

# School of Music

**Undergraduate**  
Degree Programmes 2025



CARDIFF  
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL  
CAERDYDD

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# 98% of graduates

were in employment and/or further study, due to start a new job or course, or doing other activities such as travelling, 15 months after the end of their course. (Graduate Outcomes 2020/21\*)

\*Higher Education Statistics Agency, Graduate Outcomes Survey 2020/21, published by HESA in June 2023

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**Our partnerships** with universities and conservatories around the world allow you to spend **a year or a semester studying abroad.**

Source: The Times/Sunday Times Good University Guide 2024

# 90% of our research

environment is considered conducive to producing world-leading or internationally excellent research.

Source: Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2021

# Choose Cardiff

We provide a vibrant and supportive environment for musical scholarship, composition, and performance.

Cardiff University's School of Music offers stimulating artistic and academic study in a friendly, inclusive, and creative environment.

By choosing to study here, you'll become part of a close-knit musical community that is focused on inspiring you to succeed. We will help you to broaden your knowledge of music and strengthen your practical skills, while encouraging you to participate fully in our School's wide range of activities.

Whether you consider yourself to be a performer, composer or researcher – or a combination of all three – you'll be able to choose from a broad range of options that can be tailored to your own creative and professional interests. At the same time, you'll receive a broad-based education in performance, composition, ethnomusicology, musicology, and analysis, with options available for students interested in jazz, popular music and film music studies.

You'll benefit from numerous School and student-led ensembles and events, an annual programme of concerts, and opportunities to undertake work placements and study abroad. Several of our ensembles also undertake international concert tours and make commercially released recordings.

We pride ourselves on the quality of our teaching and the strong partnership we have with our students, as well as the dedication of our staff.

Our academic staff have wide-ranging interests and are committed to high quality musical research. 90% of our research environment is considered conducive to producing world-leading or internationally excellent research (REF 2021). Students also benefit from expert performance tuition from our dedicated team of vocal and instrumental tutors.

Based in Cardiff, a culturally very lively and affordable city, we are ideally located for studying music. The city has several world-class venues, such as the Wales Millennium Centre, which is the home of Welsh National Opera and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and St David's Hall, which hosts Cardiff Singer of the World and concerts from many visiting orchestras. We benefit from collaborative links with many of these organisations.

I very much look forward to the opportunity of welcoming you to our dynamic and ambitious School!

**Dr Nicholas Jones**  
**Head of School**



# Why study music?

Music is fundamentally a social activity; it brings us together, creates social cohesion, and allows us to express ourselves.

However we engage with music - whether as a composer, performer, or listener - we are driven by its ability to convey and communicate; its power to share emotions, intentions, and meanings. Music in all its forms can promote trust and empathy. It can also help us to relax, provide relief from stress, improve our mood, and even help to reduce pain.

Our degree programmes provide an opportunity to become immersed in the world of music, from Western art music, to jazz, popular music, and musical traditions from around the globe. They give you the opportunity not only to pursue your particular musical interests, but also to try out new things. You'll learn about a variety of different approaches to thinking about music. From composing and performing to conducting, you'll analyse how a piece of music is constructed, and study the social and cultural contexts of music from an array of cultures and traditions.

We are extremely proud of the wide variety of performance opportunities we offer at the School of Music. We have a diverse and rich range of School-led music groups, from the Symphony Orchestra, Pop Collective, and West African Drumming Ensemble to our many student-led groups such as Big Band, Brass Band and Operatic Society.

Whatever your musical interests, you are sure to find an ensemble for you. You'll also benefit from the teaching expertise of instrumentalists and singers with international performance careers.

Our graduates are highly employable, possessing vital transferable skills that are important to employers both within and beyond the music profession. Whether performing and composing, working with others in ensembles, or constructing robustly argued essays, our degree programmes allow you to develop skills in leadership, teamwork, communication, creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

Recent graduates have gone on to successful careers as performers, composers, teachers, music producers, audio engineers, music journalists, and arts managers and administrators. Many have also found employment outside of the music industry, with destinations including the Civil Service, law, IT, banking, and management.

Music is a soundtrack to our lives, a constant companion that accompanies us throughout our years. Whatever your preferred soundtrack, whatever your musical interests, we hope to have the opportunity to welcome you to the School of Music.



**I chose the School of Music because of the wide variety of modules.**

There are also a variety of performance opportunities, both through the School ensembles, and the Music Society.

