

Sydney Conservatorium of Music



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Postgraduate Audition Guide 2025



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Postgraduate Audition Guide

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Left to right: aerial view of a rehearsal, student playing trumpet

The audition registration process

Audition information and how to apply

This guide will help you to start and complete your application to study with us, including preparing your audition. Plan early to understand the repertoire requirements and learn the process to make an application.

Application process

1. Apply directly to the University of Sydney – further information can be found [here](#)
2. Register for your audition/interview in [Acceptd](#)
3. Follow the specific requirements in this guide to prepare your audition program.

When you have finished your application, make sure you check your email for confirmation of the audition and interview times. For further information on applying for your chosen degree, please see [here](#).

Audition registration

You will be asked to nominate the degree for which you are applying as well as your Program Area. Refer to [Table 1](#) below to check the course your Program Area is offered in.

Entry into a Sydney Conservatorium of Music (SCM) coursework performance degree requires a successful audition. To be considered for a place in a Master of Music Studies or Graduate Diploma, you must register for your audition via our official audition portal: [Acceptd](#). Please note that you may also need to meet other requirements, such as sight-reading or attending an interview.

When to register

Audition registration opens in [Acceptd](#) in April and usually closes in September for the following year's intake. Auditions are held in July and September, and there may be an additional round in December. You choose which round you would like to participate in – please see below for audition dates.

Where to audition

Live auditions are held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music
1 Conservatorium Rd, Sydney
(just off Macquarie Street – look for the castle)

Course Information

Table 1: Programs, audition type, and degree information

Our postgraduate coursework degrees are designed to prepare you for the music profession, with a strong emphasis on perfecting your professional performance skills.

The Sydney Conservatorium offers the following postgraduate coursework options:

- Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)
- Master of Music Studies (Performance)
- Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

		M Music Studies (Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C		
		G Dip Music (Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C		
		M Music Studies (Opera Performance) *CRICOS code: 058373C		
Program Area	Audition Type			
Orchestral Instrument ▲	audition	✓	✓	✗
Non-Orchestral Instrument ◆	audition	✓	✓	✗
Jazz Performance	audition	✓	✓	✗
Conducting	video & portfolio + call-back audition & interview	✓	✓	✗
Opera Performance	audition + interview	✗	✗	✓

M = Master of, G Dip = Graduate Diploma in

**CRICOS = Commonwealth Register of Institutions
and Courses for Overseas Students

- ✓ program is available in this course
- ✗ program is not available in this course

- ▲ Classical: Bassoon, Cello, Clarinet, Double Bass, Euphonium, Flute, Harp, Horn, Oboe, Percussion, Trombone, Trumpet, Tuba, Viola, Violin
- ◆ Chinese Instrumental Performance, Guitar, Historical Performance, Organ, Piano (Classical), Saxophone, Voice (Classical)

Audition rounds and deadlines

Table 2: Audition rounds and deadlines



Table 2: Audition and application dates

Audition Round	Semester intake	Registration deadline
Round 1: 7 to 11 July 2025 <i>(excluding Opera – offered in Round 2 only)</i>	Semester 2 2025 and Semester 1 2026	22 June 2025, 11:59pm
Round 2: 29 September to 3 October 2025	Semester 1 2026	7 September 2025, 11:59pm
Round 3: 2 to 3 December 2025 <i>(excluding Opera – offered in Round 2 only)</i>	Semester 1 2026	30 November 2025, 11:59pm

How to submit your audition application in Acceptd

How to submit your audition application in Acceptd:

1. Click 'Register audition' on the Sydney Conservatorium of Music (SCM) website. You will be taken to the audition portal Acceptd
2. Start your application by selecting the degree level, degree, and program (principal study area). Click 'Apply' then follow the guidelines outlined on the right-hand side
3. Sign-up to create a new account or use your Facebook account to sign-in
4. Complete the application form
5. Pay the audition fee and select your audition time in the relevant schedule or upload your audition materials.

Further detail

Instrumental / vocal performance applications

Live auditions will be held at the Conservatorium. You can schedule your audition time via your application in the audition portal Acceptd. If you cannot travel to the Conservatorium for a live audition, you may submit a video audition. You can do this by registering your details in the Acceptd portal and uploading your video file (see below).

