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Admissions Policy

Chetham's is committed to equality and diversity:

1. **Access:** Improve accessibility, reduce barriers, and challenge perceptions for audiences, visitors, staff and students.
2. **People:** Promoting a positive and harmonious working and creative environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and are valued for who they are, as they are.
3. **Culture:** Embrace and celebrate the richness of society striving to reflect it. Where inequality exists recognise and reduce it.

Chetham's School of Music is a specialist Music School at the heart of the City of Manchester. Admission for all students is based upon an audition which tests candidates' ability, aptitude and potential to develop a talent and passion for music

Entry Requirements

Chetham's welcomes applications from young musicians for both boarding and day places for girls and boys aged 8 – 18. The first stage in applying to Chetham's School of Music is to complete an application form - enclosed within the prospectus, or available to download from Chetham's website at www.chethams.com. Chetham's welcomes applications throughout the academic year, but we strongly encourage you to apply as early as possible as places do become limited, especially by the end of the Spring Term. For all applications, we strongly advise you to apply early, ideally before Christmas.

Areas of Study: Chetham's welcomes applications for principal study of all western classical and jazz instruments, and classical voice. Please note that drum kit is not offered as a sole first study but as one element of the broader study of Percussion which includes a range of tuned and untuned percussion. We also welcome applications for composition as either principal or second study. First study composers should also be able to offer a good level of proficiency on a second study instrument.

Other requirements: There is an expectation that all students applying for 6th form (year 12) entry will have passed GCSE Music (or equivalent) and ABRSM Grade 5 Theory. Given the already vibrant programme that 6th form entails, we strongly advise that this expectation is met, in order to avoid the need to attend 'catch-up' theory classes. All students are required to study A level Music. We advise all applicants to be involved in a wide range of musical activities, for example: singing in a school or local choir; composition; playing in an orchestra, band or ensemble.

Applicants must also have a good behaviour and attendance record at their previous educational establishment; references and reports will be requested.

Pre- application advice auditions: These are informal and informative sessions and are available normally for musicians aged 7 - 16 who would like professional feedback on their current musical level and potential or general advice (please see the section on Accessibility regarding SEND access). Please note that we do not usually provide accompanists for pre-application advice auditions.

What Are We Looking For?

We look for the following qualities:

- Musicianship - your ability to deal fluently with practical music issues. This may include questions on key, rhythm, dynamics and other aspects of interpretation.
- Aural awareness – your ability to understand, identify and respond to musical sounds and patterns. This will include ear (aural) tests, mainly through singing, and pitching intervals, short melodies, answering phrases, rhythms and simple chord recognition.
- Creativity / Musicality – what we look for primarily is natural musical spontaneity and potential.
- Technique – your instrumental skills, including awareness of quality of sound, intonation and rhythmic precision. You will also be asked to play scales at the appropriate level.
- Musical literacy – your ability to sight-read and to understand and discuss music – we may ask you about your audition programme.
- Musical personality / potential – we highly value these qualities. We are looking for your strength of personality, teamwork, dedication, enthusiasm, individuality and musical potential.
- Response – with all of the above we are looking for potential and musical ‘instinct’.

How do I apply?

(NB. The application procedure outlined in this policy has been amended to enable us to work within current restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus pandemic. It will apply to all applications for September 2021 entry.)

A complete application should include the following:

1. **The application form:** this can be downloaded from our website <https://chethamsschoolofmusic.com/admissions/applications/> or posted to you on request. It should be signed by the applicant’s current Headteacher or if that is not possible, an email acknowledgment from the Headteacher to be forwarded to us, confirming their awareness of the application.

2. We will need to see your **school reports and a reference** from your current school. Please ensure that they are aware of your application before we contact them. 2. Copies of any relevant exam certificates, festival awards etc..

3. **References** from instrumental tutors, which should provide background information about your: suitability; attitude to, and aptitude for, learning and practice. The Tutor Reference Form can be downloaded from our website.

<https://chethamsschoolofmusic.com/admissions/applications/>

4. **YouTube links** to video recordings of:

- at least 2 pieces on the applicant's principal study instrument
- at least one piece on any other instrument/s if applicable¹,
- scales/arpeggios on the principal study that reflect the level of repertoire presented.
- Please begin the video/s with a short, spoken introduction of themselves and the pieces you are going to present.
- *If you are applying to study composition, your application should include at least two written examples of your work. These may be handwritten or produced with Sibelius or similar programmes, and must be submitted as pdf files.*

5. **Payment.** We are all too aware of the difficulties that many people are facing during the pandemic and so for September 2021 applications we have reduced the registration fee to £60 (usually £90).

