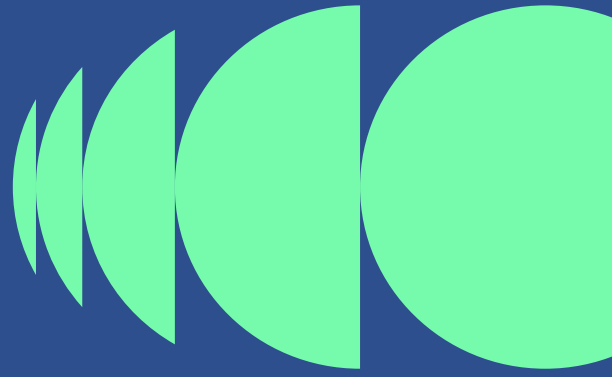




**Institute
of Music**



Music Performance Portfolio, Audition and Interview Guidance

2026 & 2027 entry

- ↳ **BA (Hons) Music Performance and Music Production**
- ↳ **BA (Hons) Songwriting and Music Production**
- ↳ **BA (Hons) Vocal Artistry and Music Production**

Thank you for applying to dBs Institute of Music!

Whether you're a performer, producer, sound designer, or multi-disciplinary artist, this application process is your chance to showcase your creativity, passion, and potential. We're not looking for perfection, we're looking for individuals who are curious, committed, and ready to grow.

What to expect:

We will ask you to submit a [portfolio](#) including the following:

- ↳ An audio track demonstrating your production skills.

You will also be asked to prepare an [audition](#) piece consisting of:

- ↳ A performance highlighting your musicianship and/or vocal ability.

Following the submission of your portfolio you will be invited to attend an [interview](#) with a member of our academic team who will:

- ↳ Discuss your application, audition and portfolio.

If you have submitted an APEL (Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning) application, this will also be reviewed during your interview.

Final decisions will be communicated via **UCAS Hub** and confirmed by email.

