Undergraduate pre-admission and audition requirements

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Composition

Bachelor of Music (Composition) 513405
Bachelor of Music (Music Education) 513410

You will undertake an interview and demonstrate your level of achievement as a composer by submitting three compositions in different performance media or genres.

The compositions must be original works of varied style or media. For example: solo, chamber, choral, orchestral, electroacoustic, mixed-media.

1. Scores: At least two of the works must be presented in a notated form.
2. Recordings: At least two of the works must have complementary audio (or video) recordings.

Here are some examples of how your portfolio may look:

- Eg 1. Work 1: score and recording | Work 2: score and recording | Work 3: score and recording
- Eg 2. Work 1: score and recording | Work 2: score and recording | Work 3: audio/video only (i.e. non-notated music, score not relevant)
- Eg 3. Work 1: score and recording | Work 2: score and recording | Work 3: score only (i.e. not yet recorded, conceptual work, etc.)

Contemporary Music Practice

Bachelor of Music 513400

You will submit two original contemporary music tracks/songs (5-8 minutes of music in total) and attend an interview.

- Submit audio or video material streamed on YouTube, SoundCloud, Unearthed or another easily accessible platform
- Or you can provide a link to streamed content on one of the above mentioned platforms or link to a mp4 or mp3 file on a file sharing site like Dropbox, Google Drive or equivalent

Be sure to include information about your role in creating the music submitted (instruments played, sound engineering, production, song writing).
Composition for Creative Industries

**Bachelor of Music**  
513400

You will submit a portfolio of three creative works and attend an interview.

The three works must be of contrasting style and media that may include a combination of original works and arrangements of existing works. For example: original concert works, arrangements for ensembles and bands, film scores, notated songs. Works may be presented as a combination of scores and audio/video or both.

Here are some examples of how your portfolio may look:

1. Eg 1. Work 1: score and recording | Work 2: score only | Work 3: audio/video only
2. Eg 2. Work 1: score only | Work 2: score only | Work 3: audio/video only
3. Eg 3. Work 1: score only | Work 2: audio/video only | Work 3: audio/video only

**Digital Music and Media**

**Bachelor of Music**  
513400

You will submit a portfolio of three original works and attend an interview.

The three works must be of contrasting style or media. For example: electroacoustic, film, game, sound-design, electronic music.

All works must be submitted as audio or video. Inclusion of complementary scores is optional.

Here is an example of how your portfolio may look:

- Work 1: audio or video | Work 2: audio or video | Work 3: audio or video (and optional score)

**Improvised Music**

**Bachelor of Music**  
513400

You will submit a written half-page statement describing your musical experience and reasons why you would like to study Improvised Music.

You will attend a live audition of approximately 20 minutes. If you are an interstate or international applicant and cannot attend in person, you may submit audition material as a video online. The recordings must be no older than six weeks at the time of submission, audio-only recordings will not be accepted.

In the audition, you will be provided with Conservatorium jazz and improvised music staff accompaniment of guitar/piano and drums. Pre-recorded electronic backing can also be used and a sound system will be available in the audition studio.

All applicants should bring a simple lead sheet for their prepared work for the accompanists that
includes chord symbols, a clearly marked form and time signature.

Please prepare the following listed musical items to play and improvise on at your interview-audition.

1. **Two Pieces: duration 2-3 minutes (all applicants)**

Prepare two pieces to perform that demonstrate your range of musicality. Use electronic and/or live accompaniment if required.

- □ A prepared short piece of your choosing including improvisation, with accompaniment if required.
- □ A prepared drone piece, based on improvisation either in free time or with pulse.

2. **Technical - Vocalists & Instrumentalists**

Prepare to demonstrate your knowledge of all Major and Minor scales, triads and arpeggios:

- □ Triads: Major/minor/diminished/augmented triads.
- □ Arpeggios: Maj7/min7/dom7/dim7 and m7b5 arpeggios.
- □ Scales: Major / harmonic minor/ Melodic minor ascending/ maj-minor pentatonic

Drum Kit, amplifiers, pianos and vibraphones are provided.

