

Music Scholarships 2026-2027

Music Scholarships are available at 11 and 16+ to boys and girls (at 16+). Applications at both stages are open to both internal and external students and the audition process is the same regardless.

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Music Scholarships range in value from one free set of instrumental/singing lessons from a UCS Visiting Music Teacher, to a fixed sum reduction in the annual school tuition fee equivalent to between 10% and 25%. In exceptional circumstances an award equivalent to 50% may be made. One set of free instrumental/singing lessons is also included in any % Music Scholarship. In addition applicants may ask to be considered for a means tested bursary which may raise the value of total fee remission to 100%.

At the audition applicants will be required to play or sing two contrasting pieces of their own choice on a main instrument or voice. Demonstration of ability on a second instrument or as a singer is warmly welcomed, although candidates will not necessarily be expected to be at the same level as their first instrument. There will also be a general interview about musical interests and activities. Piano accompaniments will be provided by a UCS accompanist for all candidates, without exception, in order to ensure a level playing field for applicants.

The following time limits apply to the length of programmes submitted for audition as follows;

- 11+ 8 minutes in total
- 16+ 12 minutes in total

Please note that we may need to stop candidates in the middle of a piece in order to cover all aspects of the audition.

The principal rationale for Music Scholarships is to support ensemble music making at the School. We therefore expect candidates at 11+ to offer at least one orchestral instrument (including saxophone and tuned percussion, but not piano, guitar, electric guitar or drum kit) either as their first instrument, or as a strong second. 16+ candidates may offer singing instead of an orchestral instrument. We reserve the right to decline to audition any candidate who do not offer the appropriate mix of instrument as defined above. Minimum standards for audition at 11+ are Grade V on at least one instrument, and for 16+ Grade VIII on at least one instrument.

Successful candidates are expected to make excellent progress in their instrumental or vocal studies during their time at UCS. They are also expected to play a full part in the musical life of UCS through contributing to the School's orchestras, chamber and Jazz ensembles, and choirs. External applicants must also satisfy the Headmaster as to their academic ability through the standard school entrance procedures.

Application:

The first stage of the application process consists of completing an online application form at the same time as the School's general Admission application is completed. Candidates only go onto the second stage if they are invited to academic interview following the entrance examination. At this point candidates will be contacted by the Music Department requesting the following additional documents and information;

- Testimonial from current Head of Music*
- Testimonial from current Instrumental teachers*
- Copy of all music, including piano accompaniments where required

** For students currently at UCS Senior School or Junior Branch, it is not necessary to obtain references from Head teacher, Director of Music or instrumental teachers if taught at UCS.*

Auditions will take place at the School on the dates detailed below. Candidates will be notified of the timetable prior to the examination days.

Relevant dates are as follows:

	Closing date for applications#	Audition days*
11+	Monday 9 th November 2026	Monday 25 th January and Tuesday 2 nd February 2027
16+	Monday 28 th September 2026	Saturday November 21 nd and Friday 27 th November 2026

These are the same dates as the School's General Admissions deadline. Please tick the box on the General Admissions form to indicate that you are applying for a Music Scholarship. We will then follow this up with a separate Music Scholarship application form.

*** These dates may be subject to change**

The Director of Music, Christopher Dawe, is pleased to answer further questions or to arrange an informal meeting at any time. He can be contacted at Christopher.dawe@ucs.org.uk

May 2026