Live Auditions

Live auditions will be held at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. You will be directed where to go once you have arrived and signed in for your audition. Please arrive approximately 30 minutes before your audition is scheduled. You will be offered a short warm-up period immediately prior to your audition. As your audition will be a performance, we suggest that you consider wearing appropriate on-stage attire for your study area.

Video Auditions

You can upload your audition file as an unlisted video to a video hosting service (such as YouTube or Youku or equivalent), then upload to your Acceptd registration. The file cannot be larger than 5GB and video types that you can upload are: MP4, M4V, AVI, FLV, MOV, WMV, MPG, MPEG, M2V, MKV, WEBM. As your audition will be a performance, we suggest that you consider wearing appropriate on-stage attire for your study area.

Official notifications regarding entry to the Sydney Conservatorium of Music will be sent upon receipt of your completed University of Sydney course application and audition registration

Preparing for your audition



Scan to view our
video on
'How to prepare for a
successful audition'

To study at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, you will need to audition or attend an interview. This can be a nerve-racking experience, but it doesn't have to be. An audition is your opportunity to show us your abilities, and it allows us to assess your skills and discuss your commitment. You can register for your audition or interview when our online audition portal Acceptd opens for applications.

Here are four tips from those who've previously applied to help you prepare for your audition:

- 1. It's not what you play that counts, it's how you play**
When selecting repertoire, you want to play it comfortably and well. A piece that's achievable is better than going for something that's too difficult. The audition panel will look for quality of performance |
- 2. Double check all of your audition requirements**
Make sure you follow the audition requirements for your specialisation. If you're auditioning on an orchestral instrument or voice, remember you need to have an accompanist
- 3. It all comes down to sound quality**
Whatever equipment you're using to record your audition, do your best to maximise the sound quality by choosing your location carefully. If you can, try and use an ensemble room or recital hall. It doesn't need to be recorded professionally – a simple ZOOM recording is enough
- 4. Show your personality**
An audition panel consists of musicians. Show them that you're one too and that you have a passion for music. Be technically proficient, but don't fret about technique – they'll be on the lookout for potential.

Find a Collaborative Pianist

If you are attending a live audition and your work requires accompaniment, you must provide your own collaborative pianist. If circumstances prevent you from attending a live audition, you may submit an audio-visual audition recording. While it is preferred that you play with an accompanist, there will be no disadvantage if you submit a recording of your unaccompanied performance. We will not accept the use of a recorded accompaniment.

If you do not already have one, and if you have registered for a live audition, the following information can assist you in finding an accompanist.

Accompanists' Guild of NSW – Find an Accompanist:

<http://accompanistsguildofnsw.org.au/accompanists/>

Please note:

- Any arrangement for payment is solely between the applicant and collaborative pianist.
- The Sydney Conservatorium of Music is not responsible for any services and fees.
- This suggested list is optional only, and there is no requirement to engage with a collaborative pianist from the list provided. This suggested list is optional only, and there is no requirement to engage with a collaborative pianist from the list provided.



Video Auditions

Table 3: How to record your audition

Table 3: How to record your audition

Instrument	Recording Tips
Brass	Do not point the bell directly towards the camera.
Violin & Viola	Face slightly to your left, to ensure the fingerboard is visible and not obstructed by a music stand. F Holes should point towards the camera.
Cello & Double Bass	Face slightly to your right, to ensure the fingerboard is visible and not obstructed by a music stand.
Guitar	Both hands visible and not obstructed by the music stand.
Harp	Face towards your right, to ensure both hands are visible. Foot pedals should also be visible.
Piano	Angle the camera to ensure the keyboard is not obstructed by your body and hands are visible. Please make sure your face and hands are both clearly visible.
Voice	Position the camera to take full length body. Clarity of voice must be heard.
Woodwind	Ensure your hands are visible and keys are not obstructed by a music stand.
Music Theatre	Singing: Refer to Voice above. Acting: Film from chest upwards, voice and facial expressions should be clearly visible.