The School is friendly and welcoming, and there's a wide range of support available, both academically and pastorally. I've really enjoyed participating in ensembles and the performance opportunities the School provides.

**Victoria Agg**, Music (BMus)



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# Studying with us

Cardiff is a vibrant capital city with rich musical traditions.

Cardiff has a rich and diverse musical culture, with a thriving live music scene and a history of producing world-class musicians. The city is home to a number of legendary music venues, including the iconic Clwb Ifor Bach and Utilia Arena Cardiff, which regularly hosts major international acts.

Cardiff is also home to several music festivals throughout the year, including the award-winning Sŵn Festival. The city's musical heritage and contemporary scene make it a vibrant and exciting destination for music lovers.

At our purpose-built building in the heart of Cardiff, we have all the facilities you need to succeed in your studies. It offers lecture theatres with modern lecture-capture technology, seminar rooms, practice rooms, ensemble rooms, and electro-acoustic studios.

## Performance and studio facilities

Our 250-seat concert hall hosts professional public concerts and student-led events throughout the year, as well as being used daily by our students for teaching and rehearsals. The space is integral to the life and work of the School and is central to our ensembles, student performances and concert series.

Much of the performance in our concert hall connects directly with our undergraduate programmes, with a range of visiting professional performers frequently holding masterclasses and workshops in both composition and performance.

Our music studios are fully acoustically treated and equipped to industry standards. The main studio also has an attached live room for multitrack recording, voiceovers, and overdubs.

## Instrumental lessons

Music students receive instrumental or vocal lessons as part of their course. Many of our practical tutors are members of either the BBC National Orchestra of Wales or Welsh National Opera.

Vocal or instrumental tuition is fully funded by the School on your principal study instrument if you're taking a Practical Musicianship module. This includes accompaniment at your final recital. You'll receive 24 half-hour lessons over the course of the year. This increases to 24 hours of lessons in the final year for BMus students taking the Recital module.

## Student life

Our small student body is friendly, collaborative and very active.

Students regularly perform together in School-led ensembles and concerts, as well as student-run groups. The student-led Music Society, which is open to students across Cardiff University, organises social events, competitions, performances, and trips abroad, as well as lunchtime concerts which are open to all.

## International students

We offer a wide provision for international students coming to study with us. For those who have English as a second language, we offer weekly classes throughout each semester, along with courses before the beginning of each academic year.

We also have an International Buddy Scheme and hold weekly language lunches, bringing together staff and students from around the world, offering opportunities to practice languages, learn about other countries and build networks across the School.



**Music at Cardiff University was my first and favourite choice out of all the universities I applied to.**

I liked the fact there were a lot of musical opportunities, and I feel I have definitely taken advantage of living in a capital city.

I love the fact that the School of Music is quite small, everyone knows everyone and it feels like one big support network. Cardiff University has provided me with some of my closest friends and fondest memories. Say yes to every opportunity that comes your way and you will not regret it!

**Florence Waddington,**  
Music (BMus)





# A world of opportunities

We want you to get the most out of your degree, inside and outside of the lecture theatre. We offer a range of opportunities for you to explore new frontiers and embrace new customs and cultures during your studies.

Most of our students will have the opportunity to study abroad as part of their undergraduate programme. We currently have links with universities across Europe, the USA, South-East Asia, Australia and Canada.

Studying, working or volunteering abroad is a fantastic opportunity to immerse yourself in a different culture, make new friends, embrace a new language, and enhance your career prospects.

Spending time abroad will also help you to develop a wide range of transferable skills prized by employers, including independence and responsibility, organisation and time management, problem solving, communication skills, and adaptability and resilience.



**“ I remember shedding so many tears at the airport, saying goodbye to friends and family as I left to start my year in a country I had never been to before.**

Then I remember crying even more when I said goodbye to the wonderful city, the friends and family I was leaving behind in Helsinki after what had been the most enjoyable year of my life so far.

Those who are tempted by a year abroad should not think twice about it. I have grown in so many ways, not only as a musician and student, but as an all-round individual. It is a privilege to have the freedom and opportunity to pursue an education beyond one country and even more so to be able to travel.

**Jackie Yip**, Music with a Year of Study Abroad (BA 2018)





# Preparing for life after university

We take your employability seriously and encourage you to think about life after university from day one. We're here to help you develop the practical skills and professional confidence you need to succeed in your career.

