



ISA

YOUNG
MUSICIAN
COMPETITION



Open to KS2 - KS5
Final: Wednesday 11 March 2026
JdP Music Building, OX4 1DY

DEADLINE

Thursday 4 December 2026

Competition open to ISA Members' schools only
Visit the ISA website for more information

isaschools.org.uk | isaarts@isaschools.org.uk

ISA
ARTS

The ISA Young Musician Competition is our annual celebration of musical talent. Pupils at ISA Members' schools are invited to demonstrate their music performance skills in front of a live audience and expert judges.

Eligibility

Only schools whose Head is a Member with ISA are eligible to enter ISA competitions. Any pupils competing must be on the main school's admissions register, on the date of the event.

Open to Year 3-13. Our year groups are based on the UK national curriculum, for more information and to check the correct year group for your students see [here](#). Please ensure you enter pupils according to the UK system, even if your own school's age group system differs.

At ISA, we are committed to making our opportunities accessible, we welcome applications from all pupils, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities. If your pupil(s), those with an EHCP or on the school's SEND register, are working at a level that differs from their age group's key stage, or if your school or student focuses on development and skills rather than year groups, please contact us.

Alternative formats of these guidelines are available on request. Please notify us at the earliest opportunity so we can provide the document accordingly, if required.

Year Groups

Each school may submit up to four entries per year group.

Solos or duets are welcome. Mixed year groups are allowed, please submit entries in the year group of the oldest pupil.

- Year 3
- Year 4
- Year 5
- Year 6
- Year 7
- Year 8
- Year 9
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 12
- Year 13

How to enter

Entries must be submitted via the online form on the ISA website on the competition page found [here](#) by **Thursday 4 December 2025** at the very latest. You must be logged in to the website to access the entry form, any staff member can create a login with their school email address. Pupils or parents must not submit entries themselves.

- Schools are invited to record a video of their entry(ies) and submit it/them via the online form on the ISA website, following the guidelines below.
- A working URL link must be given for the video (e.g., to YouTube or Vimeo). ISA won't accept any file to download, WeTransfer links, or broken links.
- Please make sure that your videos are accessible for at least 3 months to view by anyone with the link. YouTube videos will need to be unlisted, Vimeo videos will need to be unlisted and age rated, Google Drive will need to be set to 'Anyone with the link' and OneDrive needs to be set with 'share link' to 'anyone'.
- The maximum duration for each online entry is three minutes.
- ISA suggests running a competition in-house and submitting your best entries.

Competition Format

1. Online Qualification Round

The first stage of this competition consists of an online qualification round.

Late cancellations cause considerable inconvenience to the organisers and prevent other schools from taking part. All entries received will be regarded as a definite commitment to attend the final if successful.

2. The Final

Finalists will be invited to the JdP Music Building, St Hilda's College, OX4 1DY on **Wednesday 11 March 2026** for the final. Schools will be asked to email the following information to isaarts@isaschools.org.uk before the event:

- Name of piece and music sheet for the performance.
- Total number of attendees, including staff and audience.

Judging criteria

- Pitch
- Time
- Tone
- Shape
- Performance

Rules and General Information

- This competition does not include vocal entries.
- Pupils can play either from memory or with music.
- Pupils may have a piano to accompany them if needed. (No other accompaniment is allowed)
- A piano will be provided for pianists and accompanists as well as music stands if required.
- You must provide your own accompanist and page turners if required.
- No backing tracks allowed.
- The piece must last **no longer than 5 minutes** for both the online qualification round and the final.
- Please note the instrument of choice must be acoustic. Guitarists must play classical guitar.
- Solo instrument or Duet only can enter the competition.
- Finalists do not have to play the same piece as the first round.
- Pupils may not compose their own piece of music.
- Dress code: smart or school uniform.
- We understand that travel is a factor, but we encourage teachers, family and friends to come along for the whole day to support the musicians and watch the performances.
- There is no parking available at the venue, alternative parking instructions will follow in communications to the schools participating.

If you have any questions, please contact isaarts@isaschools.org.uk