**Technical - Drummers**

You are required to present:

- □ Demonstration of grooves/styles. Candidates will be asked to play the following feels at an appropriate tempo range: bossa nova, mambo, medium swing (brushes), medium/fast swing (brushes), fast swing (sticks), shuffle (sticks), straight 8’s, and a groove in an add-time (5/4, 6/4, 7/4, 9/4) or compound meter (12/8, 6/8, 9/8).
- □ You will be assessed on consistency of time and feel, dynamics and the authenticity of the various feels.

Drummers should bring their own cymbals and hi-hat clutch, and bassist and guitarist should bring their own leads.

3. **Three Rhythmic/Melodic Phrases (all applicants)**

Three musical rhythmic phrases are notated 1-3 on the following page, each in treble and bass clefs.

Please prepare your playing of each of these phrases with a metronome and in the clef that suits your instrument. Adjust the metronome setting to a slower tempo for thorough practice. An important aspect of the studies of Improvised Music at the Sydney Conservatorium is to develop a fundamental awareness and capacity to articulate rhythm.

In the audition after first playing the written phrase, the accompanists will keep repeating the phrase for you to improvise musical sounds in any manner that you feel is associated with the repeated played phrase. You will be joined by staff musicians in the playing of these phrases in the audition and interview. Each phrase will repeat many times, providing you with an opportunity to develop rhythmic and melodic improvisations.
Musicology

Bachelor of Music  513400
Bachelor of Music (Music Education)  513410

You will submit one or two examples of your recent written work and attend an interview.

In your interview you will discuss your interest in musicology and your commitment to musical research. On the basis of the written work and the interview, the Conservatorium will assess your suitability for the course here, and your potential for musicology, whether as a professional musicologist or in a related profession such as teaching, music administration or music journalism.

Your sample of written work should demonstrate your ability to write in a reasonably formal style, to synthesise the work of others and ideally, to contribute your own ideas to the discussion. You may, for example, submit a final year school essay, or choose to prepare something new. Music-related topics are preferred.

Music Education

Bachelor of Music (Music Education)  513410

Music education candidates will undertake a principal study in either performance (jazz, classical or historical performance), composition or musicology. Please follow the specific audition requirements of your chosen principal study.

You are also required to fulfil the below prerequisites for admission and submit a personal statement direct to the Universities Admissions Centre.

The general entry standard for school leavers into undergraduate initial teacher education degrees is three HSC Band 5 results including one in English. Other applicants may be admitted through an approved comparable measure or alternative pathway as approved by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

Performance

You will audition in your chosen instrument or voice. Please refer to your instrument’s audition requirements, located below in the performance section of this guide.

Composition

You will submit a portfolio and be interviewed. Please refer to the composition audition requirements in this guide.

Musicology

You will submit a portfolio and be interviewed. Please refer to the musicology audition requirements in this guide.
Performance

Bachelor of Music (Performance)  513415
Bachelor of Music (Music Education)  513410

Brass

You will prepare a program consisting of one movement from a major concerto or sonata and one other contrasting solo work from the 20th and 21st century repertoire.

One orchestral excerpt as below:

Horn

Tchaikovsky – Symphony No. 5, 1st horn, second movement, beginning to measure 29

Trumpet

Mussorgsky/Ravel – Pictures from an Exhibition, 1st trumpet, Promenade, measures 1-8

Trombone

Mozart – Requiem, Tuba Mirum

Bass Trombone

Haydn – Creation, no. 26, beginning to letter C

Euphonium

Holst – The Planets, Mars, figure 4 to four bars before 6

Tuba

Wagner – Die Meistersinger, Overture, letter J to letter L

Historical Performance and Non-western instruments

You will prepare a 10-15 minute recital with three contrasting works.