When using your smartphone or other devices to record your performance:

- Record in one continuous take, without cuts or edits. You may choose to record individual pieces or movements separately
- Place your recording device in a horizontal, i.e. 'landscape' position
- Remember that audio quality is more important than video quality
- Ensure the room you record in is well lit and quiet. Avoid bright side light or back light. The best location to film is usually with you facing a window
- Place your device on a tripod or makeshift stand, i.e. not handheld
- Check that Flight mode is turned on and Wireless is turned off, so you receive no calls or messages during the recording
- Note that while you can use recording software such as Adobe's Premiere Rush to record yourself, the standard Camera applications on iOS and Android devices are usually sufficient to obtain good quality results
- Make sure your camera is set to record at 720p HD at 30fps, if you are using an iPhone or an Android device. This is set in the Camera Settings within the Settings application. Recording at higher quality settings is not necessary for evaluation and will significantly impact the upload time of your final recording.

Keep in mind that it's the quality of your performance that matters most, not the quality of your recording.



Image: The Sydney Conservatorium of Music building

Performance coursework degrees

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

This degree is aimed at musicians who wish to enhance their mastery in music performance and to prepare for a career at the highest levels of the performance industry. Principal study areas include orchestral and solo instruments, historical performance, and jazz.

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

This course is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduates and young professional musicians who wish to extend their performance skills and knowledge in the context of current professional practice. This program may be taken in any of the Conservatorium's instrumental areas.

Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

The Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance) is designed to meet the needs of advanced graduates and young professional singers who wish to extend their performance skills and knowledge in the context of operatic repertoire and current professional practice.

The principal study area is Opera Performance.

Principal Study Areas – Performance

- Brass – Classical
- Collaborative Piano – Classical
- Organ – Classical
- Percussion – Classical
- Piano – Classical
- Strings – Classical
- Voice – Classical
- Woodwind – Classical
- Chinese Instrumental Performance
- Historical Performance
- Jazz Performance
- Conducting
- Opera Performance: *MMus Studies (Opera Performance) only*



The audition requirements for each principal study area are listed on the following pages. We suggest that, if possible, you discuss these requirements with your mentor prior to attending your audition.




Image: four students holding their instruments

Brass – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

We offer study in:

Horn

Trumpet

Trombone

Euphonium

Tuba

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a program presenting various styles and periods. This should include:

1. At least one major 19th or 20th-century concerto
2. One work originally written with piano accompaniment
3. One unaccompanied work
4. Two characteristic excerpts from the standard orchestral repertoire.

All works should be originally written for your instrument (no transcriptions or arrangements).


Note for Tuba candidates

Tuba candidates should demonstrate both the F or E \flat tuba and the CC or BB \flat tuba.

Organ – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a well contrasted 50-minute recital program, which includes:


1. A major work of J.S. Bach
2. A major Romantic composition.

It is expected that you will perform the chosen works to a high level of excellence and will also display well-advanced console management skills.

Percussion – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a 40 to 50-minute program that represents the area in percussion performance that you are intending to focus on.

Audition examples

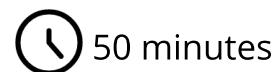
1. If you plan to focus on the marimba, you should perform major works or concerti for marimba.
2. If you plan to focus on orchestral percussion, you should perform:
 - I. Orchestral excerpts on snare drum, timpani, mallet keyboards, aux percussion
 - II. A J.S. Bach transcription on marimba.

If you are interested in studying a wide range of repertoire, you should perform pieces reflecting this diversity: for example, works for mallet keyboards, timpani, and multiple percussion.

Piano – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)



Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare the following program for your application:

Audition

- You are required to perform a 50-minute recital of freely chosen works which must include a major work of at least 15 minutes. Any complete major work of a minimum 15-minute duration by any composer will be acceptable.

All works should be performed from memory, except for complex contemporary works.

Sight reading / Short Study

- In addition to the 50-minute recital, you will be assessed in the following:

Live audition

- a sight-reading assessment.

Video audition


- a short study assessment.

You will be sent a short study upon receipt of your video audition registration and at least two weeks before the application deadline. You are required to prepare, record and upload the short study assessment prior to the program. The details of the short study and how to upload will be sent to your Accepted 'messages.'

