LEEDS CONSERVATOIRE

Leeds Conservatoire

Audition Requirements

2027 Entry

CertHE Performance

[Acting, Actor Musician, Musical Theatre]

V1

Welcome

The CertHE Performance is a one-year Level 4 programme designed for performers wishing to accelerate their artistic development and skills training before progressing to undergraduate conservatoire training or other vocational pathways. The programme includes three specialist strands: Acting, Musical Theatre and Actor Musician.

Important Note: Applying for a three-year BA?

This guide is only for applicants to the one-year CertHE Performance programmes. If you are applying for BA Acting, Musical Theatre or Actor Musician, please return to the website (leedsconservatoire.ac.uk/audition) and download the relevant BA audition guide.

The Audition Process

The audition process is your opportunity to showcase your storytelling skills and introduce yourself to the School of Drama team. It consists of two stages, allowing the team to assess your creativity, skill, and readiness for conservatoire training.

The process also gives you a chance to evaluate the programme and determine if it's the right fit for you.

We understand that auditions can be daunting and appreciate the effort applicants put into preparing. That's why we work hard to make our auditions accessible and supportive for everyone. Our recall days are designed to reflect the quality of training you'll experience at Leeds Conservatoire.

We also recognise that multiple auditions can be expensive and time-consuming. At Leeds Conservatoire, we don't charge for auditions, and our in-person recalls are scheduled over a single day to minimise travel costs. Additionally, travel refunds may be available for applicants from low-income households. For more information, please visit our website.

Our audition process is in two parts:

Round 1:

- If you meet or are likely to meet our entry requirements we will invite you to upload your round 1 audition materials using our online application system, Acceptd.
- Following receipt of your UCAS application, you will receive an invite from Acceptd to create an account where you can upload your videos.
- Full instructions of how to do this and when you need to submit by will be sent to you, please check your junk mail if you have not received your invite to upload your materials within a couple of days of submitting your application.
- Round 1 video requirements are detailed below.
- A panel will assess your Round 1 materials and if successful, invite you to a Round 2 recall audition.

Round 1 Videos

1. Introduction Video (2 minutes maximum)

Please upload an introduction video in which you tell us:

- Why now is the right time for you to undertake a one-year intensive performance programme.
- Where you would most like to develop as a performer.
- What access you have had to training and performance opportunities so far.
- What you hope this year will enable you to do next.
- Tell us something about yourself beyond performing. We want to meet the person behind the application rather than hear a list of credits or simply that you love theatre.

2. Performance Submission

Please also upload the following performance videos, plus a photograph:

- ONE speech from a published play;
- EITHER:
  - ONE song OR
  - ONE performance on a musical instrument
- A photograph

In total, your Round 1 submission should include three compulsory videos and one photograph:

1) Introduction, 2) Speech, 3) Song or Instrumental Piece, 4) Photograph

Optional: Upload a fourth video if you wish to demonstrate all three disciplines, or another skill that is fundamental to your storytelling (for example dance, self-written work, verse speaking, physical theatre, circus, spoken word or another relevant performance skill). You will not be penalised in anyway for not adding optional material.

What sort of speech?

Something from a published play text (maximum two minutes per speech). Please introduce the speech at the beginning of the video or save the file name with this information: This is [CHARACTER NAME]'s speech from [TITLE OF PLAY].

What sort of song?

If your singing experience and area of interest is in musical theatre: a single song from a published musical. Ideally with piano accompaniment or backing track if this isn't available.
If your experience of performance is as an actor, then something short, folk, pop, any musical style is fine. You can do this acapella (without any music).

What sort of musical piece?

Anything you love, are confident playing and shows the level of your musical experience. If you play more than one instrument, you can tell us in the introduction. You are welcome to accompany yourself if you prefer to sing and play but you don't have to.

What sort of photograph?

