

BRITTEN SINFONIA ACADEMY and Composer Hub

FAQs

I haven't sat my Grade 7 exam, can I still apply for BSA?

Yes. We are recruiting players of grade 7 standard and above but you do not have to have sat your exam.

Do I have to be at school to apply for BSA or the Composer Hub?

BSA welcomes applications from musicians and composers of secondary school age. If you have left school early, are taking a gap year or are home-schooled or equivalent then please do apply.

How much does BSA cost?

BSA costs us upwards of £1500 per musician per year! But DON'T WORRY, we believe that everyone should have the opportunity to benefit from this experience and so we subsidise the fee and ask you only to pay a contribution of £350 for the year. In certain circumstances we are able to offer partial and full bursaries on a means tested basis. If you would like to discuss your options, then please contact us by emailing: academy@brittensinfonia.com or call us in the office on 01223 300795

Can I apply to both the Composer Hub and BSA?

We will accept applications for both the Composer Hub and BSA, however, it is not possible to gain membership to both. Please fill out both the BSA application form and the Composer Hub application form. Entry to either will be offered as a result of instrument auditions and composition interviews.

I am a member of Aldeburgh Young Musicians (AYM), can I also apply for BSA?

Yes! BSA and AYM have a close working partnership, our two organisations work together to avoid timetable clashes and to offer complementary musical experiences. By engaging with both AYM and BSA you will be benefiting from the best range of musical opportunities in the east of England.

I study at one of the junior conservatoires in London (e.g. Guildhall, Junior Academy, Junior RCM), can I also apply to BSA?

You can absolutely still apply although you should think carefully about your availability. BSA projects usually take place over weekends during term time. You'll need to be able to commit to the majority of BSA dates in order for you and your fellow BSA members to get the most from the experience. If your junior conservatoire will not release you on the relevant Saturdays then doing both might not be best for you. Feel free to contact us and talk through your options!

I play in my school and/or county youth orchestra or ensemble. Can I also play in BSA? What will BSA offer that I don't already get from these opportunities?

BSA aims to complement your school and county musical activity and we strongly support you continuing to play in those ensembles. We work closely with music hubs and local authorities to avoid timetable clashes.

BSA offers an advanced musical training with a strong focus on broadening your musicianship and developing your leadership skills. We then encourage you to take these enhanced skills back to benefit your other music making. Opportunities unique to BSA include:

- *Working side-by-side at every course as colleagues with Britten Sinfonia players*
- *Working closely with internationally renowned guest artists including instrumentalists, conductors, workshop leaders and composers*
- *Working with a professional composer to realise a new work commissioned especially written for BSA*
- *Playing without a conductor*
- *Rehearsing and performing a range of repertoire from Bach to new commissions*

I'm a current or previous member of BSA or Composer Hub, do I need to re-apply?

Yes. Every year we ask all applicants, whether it is their first time applying or they have been in the ensemble for several years, to re-apply and re-audition. This ensures spaces are allocated fairly and maintains the high standard for which BSA is renowned. Auditioning is also a really useful skill and the more you do it, the better you'll be at it!

How will I know if BSA is for me?

Because we are a small ensemble run by a team who are passionate about nurturing young musicians, we try to offer a really personal, tailored experience in BSA. You will be welcomed and nurtured with individual mentorship and support. You will have the chance to meet other people as enthusiastic as you are about having a good time and making great music.

We have a really lovely group of alumni and they are very happy to talk to you about their experiences. If you'd like to ask any questions or get in touch with current or previous members of BSA, please just email us and we'll make this happen: academy@brittensinfonia.com or call the office on 01223 300795