

PG Collaborative Piano

To help you prepare for your audition, please read the following guidance notes carefully.

For entry in September 2022 all candidates will be required to submit a recorded audition in support of their application. Once we receive your UCAS Conservatoires application we will email you inviting you to submit an audition recording, the email will include a OneDrive link you should use to upload all recordings, and the supporting documentation requested. Please include your full name and UCAS Conservatoires ID Number with your submission.

Your Recorded Audition

- Recordings should be submitted by **Monday 18 October 2021**
- Recordings must be submitted as Digital files (MP4).
- Your audition should be an audio-visual file and should open with a verbal account of your experience and aims for the future. You should also include a short verbal introduction of each piece in your recording.
- For your audition, you should prepare:
 - An etude or short solo piece of your own choice
 - An example of an orchestral reduction, which could be either a movement from an instrumental concerto or an operatic aria
 - A movement from an instrumental sonata or two songs (i.e. Lied, mélodie or English song)
- Relevant pieces in your submission will need to be accompanied by your chosen soloist.
- You should take care to select pieces that allow you to demonstrate the full extent of your technical and expressive ability. In total, your performance should last approximately 10 – 15 minutes.
- The recording must clearly show you playing your instrument without any obstruction. Please also note that presentation (dress, deportment and general stage demeanour) will enhance your audition.
- Audio only recordings will **not** be accepted.
- Please upload a **clear** copy of the solo part of your music, of **one** of the pieces you have performed as part of your audition, or provide a link to an online source. This submission will be used to ask some general musicianship questions about style, harmony/tonality and compositional structure

during your interview. Please also upload a full list of repertoire studied over the previous two years.

Your Online Interview

Following the assessment of your recorded audition you will be required to attend an interview conducted online. During the interview you will have an opportunity to talk about your future ambitions and to ask questions relating to the College and the course. Please ensure that you bring along the repertoire performed in your recorded submission, that you have your instrument available, and are in a space that will enable you to respond to questions from the panel which may include simple aural tests, scales and the demonstration of examples drawn from the score.

You will be notified of the interview date and time via email.

Interviews will take place late October /early November for recorded auditions submitted by the deadline.

Additional Advice:

What do I do if I can't get a piece to sync with the pre-recorded soloist?

If you're satisfied that you've done all you can to ensure a good performance with your pre-recorded soloist but you're still not happy, please include an unaccompanied recording of the piece **in addition** to the accompanied submission.

What Happens Next?

We aim to communicate decisions within 3 weeks of an interview. All decisions following interviews will be communicated via UCAS Conservatoires Track.

Candidates who are offered places will have the opportunity to visit RWCMD in person prior to the acceptance deadline. In accordance with safeguarding COVID protocols and regulations (PHW & Welsh Government).

Tips and Advice:

- Please be sure your recording device is placed on a tripod or flat surface, and ensure you are visible for the duration of your performance. If using a mobile phone, record horizontally.
- Please make sure that if you are using a mobile phone, you do not record using submissions on "Selfie Mode"
- Your performance must be one continuous shot with no edits or cuts. Edits are accepted for introduction and closing dialogue only.
- Hiring of recording equipment is not expected. However, we do require the video and audio to be of 'good quality' for submissions. Recordings from mobile phones are accepted.
- If access to any recording device is not possible, please contact admissions@rwcmd.ac.uk for advice.
- Where possible ensure the light is directed from the front or the sides. For example, if you are sitting with a window behind you, you will disappear, and the video will appear dark and fuzzy. It is equally important that we see your performance as well as hear it.
- Before starting your recording, please check that you have sufficient memory and battery life.

Sound:

- Before making your recording, ensure that there is no distortion to the sound during the loudest passages, and keep at a consistent distance from your recording device throughout your performance.
- Place the recording device near your instrument, but not too near. Test out a few distances to find out what works best for you. Start at five to six feet away and adjust from there. It will differ depending on location and the recording device being used.

Recording equipment or external microphones for I-Phone/Android can be used to help improve audio quality, however, they are not necessary.

- Record in the right space. Minimize the background noise. Think about the time of day and location when you can exert the most control over what's happening in the background.

Consider where and when you're doing the recording. Your bedroom or living room can work well. If you have access to a soundproof room great! If not, the softer your surroundings, the better. Sound bounces off hard surfaces, which can create an unwanted echo. Avoid large, empty rooms. At home, blankets, pillows, and curtains are all effective ways to absorb the sound.

- It is very important to do a mock recording and review the audio.

We are aware of the challenges presented by recorded submissions and our panellists will be instructed to allow for issues beyond the control of the applicant when watching and assessing the video. The following list is not exclusive but indicates the type of area that might be affected through video submission, and thus will be taken into consideration:

- Time delays between sound and image
- Instrumental/vocal sound quality
- A piano that is out of tune, or not of particularly good quality (including use of an electric keyboard)
- Use of a modern instrument for historically informed repertoire

If your best musical take includes a minor domestic interruption (eg siren in the background, someone passing through the shot), please know that the panel is able to disregard this, so don't sacrifice that version.