You should submit three compositions (in different performance media) which represent your present level of achievement as a composer. After receiving these compositions, Conservatorium staff will invite you to attend a personal interview to discuss your compositions, background as a composer, commitment to musical composition, and interest in becoming a professional composer.

**WHAT DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ENTRY?**

You are required to submit three compositions of diverse instrumentation. For example, the portfolio might include a string quartet, a duet for electric guitar and drumkit, and a song. You should submit scores and recordings, where available. If there is typically no score created for this genre of music (e.g. popular music), then there is no need to create one.

You will then be scheduled for an interview late in the year, as indicated on the Application Form. During this interview we will ask you about the pieces you have submitted, as well as general questions about your musical background and interests, and your motivation for studying composition and writing music.

After this, all applicants are ranked, and depending on ATAR results, places will be offered to the top applicants.

**DO I HAVE TO WRITE NEW PIECES FOR MY ENTRANCE PORTFOLIO?**

Most school-leavers will present works that they have written from studying music at school. Other applicants will submit three works that they have written. It’s not necessary to write new works – just submit your three best pieces.

**CAN I BE ADMITTED TO THE DEGREE IF I CAN’T READ OR WRITE MUSIC NOTATION?**

This is not recommended. Entrants will be required to undertake a Music Skills test which presumes music notation skills.

**SHOULD I HAVE DONE A PARTICULAR COURSE AT SCHOOL TO BE ADMITTED?**

Most candidates have done Music 2 at school. However there are others who haven’t, and who have done extremely well. It’s by no means essential.

**WHICH AMEB GRADE SHOULD I HAVE DONE?**

There is no requirement to have done AMEB grades. As a guide, we expect a level of approximately Grade 6 Musicianship or the equivalent to have been achieved. But as long as you are prepared to work extra hard in first year to get to this level, it may not be essential to have done AMEB grades.

**WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO SUCCEED IN THE COMPOSITION COURSES AT THE SYDNEY CONSERVATORIUM?**

Being a composer is never easy, though it can be extremely rewarding. You must be a creative person who is willing to learn and try new approaches to writing music. You should be open to listening to, and learning about, different musical styles and genres, including the contemporary, the traditional, Western and non-Western, acoustic and electroacoustic. You need to be broad-minded in your approach to music, and not enrol expecting that you will know the music you will be writing at the end of your degree.

Most of all, you must be prepared to work hard, to experiment, and to be self-motivated: that is, to be writing music because you really want to, not just because it is for an assignment or other purpose.
I'M INTERESTED IN ELECTRONIC MUSIC. IS THIS AVAILABLE IN THE DEGREE?

Yes. Electronic music, computer music, electroacoustic music and sound-based music have strong profiles within the composition degree structure. There are dedicated staff in this area, and the Conservatorium contains many studios with excellent equipment in which you will be able to explore your creativity. All composers will be required to engage with electroacoustic music at some stage in their degree.

WHAT JOBS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE END OF A COMPOSITION DEGREE?

A Bachelor of Music (Composition) is the beginning of a long musical journey that can extend over your entire life. Our graduates are professional composers in a range of musical styles (e.g. concert music, music theatre, film and television, theatre, sound installations, DJs), as well as teachers, journalists, music presenters and promoters, arts administrators and so forth. These occupations are just in the music field. There is no limit on what can be achieved.

CAN I SEND YOU SOME OF MY PIECES TO BE LISTENED TO AND RECEIVE FEEDBACK BEFORE THE OFFICIAL INTERVIEW PROCESS?

The composition staff are extremely busy giving their attention to the enrolled students, and it is unlikely that they would have time to give feedback. But we welcome your interest and questions.

I REALLY WANT TO WRITE BETTER POP SONGS. CAN I DO THIS IN A COMPOSITION DEGREE?

You would certainly have the opportunity to do this at times should you wish. It may be expected that this be part of a broader compositional framework or development, such as in the context of a larger work or body of works rather than, for example, writing a single pop song in isolation. You will also be required to extend yourself across a range of musical forms. By the end of your degree, we are confident that you would be writing much more interesting and unique pop songs than if you hadn't done the degree.

DO YOU HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRIVATE TUTORS IN COMPOSITION BEFORE I SUBMIT MY WORKS TO THE CONSERVATORIUM?

The Conservatorium Open Academy coordinates group composition classes. Private lessons may also be available through private schools in NSW.

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