

Leeds Conservatoire

Audition Requirements

2026 Entry

BA (Hons) Popular Music

BA (Hons) Popular Music with Foundation Year

Introduction - Application Process

Once you have submitted your application to the conservatoire via UCAS, if you meet or are likely to meet our minimum entry requirements, you will receive an email that will detail how to send your audition materials to us, or how to book an in-person audition if applicable.

Once we have made our decision on your application we will update UCAS with our decision and you will be notified via UCAS Hub.

Applicants have the option to audition online via portfolio submission or in person at an audition on our campus.

This guide sets out what you will need to prepare and / or submit when auditioning for our BA (Hons) Popular Music courses at Leeds Conservatoire.

Audition, Interview and Portfolio Requirements

Your audition materials will be slightly different depending on which specialism you are applying for.

Please ensure therefore that you look at all the requirements for the correct specialism so you know the expectations for each.

Please note that for Popular Music courses you can only audition on one principal instrument (although you may self-accompany on another instrument if you wish.) Please ensure it is clear which is your principal instrument that you are auditioning with.

Please see the following pages for full details of what you will need to prepare for audition.

IN PERSON AUDITION

Your audition will consist of 30 minutes warm up time with your instrument followed by a 30-minute individual audition.

We are looking for evidence of individual musical skills, creativity and enthusiasm for the subject.

1. Performers (except drummers): You will be asked to play two pieces you have selected to demonstrate your musical strengths and identity

- You may play original pieces or covers but covers should ideally be interpretative and not identical copies (i.e. you should put your own stamp on them).
- 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.

2. Drummers only: You will be required to perform one prepared piece with a play-along track.

- In addition, you will need to be prepared to improvise various common beats and fills as instructed in the audition, e.g. reggae, drum-and-bass, funk, blues shuffle, disco, etc.
- You may be asked to play technical exercises during the audition. This may include rudiments and standard patterns and techniques

3. Music Theory

Please perform a brief spoken analysis of one of your audition pieces (no longer than five minutes), considering at least three of the following components that you feel are most interesting and relevant. You may also demonstrate aspects of this analysis on your instrument as is relevant and helpful. You will not be required to sightread or read from any notation. This is a chance for us to get to know a bit more about the language and theoretical understanding you have at this stage.

- Harmony
- Rhythm
- Melody
- Structure
- Texture
- Timbre/tone
- Instrumentation
- Lyrics

4. Interview

We will also ask you some questions about yourself as a performer, your influences, your performance experience and your understanding of the music industry.

Additional audition information:

- If you compose/songwrite as well, you may wish to bring some recorded examples to play for the panel as this may come up in conversation.
- A mini jack 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 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 with at least one week's notice of your audition.

ONLINE AUDITION SUBMISSIONS VIA ACCEPTD

BA (Hons) Music (Popular) / BA (Hons) Music (Popular) with Foundation Year

Please submit the following items for assessment:

1. Performers (excluding drummers):

Submit two pieces you have selected to demonstrate your musical strengths and identity. Ensure that the pieces chosen demonstrate both your technical abilities on your instrument and your identity and character as a popular musician.

These two pieces can be submitted in either of the following orientations: a) 1 audio recording and 1 video performance; or, b) 2 video performances. If any video includes more than one performer, please make it clear which one is you.

- You may play original pieces and/or covers. If you perform solely covers at least one of the pieces should be your own creative version that differs from the original version.
- You may accompany yourself on another instrument (primarily in the case of vocal auditions), play unaccompanied or use a backing track or band for any/all of your audition pieces.

Drummers Only:

You should submit only one full length audition piece of your choosing and a video in which you perform three x 16 bar demonstrations of popular rhythm styles (hip hop, breakbeats, drum-and-bass, reggae, funk, blues shuffle, disco, etc.). You may choose the rhythm styles to perform, though they should include some demonstration of fill work and/or improvisation within the style.

2. Music Theory

Please perform a brief spoken analysis of one of your audition pieces (no longer than five minutes), considering at least three of the following components that you feel are most interesting and relevant. You may also demonstrate aspects of this analysis on your instrument as is relevant and helpful.

- Harmony
- Rhythm
- Melody
- Structure
- Texture
- Timbre/tone
- Instrumentation
- Lyrics

3. Interview:

Submit a short video with your answers to the following questions (please speak directly to the camera as if to an audition panel). We want to get to know you and learn about your experience and knowledge, so make sure you give plenty of detail.

- Why do you want to study at Leeds Conservatoire?
- Who influences you as a popular musician and why?
- What music are you currently listening to and why?
- Please tell us about your performance experience (where, when, with whom, what type of performances/bands, studio/live performance, etc.)
- What challenges do popular musicians face today?