You are also required to have specialised accompaniment at the audition. If you experience difficulties in obtaining an accompanist, you may contact Professor Neal Peres Da Costa – Professor of Historical Performance and Program Leader of Postgraduate Research.

Jazz Performance

We offer study in bass, brass, drums, guitar, piano, vibraphone, woodwind and voice. Your audition will be between 15-20 minutes in total. When auditioning, you will

1. be examined on a range of musical skills
2. be provided with accompaniment
3. drum kit, amplifiers, pianos and vibraphones are also provided
Please note: Drummers should bring their own cymbals and hi-hat clutch, and bassists and guitarists should bring their own leads.

Drummers

1. **A jazz standard from song list for jazz auditions:** You will set the tempo of the tune and will perform in a trio setting (with bass and either piano or guitar) with the following format: one chorus of trio playing the melody; one chorus piano or guitar solo (bass and drums accompanying); one chorus drum solo over the form of the tune; and there is no need to play the melody again at the end of the tune. You should demonstrate accompanying skills, good “time” and “feel” and ability to solo in a style appropriate to the chosen tune.

2. **The 12-bar blues:** A specific blues melody is not required. You will perform a 12-bar blues in a trio setting, the tempo of which will be set by the audition panel in the format of four choruses of trio playing, followed by four choruses of four bar exchanges, i.e. four bars piano, bass and drums, four bars drums, etc. You will be assessed on time, feel and stylistic appropriateness.

3. **Sight reading test:** You will be asked to sight read a short drum chart which will be played with the bass and piano or guitar. The chart will be in typical big-band style with figures or “hits” above the stave, etc. You will be assessed on accuracy, interpretation, dynamics and fluidity.

4. **Grooves/Styles:** You will be asked to play the following feels at an appropriate tempo range: bossa nova, mambo, ballad (brushes), medium swing (brushes), medium/fast swing (brushes), jazz waltz and fast swing (sticks). You will be assessed on consistency of time and feel, dynamics and the authenticity of the various feels.

Instrumental

1. **A jazz standard from the list of songs below:** You should perform the melody in a jazz style and one or two choruses of improvisation over the form of the tune. There is no need to play the melody again at the end of the tune. Bassists should be able to perform the melody and walk through the chord changes, as well as solo. Guitarists and pianists should be able to demonstrate accompanying skills by playing behind a bass or piano solo as appropriate.

**Song List:** Autumn Leaves (Kosma/Mercer), All The Things You Are (Jerome Kern), Stella By Starlight (Victor Young), I Love You (Cole Porter), On Green Dolphin Street (B. Kaper), Take The A Train (Duke Ellington), In A Mellow Tone (Duke Ellington), It Could Happen To You (J. Van Heusen), There Is No Greater Love (Marty Symes/Isham Jones), Someday My Prince Will Come (Frank Churchill) and What Is This Thing Called Love (Cole Porter).

2. **The 12-bar blues:** A specific jazz blues melody is not required. You should solo in jazz style for three choruses on the 12-bar blues with chord changes in three consecutive chromatic keys. For example, first chorus in C, modulating up a semitone to Db for the second chorus, modulating up a semitone to D for the third chorus. The keys chosen may not be C, Db and D. You are strongly advised to know the blues in all 12 keys. Suggested 12-bar blues chord progression:

| C7 | F7 | C7 | C7 | F7 | F7 | C7 F7 | E-7 A7 | D-7 | G7 | C7 | D-7 G7 |

The above example is in C and needs to be transposed to other keys, and the last bar needs to be raised by a semitone to transpose into a key centre a semitone higher, as per the blues audition requirement. In the above example, the last bar should be Eb-7/Ab7 to arrive at Db7.

3. **Scales and arpeggios (technical exam):** You will be asked to play the major scale, the melodic minor and harmonic minor scale in any or all of the 12 keys and the arpeggios of the various chord types drawn from the following: major, major 7, dominant 7, minor, minor
7, minor 7b5, diminished, diminished 7 and augmented in any of the 12 key tonalities.