What Happens Next?

The completed application will be assessed initially by the appropriate Head/s of Instrumental Department/s, who select those candidates they wish to put forward to the Joint Principal (TR) for final assessment.

We may contact you to request an additional video recording, to arrange a 1:1 online instrumental session or to interview you. Sometimes we will arrange to have a conversation with parents/guardians as part of this process.

The outcome will be one of the following:

1. An offer of a place.
2. A place on the reserve list²
3. Feedback and an invitation to re-audition again in 1-2 years.
4. An email to inform you that the application has been unsuccessful.

¹ NB. a second study instrument is NOT a requirement for entry, particularly for pianists. When the principal instrumental study is not piano, and no second study instrument is offered on application, we would normally include piano lessons as a second study when we offer a place, as keyboard skills are essential to building a strong foundation for our students' musical development.

² The list of reserve applicants will be reviewed by 30th April. If we still have places available, these applicants may have their application reviewed and may subsequently be offered a place or invited to submit further audition videos or to update their application for re-consideration.

Accepting Your Offer

Once you have been offered a place, you will receive an acceptance pack and we will request some key information about you, to help us prepare for your arrival. We will send you some key information about the school such as: term dates; full terms and conditions, and other details to help you plan your first days at the school. This will be contained in the Welcome Pack. You will also be asked to pay an acceptance fee of £145.

Overseas Applicants Applying from Abroad

The normal school year in the UK runs from early September to early July.

If you live abroad and distance makes it difficult for you to visit Chetham's for an audition, we will accept a video and or audio recording of your playing, which should be submitted with a completed application form and other information about your educational and musical progress, including a reference from your principal study music teacher. Recordings should be recent but don't have to be accompanied if a pianist is unavailable. We will also arrange an online interview with you and your parents or guardian.

Although admission is primarily on musical potential and there are no academic entry requirements, it is vital that you have a competent level of spoken and written English. This is so that you can access the academic and musical curriculum fully in order to make maximum progress with your studies. Support is available for students whose first language is not English. The School will provide additional language support (at an extra cost) if you are unable to understand your lessons, learn your subjects or take a full part in school life because of a low level of English fluency.

Applying to be a Chorister

Auditions for Manchester Cathedral Choristers are held throughout the year and applications are welcomed from girls and boys between the ages of 8-10. Choristers are educated at Chetham's and also study one instrument at the School. They normally remain in the Cathedral Choir until the end of Year 8 when they can request a place at Chetham's as a singer, apply to audition as an instrumentalist if appropriate, or complete their secondary education elsewhere.

Potential choristers do not need any prior experience to audition for the Choir; we are looking for children who enjoy singing, being part of a close-knit team and who, with their parents, will commit to a demanding but immensely rewarding schedule. Choristers attend rehearsals in the cathedral each day and sing for the weekly round of services and other special events such as live radio broadcasts, CD recordings and touring within the UK, Europe and beyond. They are busy during many holiday periods and weekends; Christmas and Easter are especially busy periods and it is important that parents are aware of these considerations when applying for a choristership.

Choristers attend most lessons and practice sessions at school with the other students, and their daily rehearsals and services at the Cathedral are integrated into the school timetable. They have timetabled music lessons, as do the other students, and if they do not already play an instrument when they come to Chetham's they will be expected to learn the piano.

To enquire about Choristerships, please contact the Cathedral in the first instance:
T: +44(0)161 833 2220 E: christopher.stokes@manchestercathedral.org

Accessibility

We welcome applications from students with diverse backgrounds, special needs or disabilities. It is true that our School buildings vary in age and accessibility but we will do all that we can to make reasonable adjustments in keeping with the *Equality Act 2010* and *The Children and Families Act 2014*.

The School needs to be aware of any known disability, learning issues or special educational need which may affect an applicant's ability to participate in the admissions procedure so they can take full advantage of the education provided at the School. Parents of an applicant who has any disability, learning differences or special educational needs or existing Access Arrangements for examinations should provide the School with full details.

The School will then be better able to assess those needs and consult with parents about the adjustments which can reasonably be made to ensure that the application/audition procedure is accessible for the applicant, and that the School can reduce any potential or perceived barriers for the applicant should an offer of a place be made.

Your Data

Chetham's believes that privacy is a fundamental human right. Chetham's data storage systems are designed to minimise the amount of data collected, used and stored. The systems are also designed to keep your data as safe as possible. Any data you submit in digital or physical form including video or audio recordings will be retained, secured and disposed of in accordance with the terms of our Data Protection (Privacy) Policy which has regard to the GDPR (2016) and the UK Data Protection Act (2018).