Collaborative Piano – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

There are two parts to the Collaborative Piano audition:

Part 1: Submit a video recording of the repertoire (specification noted below)

Part 2: Live audition for invited applicants

Part 1

In your video, you are required to perform:

- The first movement of a Sonata for Piano and Violin by Mozart or Beethoven; OR
- The first movement of a Sonata for Piano and Cello by Beethoven
- One movement from a Sonata for Piano and another instrument by Brahms, Franck, Faure, Debussy, Poulenc, or other Sonata-Duo work in the Romantic, Impressionist, or Early 20th Century/modern style
- 6 art songs, representing at least three different languages and styles

All repertoires must be performed with instrumental or vocal associate artists.

Part 2

If you pass Part 1:

1. You will be invited to present a live audition at the Sydney Conservatorium to play the repertoire as presented in Part 1.
2. You will also be emailed a short quick-learn project one week prior to the live audition. You will learn the quick study and deliver it in your live audition.


After completing your live audition, you will have a short discussion with the Collaborative Piano faculty.

You are encouraged to bring your own associate artist/s, however we understand that this might not be possible for interstate or international applicants. In these situations, we can provide the names of local musicians for you to organise directly with those associate artists, including payment.

Strings – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 50 minutes

We offer study in:

Violin

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Guitar

Harp

Audition Requirements

Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass

You are required to prepare a 50-minute program including:

1. A major sonata or concerto, or movements from either
2. A virtuoso piece
3. A movement of solo Bach

Guitar

You are required to perform a 40 to 50-minute program of contrasting works, including:

1. A 20th century sonata (complete, or one or more movements)
2. A work by J.S. Bach


Harp

You are required to perform a 50-minute recital of varied styles, including at least one major solo or concerto repertoire work, at the level of a senior undergraduate or final recital.

Voice – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 35 minutes

Audition Requirements

Audition

You are required to prepare a program comprising a 30-minute recital of advanced and varied works in at least four languages (e.g., Italian, German, French, and English) performed to a high level of excellence. The audition would generally include a representation of the general art song repertoire.

All works should be performed from memory.

Interview


In an interview following the performance, a proposed plan of study will be discussed.

Note: you do not need to book a separate time for this interview.

Woodwind – Classical

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 30 minutes

We offer study in:

Bassoon

Clarinet

Flute

Oboe

Saxophone

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a 30-minute recital of advanced and varied works, performed to a high level of excellence.


Up to 15 minutes of this recital can be unaccompanied. The recital must include one major work from the repertoire.

If you would like more advice about appropriate repertoire choice, please contact the staff listed for your instrument [here](#).

Chinese Instrumental Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 40-45 minutes

As outlined in the below list, we offer study for musicians trained on Chinese, Indian, Japanese, Mongolian, and Persian musical instruments, and others by application.

Aerophones:

- Shakuhachi
- Sheng
- Zhudi

Lutes (bowed):

- Erhu
- Morin khuur

Lutes (plucked):

- Pipa
- Satsuma-biwa
- Sitar
- Shamisen
- Tar
- Zhongruan

Percussion:

- Minzu dajii
- Tabla

Zithers:

- Konghou
- Koto
- Yangqin
- Zheng

Audition Requirements


A 40 to 45-minute recital recording including one ensemble work (own choice) and three contrasting solo works (as specified below):

1. One traditional solo piece
e.g. A flowery moonlit night by the Spring River 春江花月夜 *for pipa*
2. One contemporary piece (after 1980s)
e.g. The Scenery of Tianshan Mountain 天山风情 *for erhu*
3. One improvisational work
e.g. Innovate within the framework of tradition ('now avaran-e sonnati: bringing newness to tradition') *for tar*

Historical Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 30 minutes

We offer study in

Historical Performance Instrument:

String instruments: violin, viola, cello, viola da gamba, violone, bass

Plucked instruments: lute, theorbo, guitar, harp

Wind instruments: recorder, flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, cornetto

Brass instruments: trumpet, horn, sackbut

Historical Performance Keyboard:

Harpsichord, chamber organ, clavichord, fortepiano, 19th-century piano

Historical Performance Vocal:

All types

Audition Requirements

You are required to prepare a program of works totalling 30 minutes of material at the level of a senior undergraduate or final recital, demonstrating musical and technical excellence.