4. **Sight reading:** You will be asked to sight read the melody of a jazz standard, play it in an appropriate jazz style and then improvise a solo of the chord changes for one chorus to demonstrate the ability to read musical notation as well as follow and interpret a set of chord changes.

**Vocal**

1. You will sing two jazz standards—one swing or bossa nova and one jazz ballad from the lists below:

   **Swing and Bossa Nova:** Autumn Leaves (Kosma/Mercer), All The Things You Are (Jerome Kern), Stella By Starlight (Victor Young), Our Love Is Here To Stay (George Gershwin), I Love You (Cole Porter), On Green Dolphin Street (B. Kaper), Take The A Train (Duke Ellington), Satin Doll (Duke Ellington), It Could Happen To You (J. Van Heusen), Someday My Prince Will Come (Frank Churchill), What Is This Thing Called Love (Cole Porter), Corcovado (A.C. Jobim) and Triste (A.C. Jobim).

   **Jazz Ballads:** My Funny Valentine (Rodgers and Hart), But Beautiful (J. Van Heusen), My Foolish Heart (V. Young), Polkadots and Moonbeams (J. Van Heusen), Darn That Dream (J. Van Heusen), When Sunny Gets Blue (Segal & Fisher) and Body and Soul (J. Green).

2. **Scales:** You must be able to sing the major, melodic minor and harmonic minor scales.

3. **Sight Reading:** You must be able to accurately read a written melody that will take into account your voice type and range.

**Jazz Aptitude Test**

You will also complete the Jazz Aptitude Test which is used to determine your suitability for entry.

- The test will last for approximately one hour and will be held on the same day as your live audition
- The test assesses general music skills and knowledge of the history and construction of jazz
- Questions will range from the historically based, such as associating an instrument with a performer, to an aural component covering meter, pitch, rhythm and harmony primarily composed of listening questions
- The aural component of the test will consist of ten intervals up to and including a ninth; ten chords drawn from major, minor, augmented, diminished and dominant chord families; and you should identify all extensions and alterations as appropriate

**Audition preparation workshop**

If you are planning to audition in jazz, be well informed about the audition requirements and process so you can achieve your best result in this highly competitive field. Craig Scott, Senior Lecturer in Jazz, leads this three hour workshop, which includes discussion and demonstration of the process and the opportunity to try a mock audition if you choose. This is an invaluable opportunity to ensure your optimum preparation for the ‘real thing’. [Click here for more information](#).

**Organ**

You will come prepared to discuss your musical background, your reasons for wishing to continue your organ studies and your particular interests relating to the organ in church or concert hall.

1. Prepare a contrasting program of three works, comprising:
   a) A fast movement from one of the Six Trio Sonatas by J.S. Bach;
b) A chorale prelude from the Baroque period;  
c) A 19th or 20th-century work of up to 10 mins duration  

2. Sight reading

Percussion

1. Technical requirements:  
   Snare drum – demonstrate from the 40 PAS International Drum Regiments: single, multi-bounce and double stroke rolls; diddle combinations; flam combinations; and drag combinations. Timpani – demonstrate: long roll (P, F, <,>); tune two timpani in 4ths and/or 5ths from a given A; and damping techniques. Xylophone, Marimba or Vibraphone – demonstrate all major and minor scales and triad arpeggios (2 octaves)

2. Prepared program:  
   One short work, or movement from a work, for each of the following: snare drum; timpani and xylophone, marimba or vibraphone

3. Sight reading: snare drum, xylophone, marimba and/or vibraphone

Piano and Collaborative Piano

BMus (Performance): You will perform a program of four works:
1. a polyphonic work  
2. an etude  
3. two movements of a classical sonata including a slow movement  
4. and one piece from the 19th, 20th or 21st century

Two pieces must be from memory. Sight reading may be required and works or part thereof from this program will be selected by the audition panel.

