in person or online is also a great way to get advice and ideas.

Finally, there are books of speeches available to buy or borrow from the library but remember these are very popular and read the advice about performing speeches from monologue books below.

Can the speech be from a monologue book?

It can be. However, if you chose a speech from a monologue book be sure to read the whole play. This will enable you understand the character's speech in the context of their whole journey.

Should I do an accent?

Unless an accent is excellent and so sounds native, or is essential to the speech, we would prefer work to be performed in your native accent. What we want to hear is your natural voice quality.

Do I need to know the speech by heart?

Yes. In order to communicate your story to your audience you need to be able to work script free.

Everyone learns lines at different rates and in different ways, so ensure you give yourself enough time for this preparatory work. Learning your speech thought by thought and exploring ways of communicating it, can often be more effective than line by line repetition. Whatever approach you take, the ultimate aim is to be able to deliver your speeches with the same familiarity as your own phone number.

Will I receive feedback?

Peer to peer feedback happens as a natural part of the 'in person' recall masterclasses on the day. Unsuccessful applicants will be able to request short individual feedback alongside the outcome of the audition by emailing admissions@lcm.ac.uk.

It is useful to remember that performance is subjective. Different programmes have different criteria and often feedback from one source will differ from another, so only use what is useful to you moving forward.

Can I apply for both Acting and Actor Musician?

Absolutely. Apply for the Actor Musician programme and submit materials for both. It is useful to note in your introduction that you would like to be considered for both programmes.

How does the reserve list work?

A place on the reserve list is our way of saying you are ready for this programme and we would be thrilled to work with you. However, we have more excellent candidates than places so we have to look at the whole group before making a firm offer.

In order to ensure the audition process is fair, we have to have places to offer throughout the audition process. As a result, it is often necessary to identify candidates who are ready to train on the programme and make offers at a later date when we have seen all applicants.

Acting and Actor Musicianship are ensemble practices, so building a cohort is like building a company. To ensure the richest learning experience, each cohort represents a broad range of skills, celebrates diversity and consists of individuals with different experiences.

What is the best time in the year to audition?

We have places available until the final recall date. The important thing is to audition when you are feeling prepared and ready to do your best work.

FAQs BA (Hons) Actor Musician

I play more than one instrument, should I prepare a piece on each?

You are welcome to do so but we only require one for Round 1 audition purposes. Play the instrument you consider your primary instrument. If you play piano and guitar, or a similar combination, you could always demonstrate a secondary set of skills by accompanying yourself in your song.

Is my voice a primary instrument?

You can upload an accompanied or unaccompanied song as an additional part of your portfolio but you would have to have a primary instrument other than voice for the instrumental assessment.

Can I borrow an instrument for my recall?

Yes. If you are unable to transport your instrument, or don't have access to your own, we will endeavour to provide you with one for the purposes of your audition. This is subject to the type of instrument and availability so please give as much advance notice as possible.

What sorts of instruments are acceptable to play?

In order to benefit most fully from a three-year Actor Musician training programme, applicants should be able to demonstrate confidence and proficiency in at least one instrument. We accept applications from traditional instrumentalists and electronic music producers with a passion for creating music for and participating in live theatrical performance.

Can I use sheet music?

Yes, you can use sheet music/chord charts. If you do, bear in mind we are assessing musicality as well as skill. Think about how you are communicating the music as well as how skilfully you are playing it. The more ownership you have over the music, the easier it will be to think about its effect on the listener.

Entry requirements

a. Academic

96 UCAS tariff points from level 3 studies or equivalent, which normally include an A Level or BTEC Extended Diploma in an Acting related or Acting / Music related (for Actor Musician) subject.

A minimum of three GCSEs including English Language at Grade C / Grade 4 or above or equivalent international qualification, eg IELTS 6.0 (5.5 in each component).

b. Audition

Applicants will be invited to submit audition materials and may attend a recall audition.