You are also required to have specialised accompaniment at the audition – clavichord, harpsichord, fortepiano, or nineteenth-century piano. Please specify your keyboard instrument for accompaniment in your audition application.

If you experience difficulties in obtaining an accompanist, you may contact [Dr Daniel Yeadon](#), Senior Lecturer in Historical Performance.

Jazz Performance

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

Graduate Diploma in Music (Performance)

 20 minutes

We offer study in:

Bass

Brass

Drums

Guitar

Piano

Vibraphone

Woodwind

Voice

Audition Requirements

Candidates are required to demonstrate their Jazz Performance skills by completing the following tasks:

1. Repertoire

Play/sing two jazz standards of your choice, including in each standard:

- 1 chorus of melody; and
- 2 choruses of improvisation

No lead sheets are permitted during the performance.

2. Technical Work

Play/sing the following scales (each from a different root note of your choosing):

- Major scale
- Melodic minor scale
- Diminished scale (whole-half step version)

Play/sing the chord arpeggios off each scale degree of a major scale and melodic minor scale, each in a different key of the candidate's choosing. For example:

- C major scale: Cmaj9, Dm9, Em7(b9), Fmaj9, G9, Am9, Bm7(b9)b5
- G melodic minor scale: Gmin(maj9), Am7(b9), Bbmaj9(#5), C9, D+9, Em9b5, F#7(#5#9)

All scales and arpeggios should be played over two octaves (or one octave for vocalists) ascending and descending, in quavers, at crotchet = 100bpm. Arpeggios should be played in the following pattern: 1-3-5-7-9 (then in the next octave) 1-3-5-7-9.


3. Written Statement

Applicants are also required to write a statement (max 500 words) outlining:

- Their background/experience with Jazz Performance;
- Their skills in Jazz ensemble arranging and/or composing (including a single PDF score, where appropriate), and;
- Their future career aspirations

Conducting

Master of Music Studies (Performance)

 50 minutes

Audition Requirements

There are two parts to the Conducting audition:

Part 1: All applicants – video submission + portfolio upload

Part 2: Call-back, invited applicants only – audition + interview

Part 1

Candidates are required to prepare:

Video Submission

- Video recording (YouTube link) of you conducting an ensemble. This should include 10–15 minutes of rehearsal and 10–15 minutes of performance with a variety of repertoire. The camera should show a frontal view of the conductor

Portfolio

- List of conducting experience
- List of conducted repertoire
- Three contact numbers and emails for references

Part 2

Call-back audition + interview

You will be notified of the result of your part 1 submission. Successful applicants will then be invited to a call-back audition and interview.

Audition


- Rehearse and conduct 2 pianos. Repertoire will be sent to you one week prior to audition
- Aural skills assessment including identification of intervals and chords, melodic and rhythmic dictation, musical terminology, music recognition and sight-reading

Interview

You will attend an interview with the conducting faculty following your audition.

Opera Performance

Master of Music Studies (Opera Performance)

 30 minutes

Audition Requirements

Audition

You are required to present a varied program of at least three arias at an advanced level of difficulty and to a high standard of excellence.

All pieces must be performed from memory.

Interview

Live audition

In an interview following your performance, a general discussion of your current experience and future goals will be explored. This interview does not have a separate booking time.

Video audition

In lieu of a live audition and interview, you may elect to submit a video audition. In the video, please follow the filming criteria set out in Table 3 of this guide. In the video, please also present your full name, the degree and program area (as set out in Table 1) you are applying for and provide a summary of your music academic qualifications and/or work experience, as well as your future goals.

Contact Us



+61 2 9351 1222 (option 6)



con.apply@sydney.edu.au



sydney.edu.au/music



1 Conservatorium Rd, Sydney
(just off Macquarie Street – look for the castle)

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Produced by the Sydney Conservatorium of Music, 2024.

The University of Sydney reserves the right to make alterations to any information contained within this publication without notice.

This document was last updated: April 2024

For more information
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