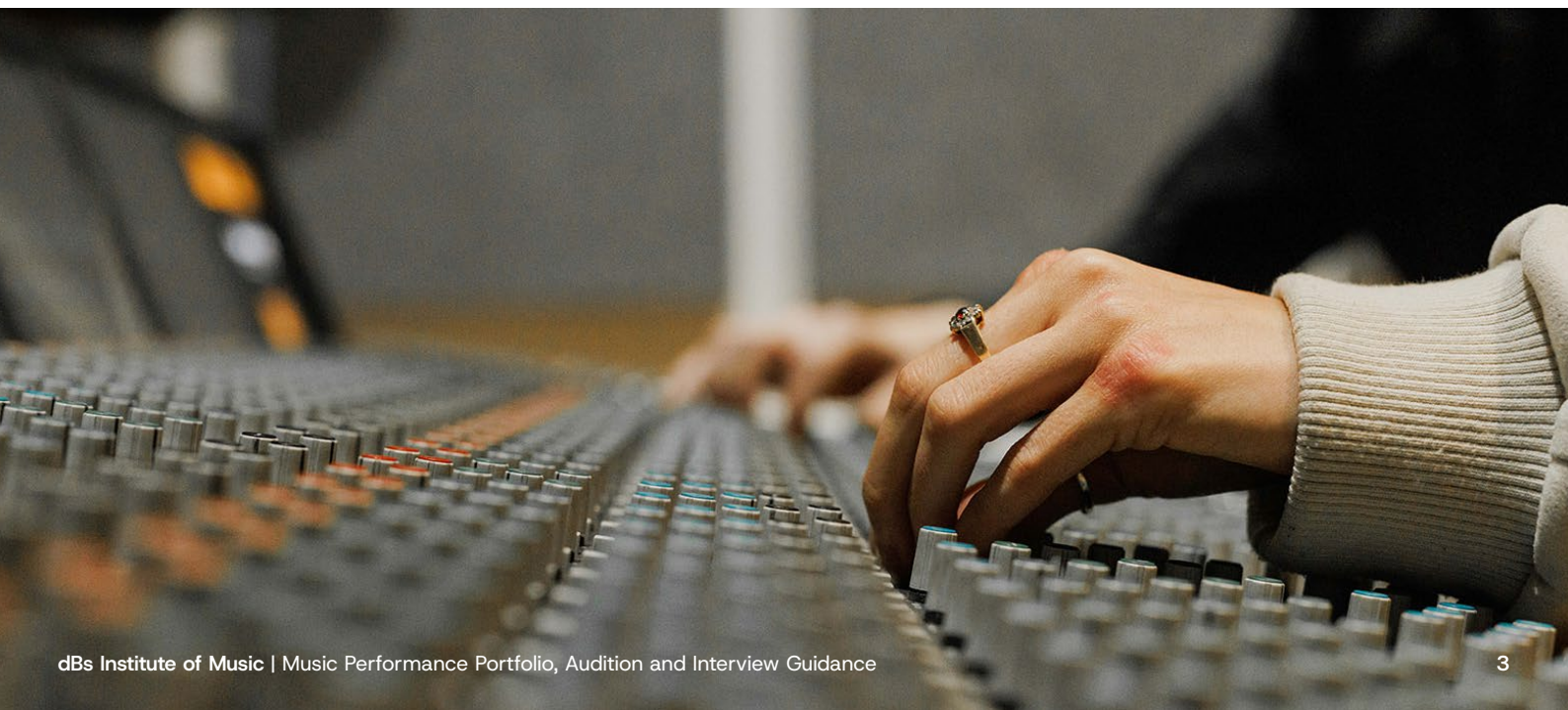
What we're looking for

At dBs Institute of Music, we value potential, originality, and musical thinking. Your portfolio should reflect who you are now and where you want to go as a musician, performer, or producer.

We're more interested in how you apply musical ideas than in formal theory or notation. You don't need to read sheet music or recite textbook definitions, we want to see how you use musical elements in your own way. This might include:

- ↳ **Your technical approach:** What decisions have you made in your production process and why?
- ↳ **Use of music theory:** How do elements like harmony, rhythm or scales influence your creative choices when performing or composing?
- ↳ **Your working practice:** Can you clearly discuss your creative process and reflect on your choices?
- ↳ **Your motivation:** What drives you to create? What inspires your work?

You'll have the opportunity to talk about these elements in your interview. We're interested in how you think musically and how you bring your ideas to life, not in testing what you've memorised.



Portfolio

Your portfolio is a vital part of your application to dBs Institute of Music. It offers the academic team a window into your musical identity, your technical ability as a producer or performer, and your creative potential. This is your opportunity to present a piece of work that reflects not only what you can do, but how you think musically.

We understand that applicants come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience levels. Whether you're just starting out or already producing regularly, what matters most is your willingness to explore, your originality, and your commitment to developing your craft.

For your Portfolio please submit a self-produced or co-produced demo or finished production.

Audio Track Specifications (.mp3 or .wav)

Please ensure your portfolio is submitted **before your interview date**.

Length: Between 2 minutes 30 seconds and 4 minutes 30 seconds

Format: .mp3 or .wav

Content: A self-produced or co-produced demo created in a DAW of your choice.

- ↳ This can be an original composition or a cover. **[Original composition only for BA (Hons) Songwriting and Music Production]**.
- ↳ Your track may include a performance of your instrument of choice however this is not a requirement.
- ↳ The track should demonstrate your production skills.

Things to consider:

When choosing which track to submit, think about what best represents your current strengths and musical interests. We're interested in how you use your DAW to create and structure music. We're not expecting a fully mastered commercial release, instead, we want to hear your ideas, your style, and your ability to make creative decisions.

Your track should demonstrate an understanding of musical structure and theory, even if subtly. If you're including live performance elements, we'll also be listening for how they integrate with your production and contribute to the overall sound.

Audition:

Your audition is your opportunity to present your musical ability in real time. Whether you're a vocalist, instrumentalist, or multi-disciplinary performer, the audition allows our academic team to experience your performance style, technique, and musical expression.

You can complete your audition by pre-recording your performance and submitting with your portfolio or performing live during your interview. Both formats are equally valid, and you should select the one that best suits your comfort level and availability.



Option A: Pre Recorded Audition [Prior to Interview]

Length: A filmed performance between 2 minutes 30 seconds and 4 minutes in length

Format: .mp4 or .mov

Requirements for instrumentalists and vocalists:

The recording must be of you performing one track (a cover or original composition) and can be unaccompanied, with a backing track or with live instrumentation. The recording must be one single take, unedited (no cuts or splices), with minimal use of FX (only if appropriate to the style). The instrumental or vocal performance must be clearly audible on the recording.

