

## Audition Requirements

### General Overview of Audition Process

Candidates are required to perform two contrasting pieces with a rhythm section and a short unaccompanied transcribed solo. After the audition there will be a brief interview and discussion with the candidate. The audition and interview together last for about half an hour. You will be invited to arrive before the audition in order to rehearse with the rhythm section. First study drummers are required to prepare some piano keyboard work instead of playing a transcription.

### The Pieces

The first piece must be chosen from the list below.

1. Any 12 bar blues head in any key.  
Typical examples include:  
Blue Monk, Now's the Time, Sandu,  
Tenor Madness, Straight No Chaser,  
Relaxin' at Camarillo
2. Any Rhythm Changes in B flat concert.  
Typical examples include: Anthrapology,  
Oleo, I've Got Rhythm
3. Ladybird
4. Tune Up
5. Green Dolphin Street
6. I'll Remember April
7. Body and Soul
8. Cherokee
9. What Is This Thing Called Love?
10. All The Things You Are
11. Confirmation
12. Yardbird Suite

The second piece is a free choice. It may again be chosen from the list above but could be any jazz standard, an original composition or a free improvisation. If the piece is not from the given list then candidates are asked to bring good rhythm section parts with them to the audition.

If the second piece is deemed stylistically inappropriate for audition to a jazz programme or the presentation of the parts is too poor to prepare a performance in the allotted time, then the candidate will be advised to perform another piece from the list or a free improvisation.

### Rehearsal

Candidates are given the opportunity to rehearse with the rhythm section half an hour before the audition. The rhythm section will consist of one member of the Jazz Course tutorial staff and senior students from the BMus(Hons)Jazz course. The candidate is expected to lead the rehearsal but the tutor will provide guidance and advice.

### Transcription

Candidates are asked to perform a short transcription of an improvised solo for their instrument. A copy of the transcription should be provided for the audition panel. The transcription can be one that the candidate has done themselves or from any published source and should be performed unaccompanied.

## **Interview**

After the audition there will be an informal interview. The panel will be interested to hear the candidate talk about their artistic influences, what inspires them to be a jazz musician and to discuss their career objectives. This is also an opportunity for the candidate to ask the panel questions about the Jazz Department and what life will be like as a jazz musician in Birmingham.

## **Extra Requirements for Drum Applicants**

In order to demonstrate a basic level of harmonic literacy, drum applicants are required to present some prepared work at the piano keyboard. The panel are not expecting piano skills to any performance level but need to know that the applicant can find satisfactory voicings for common chords in jazz language. Therefore drummers are asked to choose one of the pieces from the list above and play through the chord progression at the piano. Because of this extra requirement, drummers do not have to prepare a transcription.

## **Additional tests at the discretion of the panel**

If the audition panel require further evidence of appropriate skills, they may give further tests such as sight reading, keyboard, aural or interactive tests.

## **Notes, Guidelines and FAQs**

1. Pianists, bass players and drummers will audition by taking the place of their respective instrument in the rhythm trio. Guitarists replace the piano forming a trio of guitar, bass and drums.
2. Drummers do not have to provide their own instrument but can bring their own cymbals and snare if they so wish. A drum kit is also provided for the rehearsal prior to the audition.
3. Basic amplification will be provided for bass players and guitarists.
4. Bass players need only play the head in the first section of the audition and can choose whether or not to do so for the "free choice" section.
5. What is a transcription? Transcriptions are notated versions of improvisations. The panel would prefer to hear a transcription of an established improviser who is significant to the history of jazz. It is not appropriate to present arrangements in a jazz style or composed melodies for this section.
6. The panel will only consider offering places on the course to candidates who improvise for the majority of their performance.
7. Candidates are encouraged to research their chosen pieces from original recordings but will also find some lead sheet versions in the "New Real Book" published by Sher Music. Another good source is the Charlie Parker Omnibook. Both publications can be ordered from Jazzwise Publications on 02087695430 or [www.jazzwise.com](http://www.jazzwise.com)