



Leeds Conservatoire

Audition Requirements

2027 Entry

MA Popular Music (Writer Performer)

Introduction

To begin your application for the MA Popular Music (Writer Performer) programme you must submit your initial audition materials online.

You may choose to complete your audition process by submitting the remaining audition materials online, or by attending an in-person audition day (subject to availability of audition dates.)

Once you have submitted your application, if you meet or are likely to meet our entry requirements, we will contact you with further details of how to submit your audition materials online through our application system, Acceptd, and to request an in-person audition if applicable.

This guide explains what is required for each element of the audition process.

All applicants will need to submit the following materials online.

1. Intended Direction of Study
2. Example of Academic Writing

For the following, applicants may choose between submitting the materials online or attending an in-person audition at our campus (subject to availability of audition dates.)

3. Examples of your musical material*
4. Answers-to-video (online applications) or interview (in-person auditions)

*Although the MA Popular Music (Writer Performer) programme is delivered entirely in English, we do greatly appreciate the diverse cultural expression of applications. As such, one of your three audition pieces may be performed in a language other than English. The remaining two must be performed in English.

1. Intended Direction of Study (Max 500 words)

To be submitted online via Acceptd

A written submission outlining your intended direction of study on the course.

This should include a brief outline of the following:

- Your relevant musical experience
- Important areas you would like to develop whilst studying
- How your time on the course could support your professional development and future goals.

Please note that this is different and in addition to the personal statement submitted as part of your application.

2. Example of Academic Writing (Between 1000 - 2000 words)

To be submitted online via Acceptd

Please submit a 1000-2000-word sample of your academic writing. Part of the MA Popular Music programme involves the analytical, critical, and research-based study of music, so it is important that we feel confident in your ability to engage in this type of activity.

The academic writing sample can be a piece of work you have written in the past on a previous course of study, such as an essay, report, or article. If you choose, it can be a newly written piece of writing, though it is not expected that you will produce a brand-new piece of writing for this task. Either way, please make sure that it represents the best example of academic writing that you can provide to us.

Please note that you are not prohibited from submitting a writing sample that is longer than 1000-2000 words, but we may not read the entire sample in the process of reviewing your application.

3. Examples of Your Musical Material (c. 10-12 minutes)

To be submitted online via Acceptd or provided at an in-person audition day

We are hoping to hold limited in-person auditions in February, April and June.

Where there is an in-person audition date available, you will have the option to select between an 'in-person' or 'online submission'. Where there is not an in-person audition date available, only the 'online submission' option will be available.

Please note that you are welcome to submit the same or very similar materials for more than one of the MA Popular Music programmes if you wish.

- Please prepare performances of THREE songs (c.10-12 minutes) you have written yourself, and that demonstrate your musical and compositional strengths and identity.
- Ensure that the pieces chosen demonstrate your technical ability as a writer and performer on your principal instrument and your identity, character and direction as a popular musician.
- Please also provide accompanying lyric sheets (with English translations where necessary). You do not need to provide scores of the material.

Online submission requirements:

These three songs can be submitted in either of the following combinations:

- 1 audio recording (.mp3 or .wav) and 2 live video performances; or 3 live video performances.
- The recordings do not have to be of a professional standard, but we do ask that the audio is clear and that you are evidently visible and identifiable in the performances.
- You may perform solo, accompanied, along to a backing track or with a band if you choose to do so.
- 1 of your audition pieces can be performed in a language other than English, though at least 2 of the audition pieces must be performed in English.

In-person audition requirements:

- Applicants must perform at least two songs live in the room. For the remaining song, applicants can choose whether they would prefer to play this live or bring in recorded versions on an audio playback device (a phone or laptop are fine).
- If you choose to play a recording for your third track, you do not need to send us a copy in advance, we will listen to it in the audition with you.
- You may accompany yourself, play unaccompanied or use a backing track for any/all of your audition pieces. Please note: you are unable to bring along any band members or accompanists
- A mini jack (with USB-C adaptors) will be provided in the audition room for playing backing tracks through a PA. A member of staff will help you set this up.
- The audition room will contain a piano, a selection of guitar and bass amps, a drum kit and PA with microphone which you will be able to use. If you have any additional technical set up requests, please email them to admissions@leedsconservatoire.ac.uk at least one week before your audition.

4. Answers to Camera/Interview (No more than 15 minutes)

If all other materials submitted have been online, this must be submitted online via Accepted. If attending an in-person audition day, this will be conducted as an interview.

The format for your interview will vary depending on if you choose to attend an in-person audition day or submit all of your materials online. If you are attending in-person, please do not submit an answers-to-camera video online.

Online submission requirements:

Submit a short video (no more than 15 minutes) with your answers to the following questions (please speak directly to the camera as if to an audition panel):

1. Tell us why you want to study MA Popular Music at Leeds Conservatoire. What is it about this course that will assist you in achieving your creative and/or career goals?
2. Talk about your experience as a popular musician, outlining any key projects and your role within them, and what you have learned from them.
3. Tell us about your influences, especially the artists you have studied/listened to the most, and how they inform your musicianship.
4. Provide a brief example of how research and reflective practice has informed your musicianship, and how this may inform your development in the future.

Depending on the outcome of your portfolio, you may be contacted by a member of the academic team to schedule an additional online interview where you will be asked a series of short questions exploring your interest, experience and knowledge. This interview helps us to clarify any details of your application and to ensure the programme is right for you.

Applicants who receive offers and have further questions about the programme can request an online meeting with the academic team or in-person visit.

In-person audition requirements:

Following the performance/playback of your audition pieces at an in-person audition, you will be asked a series of short questions exploring your interests, experience and knowledge, as well as about your audition pieces. These may cover similar themes to those outlined in the online submission section above.