BMus (Music Education) in Piano (classical): You will perform a program of three works: a fast movement of a classical sonata and two contrasting pieces from any period.

If you are interested in Collaborative Piano studies, you can begin to specialise in this area in your third year of study in the Bachelor of Music (Performance).

Strings

Double Bass

1. Technical requirements: demonstrate different bowings in any two octave scale of your choice, one study which demonstrates technical ability.

2. Prepared program: a fast and slow movement from a baroque sonata, for example, Corelli, Eccles or Vivaldi; and two short pieces, including one 20th or 21st century work.

Guitar

1. Technical requirements: all major and melodic minor scales (Segovia) with all standard right-hand fingerings (im, ma, ia); and two contrasting studies, for example: Villa Lobos (any); Sor 12, 16 or 20 (Segovia); Dodgson 4 or 10.

2. Prepared program: three contrasting pieces, including one 20th century work.
Harp

1. **Technical requirements:** major and minor keys over four octaves including common chords, dominant sevenths and their inversions performed as: scales (both hands); arpeggios (both hands); extended arpeggios; flat, broken chords (both hands); one study such as ‘Mirage’ — Modern Study of the Harp by Carlos Salzedo (Schirmer 1948), ‘Premiere Etude’ — Exercises et Etudes no.36 by (Ed) La Riviere Alphonse Leduc (or equivalent).


Violin, Viola, Violoncello

1. **Technical requirements:** You will prepare scales, arpeggios (including dominant and diminished) and standard double stops (3rds, 6ths, 8ves) for at least one key of your choice from a scales system according to you current level of individual technical proficiency and background; you may be asked to demonstrate different bowings in any three octave scale of your choice; one study
   - Violin — Kreutzer, Fiorillo, Rode, Dont Opus 35 or any other study of comparable or higher degree of difficulty
   - Viola — as above or a study by Campagnoli
   - Violoncello — Piatti, Popper or Grutzmacher.

2. **Violin and Cello prepared program:** two contrasting movements of a Bach solo work; a fast and a slow movement from a concerto in the standard repertoire; and one short 20th or 21st century work (either a piece, or a movement of a sonata).

3. **Viola prepared program:** two contrasting movements of a Bach solo work; a fast and a slow movement from a concerto or sonata in the standard repertoire; and one short 20th or 21st century work (either a piece, or a movement of a sonata).

4. Applicants for the **Bachelor of Music (Performance)** need to prepare all requirements.

5. Applicants for the **Bachelor of Music (Music Education)** need to prepare the technical requirements and only two contrasting works/movements outlined in the prepared program.

Voice (Classical)

You will perform four works from each of the following categories: a 17th or 18th century Italian song; a Lied (e.g. Schubert or Schumann); a British or American art song of the 20th or 21st century; and a song of your own choice. All works should be performed from memory. Typically the panel will hear two pieces and you may be required to demonstrate the capacity to read music.

Woodwind

We offer study in bassoon, clarinet, flute, oboe and saxophone. Please refer to the Historical Performance page for audition requirements for recorder or Baroque flute.

You will have an audition of approximately 10-15 minutes. The panel will be looking for you to demonstrate a refinement of tone, technique and musicality.
Audition material should include at least two or more contrasting pieces, or excerpts of pieces, of around 10 minutes duration. At least one piece must be with accompaniment.

**Saxophone, Clarinet, Oboe**
You will present all major and minor scales and arpeggios in whichever format you are accustomed to practicing in.

**Flute**
In addition to your own choice of pieces, you will also prepare Exercise #1 in all keys from Seven Daily Exercises Op. 5 by M.A. Reichert, Exercise #6 in D minor from Ernesto Koehler’s Flute Studies Op. 33 Book 2, and Gabriel Faure’s *Morceau de Concours* for Flute and Piano. The Faure must be accompanied at the audition.

**Bassoon**
You will present major, harmonic and melodic minor scales and arpeggios up to three sharps and flats in whichever format you are accustomed to practicing.