One that is your head and shoulders. This does not have to be a professionally-taken photograph - just a clear image that is recognisably you, we use these on audition days for reference only. Please do not use AI to generate images.

Advice for Round 1 applicants:

- Your videos are a virtual representation of the live audition experience, so set up should reflect this as much as possible.
- Choose materials that suit you and that you enjoy performing.
- Dress in loose fitting, comfortable rehearsal clothes. You don't have to be 'dressed up'.
- For solo materials choose whether you direct your performance to the camera (audience address) or to a character/point of focus just beside it, as if performing onstage.
- Clear a space with as plain a background as possible, make sure you can be seen and heard throughout.
- Record each file individually and name it what it is when saving i.e. 'Introduction – John Smith'
- Actor Musicians should try and include their hands playing their instrument if possible.
- Musical Theatre songs should show YOUR voice. Try to avoid "character" voiced songs.

Round 2: Live Recall

- You will attend an 'in-person' (if you live in the UK) or 'virtual' (if you live outside of the UK) recall audition, participating in a series of activities to assess your skill in a creative, ensemble environment.
- We will share details of the programme, course content and training methodologies.
- You have the opportunity to ask questions of staff and current students about the course and life at Leeds Conservatoire.
- You will receive a tour of our performance spaces.
- You will have a 1-1 chat with a member of staff, so that they can learn more about you and you can ask any questions you have about Leeds Conservatoire.
- You do not need to prepare anything new.
- You will be asked to share your Round 1 materials in workshop settings. So, bring this performance ready.
- If you are invited to recall for the Musical Theatre strand of the CertHE Performance, you will need to bring the sheet music of your song to the recall. If you don't have access to this, please let us know in advance and we will find it for you.
- After the audition you will receive either an offer of a place, or an unsuccessful decision on UCAS.

International Applicants:

An online 'virtual' recall will be arranged with applicants outside of the UK. During your online recall you will be required to work practically over Microsoft Teams. We may ask for further videos in response to this meeting and your Round 1 submission.

FAQs

Will I receive feedback?

Peer-to-peer feedback happens as a natural part of the 'in-person' recall masterclasses on the day. Unfortunately, due to the volume of applicants we are unable to provide any further feedback for either Round 1 or Round 2 auditions.

When should I apply/audition?

We encourage all applications to be submitted by the UCAS Equal Consideration Deadline (13 Jan 2027), as after this date applications may close at short notice.

It is important to audition when you are feeling prepared and ready to do your best work. However, we do encourage you to submit your Round 1 materials by the deadline communicated in your invitation, as submitting later may result in limited recall dates being available if invited for Round 2.

We do have places available on our courses until the final recall date, but if at all possible we advise you to accept a recall date as soon as one is offered to you, in order to ensure we are able to accommodate you within the finite recall slots available.

Can I cut a longer speech?

Yes, it is expected that you would cut a longer speech to fit within the two-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 submit it as an additional file. We will however, still require the preparation of a speech from a published text.

If you're uploading musicianship, you are very welcome to perform one of your original songs or compositions. It helps demonstrate your creativity and musical personality.

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.

If I'm applying for Musical Theatre, how do I prepare sheet music?

Make a copy of the song you wish to sing, ensuring that it is clear for the pianist to read and has no parts cut off. Tape your music - alternating sides, so that it is easy to turn the pages (like a book) or put it in a folder. Mark anything on the music that will help the pianist, especially anything you have cut, so that the accompanist knows where to jump to. Be careful of downloading piano vocals from the internet, look instead for the vocal selections or full score of the show that will have the fullest accompaniment.

I'm am a Musician and 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. You are welcome to upload additional videos of your other instruments or accompanying yourself but you don't have to.

Can I borrow an instrument for my recall?

Yes. If you are invited to recall for the Actor Musician strand and 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.

Can I choose voice/singing as my instrument?

No, your musicianship should show an instrument other than voice. You don't have to have grades in the instrument, being self-taught is fine.