



BMus (Hons) POPULAR MUSIC PERFORMANCE - AUDITION PROCEDURE (2018 entry)

Introduction

Each year, Leeds Arts University recruits a cohort of 36 student musicians to the following principal studies: 12 x vocals (male & female), 6 x keyboard, 6 x electric guitar, 6 x bass guitar and 6 x drum kit.

The audition process is designed to assess your ability in popular music performance, production and composition. Places on the course are offered based on the demonstration of your potential to develop in these areas over the three years of the course.

We welcome applications from international students. Please see the section at the end of this guide about applying from outside the UK.

Overview

The audition is structured as a 25-minute practical audition and interview session conducted by the course leader, and an instrumental/vocal specialist.

The audition process is designed to assess the following:

Criteria	Assessment method
Instrumental/vocal proficiency (equivalent to grade 8 standard)	Practical performance of a set piece
Musicianship	
Energy and presence in performance	
Production skills	Practical performance of your own original song or instrumental composition OR
Composition skills	Practical performance of an existing song, re-arranged by you
Stylistic understanding	Practical performance of set and/or original pieces
General communication skills	Panel Q&A

PART 1:

The first part of your audition is a practical performance. Instrumental and/or vocal performance skills are key to success on the course and assessed at this point.

You should choose one of the set pieces from the list below, as appropriate to your instrument/voice.

BASS GUITAR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick</i> - Ian Dury and the Blockheads 2. <i>YYZ</i> - Rush
DRUM KIT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Knights of Cydonia</i> - Muse 2. <i>Rock Steady</i> - Aretha Franklin
GUITAR	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Paranoid Android</i> - Radiohead 2. <i>Run to the Hills</i> - Iron Maiden
KEYBOARDS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>United States of Eurasia</i> - Muse 2. <i>Pinball Wizard</i> - Elton John & The Who
VOCAL	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Without You</i> - Mariah Carey 2. <i>Cry Me A River</i> - Justin Timberlake

PART 2:

In the second part of your audition, you will be asked to demonstrate your production and composition skills. You will be asked to perform one of the following:

- a) An original song or instrumental composition of your own, performed live by you to a backing track of your own making;
- b) An original song or instrumental composition of your own, performed live and accompanied by yourself.
- c) An interpretation of an existing song or instrumental composition performed and re-arranged by you (either performed live to a backing track of your own making, or accompanied by yourself).

You will be asked to produce some form of musical notation for the music you present, whichever option you choose. This might be either a score, a chord/melody chart, a rhythm chart, a lyric sheet, a part sheet, or some combination of these as appropriate.

If your second performance piece is an existing song (option c above), you will be asked to articulate the ways in which your interpretation/re-arrangement differs significantly and creatively from the original song or composition.

Audition walk-through

You will be on site at Leeds Arts University for around 60-75 minutes in total. Your warm-up and audition will take up to 45 minutes. You are encouraged to arrive up to 30 minutes before your allocated audition time to allow time for registration and warming up.

When you arrive at Leeds Arts University Blenheim Walk site, you will be greeted by a Student Ambassador (SA).

15 minutes before your practical audition, the SA will escort you to a space where you will be able to warm up and prepare.

At your allocated audition time, the SA will escort you to the audition location.

The audition panel will consist of the BMus (Hons.) Popular Music Performance course leader and a specialist in your chosen study (voice, guitar, keyboards, bass or drum kit).

Activity	Rationale
Set equipment	Prepare for performance
Perform set piece 1 or 2	Assess instrumental/vocal equivalence of grade 8 performance
Musicianship discussion [1]	
Perform original composition/arrangement [2]	Assess production and composition skills
Panel Questions [3]	Establish motivation, ambition, commitment, and reason for choosing to study at Leeds Arts University. Assess confidence and communication skills.
Your questions	You can ask any questions you have about the course and university.

Equipment

Leeds Arts University will provide:

- **Stage piano**; if you require a second keyboard, you should bring this to the audition.
- **Drum kit**; drummers should bring their own breakables (sticks, cymbals).
- **Guitar amplifier**; guitarists should provide their own guitar, pedals and leads.
- **Bass guitar amplifier**; bass players should provide their own bass guitar, pedals and leads.
- **Stage monitoring**; suitable for monitoring a backing track.
- **Music stands and lighting**; suitable for reading the score of the set/portfolio piece.

If you need to play a backing track for your portfolio piece, you should bring a suitable .mp3 player.

Notes

- Vocalists will perform without a microphone
- Backing tracks and scores for set pieces to be provided by Leeds Arts University

International students

Applications to the course are welcomed from international candidates. Where such candidates are not able to attend auditions in person:

1. Upload a video of your practical set piece performance to a suitable video sharing platform (YouTube, Vimeo or Weibo) for remote review by the course leader.
2. Upload a video of your practical performance of an original song, instrumental composition, or arrangement of an existing song to a suitable video-sharing platform (YouTube, Vimeo or Weibo) for remote review by the course leader.

3. Complete a Skype interview with the Programme Director and course leader which investigates your:
 - ambition and motivation within popular music and for enrolling on the course;
 - musicianship;
 - skills and creativity in production and composition, such as is evidenced by the original music submission.