



# **Leeds Conservatoire**

## **Audition Requirements**

### **2025 Entry**

**MA Musical Theatre Company**

# MA Musical Theatre Company

The audition process is your opportunity to demonstrate your skills as a storyteller and is also our opportunity to assess your skill and suitability for the programme.

We are proud to have removed all audition fees for our programmes at the conservatoire. If you have an interest in applying for our programmes, we don't want finances to be a barrier to you gaining access to our audition process.

## Round 1: Online Portfolio

We use an online system called Acceptd, which you will need to use to upload your portfolio. Full details on how to access Acceptd will be sent to you following your application.

Please include:

- A short, introductory video. Tell us who you are, why you are applying to the course at Leeds Conservatoire and how you think the MA Musical Theatre Company course will serve your development.
- One song in any style from a published musical. Ideally performed with piano accompaniment but a backing track is also acceptable. Please introduce the song at the beginning of the video or save the file name with this information: This is [SONGTITLE] from [MUSICAL] by [COMPOSER] OR 'This is a song from [PRODUCTION/SOURCE]'.  
This is [SONGTITLE] from [MUSICAL] by [COMPOSER] OR 'This is a song from [PRODUCTION/SOURCE]'
- One speech from a published play text (maximum 3 minutes). 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].
- A headshot. This does not have to be a professionally-taken photograph - just a clear image that is recognisably you.

## 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. Ensure you know the source material well, not just the excerpt shared.
- For solo materials choose whether you direct your performance to camera (audience address) or to a character/point of focus as if performing onstage. Try to be consistent in your choice.
- Clear a space with a plain background if 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'
- Despite being recorded you don't need to give a televisual performance, do what you would do for an audition panel in the room.
- Musical Theatre songs should show YOUR voice. Try to avoid "character" voiced songs.
- Please ensure your song choice allows you to tell a story through song.

## Round 2 - In-Person Audition or Online Submission

If you are successful in Round 1 you will be invited to a Round 2 recall audition, either online or in-person.

In-person auditions are usually held January to April - you will be offered any available dates at point of recall. Both UK and home students can audition online.

### UK In-Person Recall Auditions

#### Group Dance Class

You will be led through a group dance audition, which may include elements of jazz, ballet and contemporary styles.

We welcome applicants with all levels of dance training. Please dress appropriately in dance/ sports attire with either soft jazz shoes, jazz trainers or foot thongs. Jewellery should be removed for safety.

#### Solo Audition

You should prepare two songs, at least one of which should be from a musical. Please bring sheet music with you for the piano accompanist.

Select songs which best show YOUR voice. Your songs should contrast in either tempo (ballad, patter song, upbeat etc.), vocal style (legit, contemporary, pop etc.) or both. Try to avoid “character” songs or songs from overdone or popular musicals.

You should be prepared to work with the monologue you shared in Round 1.

#### Interview

You will be asked a series of short questions exploring your interest, experience and knowledge of musical theatre as well as discussing your application and the programme. This is also your opportunity to ask any questions you have about Leeds Conservatoire and the Musical Theatre programme.

# Online Recall Auditions

Those completing their MA Musical Theatre Company recall online, will be required to upload a further portfolio of their work and attend an online interview.

## Online Recall Portfolio Content

### Monologue

You should prepare a second monologue, no longer than two minutes in length, that contrasts your original submission.

Please begin the video by introducing the speech: 'This is a piece from [PLAY TITLE by PLAYWRIGHT] and I'll be reading the role of [CHARACTER]' or save the title and character in the video file name.

### Singing

Please record two contrasting songs, at least one of which should be from a musical. These should ideally be performed with piano accompaniment however a backing track is also acceptable.

Please refer to the advice for Round 1 applicants regarding how to choose a song.

Please introduce the song at the beginning of the video or save the file name with this information: This is [SONG TITLE] from [MUSICAL] by [COMPOSER]' OR 'This is a song from [PRODUCTION/SOURCE]'.

### Dance

You will be sent a video guide to a routine which contains a number of technical elements we need to assess.

Please study, learn and submit a recording of a performance of this routine.

Whilst the routine is a combination of technical elements, do place emphasis on the performance of your dance. We would like to see your energy and personality through movement.

We welcome applicants with all levels of dance training. Please dress safely and appropriately for your dance recording and ensure you have enough space to record your video.

### Interview

Depending on the outcome of your video audition portfolio, you may be contacted by the programme leader to schedule a short interview where you will be asked a series of short questions exploring your interest, experience and knowledge of musical theatre as well as discussing your application and the programme.

## FAQs

### What does the interview entail?

The interview is a brief opportunity for the programme team to get to know the person behind the personal statement. It is a relaxed and informal discussion in which you will be asked questions about your interests, passions, experiences and you are given the opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the programme, team or life at Leeds Conservatoire.

Try not to over think the interview or try to give the 'right' answer. The team genuinely just want to know who you are and why you think you would benefit from training here at Leeds Conservatoire.

### Can I cut a longer speech?

Yes, it is expected that you would cut a longer speech to fit within the three-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.

### 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. Whatever approach you take, the ultimate aim is to be able to deliver your speeches with the same familiarity as your own phone number.

## **Will I receive feedback?**

Unfortunately, due to the number of applicants for the MA programmes, we are unable to provide feedback for Round 1 applicants. At the Round 2 recall, applicants are able to discuss their suitability for the programme and feedback will be built into the interview.

It is useful to remember that performance is subjective. Different programmes have different criteria and often feedback from one source can undermine your confidence in auditioning for another so is not always helpful.