Requirements for songwriters:

The recording must be of you performing one of your original compositions. This can be a live performance recording (e.g. from a gig or open mic) or a single-take recording filmed at home, as long as the performance is clearly audible.

Please note: Your performance does not need to be professionally filmed and recorded, a phone recording is acceptable but the audio quality must be clear

Option B: Live Audition [As part of your Interview]

Your live performance will be conducted during your interview.

Length: A live performance between 2 minutes 30 seconds and 4 minutes in length

Format: In person or online video meeting

The performance can be:

- ↳ Unaccompanied
- ↳ With backing track
- ↳ With live instrumentation
- ↳ This can be an original composition or a cover. **[Original composition only for BA (Hons) Songwriting and Music Production].**

What we're looking for during your performance:

Your audition is a chance to show us how you perform in a live setting, not just your technical ability, but your musicality, confidence, and personal style. We're listening for control of tone, rhythm, and phrasing, but more importantly, we want to see how you bring the music to life.

Whether you're performing solo, with a backing track, or with live instrumentation, your piece should reflect who you are as a musician. If it's an original, we're interested in how you've shaped it, its structure, emotion, and creative choices. If it's a cover, we want to hear your interpretation and how you've made it your own.

We also pay attention to how you handle the performance environment. Staying composed, adapting to the moment, and delivering with intention all show us that you're ready to grow as a confident and expressive performer.

Preparing for your performance

Your audition is more than just a technical showcase, it's a chance to express who you are as a musician. We're looking for authenticity, creativity, and confidence. The tips below are designed to help you prepare thoughtfully and perform with impact.

Connect with your material

Choose a piece that feels personal and meaningful. When you connect emotionally with your music, your audience will too. Select a piece that reflects your style and strengths. If you're performing a cover, think about how you can make it your own through phrasing, dynamics, or arrangement.

Warm up and prepare

A good warm-up helps you feel grounded and ready to perform at your best. Use gentle vocal or instrumental exercises to loosen up.

Set the scene

Your performance environment matters, even if it's informal or recorded. If you can, choose a quiet, well-lit space free from distractions. Test any equipment ahead of time to avoid technical issues.

Most importantly - show us who you are

Your individuality is what makes your performance memorable. Let it shine. Express your personality and musical identity. Be proud of your unique style, voice, and interpretation.

Interview (Optional Live Audition)

As part of your application to dBs Institute of Music, you'll attend an interview with a member of our academic team. This is an important opportunity for us to learn more about you, your musical background, creative approach, and aspirations, beyond what's shown in your portfolio and/or audition.

The interview is your chance to reflect on your work and share your artistic identity. You'll be invited to talk about the audio track and performance you submitted or performed. We are interested in your creative process, influences and motivation.

It is also a great opportunity for you to speak directly with a member of our academic team. Feel free to ask us anything about the course, student life, career opportunities and what it's like to study with dBs Institute of Music.

You can book your interview online using **the link provided** in your application email. This allows you to choose a time and format (in person or online) that works best for you. **If you wish to audition live in your interview please ensure you select an interview/audition slot when booking.**

If you haven't received the booking link or need assistance, please contact our Admissions Team:

Email: admissions@dbsinstitute.ac.uk

Phone: 0161 552 6467





Important: Your portfolio must be submitted before your interview date. If it hasn't been received in advance, we may need to reschedule your interview.

How to submit your portfolio:

Please upload your files to Google Drive or another online file sharing platform (e.g., Dropbox, WeTransfer). Please ensure:

- ↳ All files are clearly labelled with your full name and the title of the work
- ↳ Sharing permissions are set to '**Anyone with the link can view/download**'
- ↳ Either upload to the [Falmouth Applicant Portal](#) or attach it when booking your interview.

Portfolio and audition checklist:

-  Audio track at least 2:30 minutes in length (.mp3 or .wav)
-  **Pre-recorded** - a recording of an unedited performance at least 2:30 minutes in length (.mp4 or .mov)
-  **Interview booked**
-  Files submitted to Falmouth applicant portal or uploaded to interview booking **prior to interview**

Need help?

If you have any questions about the portfolio or interview process, our dedicated Admissions Team is here to help. Call us on **0161 552 6467** or email at admissions@dbsinstitute.ac.uk