We actively encourage our students to develop musical and critical skills that are suited to a wide variety of careers and workplaces. You'll learn music-specific skills such as performance, composition and analysis, and academic skills including reasoning, comprehension, and oral and written communication.

The University's Student Futures team is also on hand to offer bespoke careers advice and guidance. They are available for one-to-one and online career planning sessions, CV-writing, skills workshops and more.



## Enhancing your employability

Work skills are embedded into our modules, with our Business of Music modules offering the opportunity to undertake a work placement. Our students undertake placements in areas including artist management, stage management, orchestral management, education, music therapy, sound recording and postproduction.

Placement organisations include the BBC, Music Mark, National Youth Jazz Collective, Welsh National Opera, Southbank Sinfonia, Touch Trust and Monteverdi Choir & Orchestras. Our students also have the opportunity to work or volunteer abroad through the University's Global Opportunities team.

Our graduates have gone on to enjoy successful careers with the BBC, Arts Councils, Glyndebourne Opera, English National Opera, Oxford University Press, the National Trust, and London Symphony Orchestra, along with a range of other industrial, commercial, educational and charitable organisations.



**“ Music is my passion, and I knew that I wanted to study it at the high level that Cardiff University offers. ”**

The course really appealed to me as I really enjoy performing, and there are lots of performance opportunities.

I had the opportunity to work with the BBC last summer as part of my Business of Music module. It prepared me for life after university as it gave me contacts and experience in an industry that I'm interested in.

**Evan Hancock, Music (BMus)**



# Single honours degree programme



## Music (BMus)

**UCAS Code: W302 or G85D  
with a year of study abroad**

Our most in-depth programme of study, allowing you to focus all your time specialising in and studying music.

This programme will provide you with rigorous training in traditional skills such as composition, performance, theory and analysis, as well as exploring developments in ethnomusicology, music history and musicology.

Core modules will help you to develop a solid broad-based musical education, while optional modules offer you the opportunity to study topics including film music, ethnomusicology, jazz and popular music, as well as those related to different periods, styles and genres of Western art music.

Students on this programme can opt to take specialist modules in composition. You can also take a specialist performance module with a public recital in your final year. One-to-one supervision is available if you opt to take one or two of the major written projects available in Dissertation, Music Analysis or Ethnomusicology.

If you elect to take our any of our practical performance modules, you'll receive fully funded tuition on your principal study instrument or voice.

**“The School of Music provides an environment where I’m exposed to a wide range of musical paths, some I didn’t even know about until I arrived.”**

As a percussionist, I get to experience Lanyi – West African drumming, Pandeiro (Brazilian) percussion, jazz drumming etc. These, on top of the studio and composition tuition, give me a wide perspective on what I want to, and can, do in music.

I really like how closely we work with peers and staff. The staff are very kind, nice and helpful, which made me feel very welcome here.

**Jimmy Yeung, Music (BMus)**

# Joint honours degree programmes

## Music and English Literature (BA)

### UCAS Code: WQ33

Combine studies in literature, music and culture with creative and practical skills development, opening doors to a variety of career pathways.

This flexible degree programme will help you develop critical and creative thinking, encourage your understanding and appreciation of diversity, enable you to communicate to a high standard and foster your resilience and independence.

Explore English literature from different periods and cultures, and across the range of principal literary genres. You won't be restricted to studying the printed word: we're intrigued by the connections between literature and film, art, history, technology, language, and everyday life, and our teaching reflects these interests.

Your music studies will include a range of academic modules which will develop your understanding of music theory, and ensure you're equipped to critically and reflectively assess styles and techniques. Alongside this, you'll be encouraged to take full advantage of our exciting ensembles.

## Welsh and Music (BA)

### UCAS Code: QW53

Discover the richness of Welsh language, literature and culture alongside music. Taught in collaboration with the School of Welsh, this course aims to produce graduates with a thorough academic and practical understanding of the Welsh language, a high level of skill in written and spoken Welsh and a broad-based musical education.

Music modules will allow you to specialise and develop your musical interests, while Welsh modules will develop your key skills in the fields of language and literature. This programme is suitable for students who have studied Welsh as a first or second language.

## Music and a Modern Language (BA)

### UCAS Code: R753

Study the language, literature and history of French, Spanish or Chinese while gaining a broad education in music.

Our aim is to help you become a 'global citizen' who thinks critically and creatively, understands and appreciates cultural diversity, and has a wealth of transferable skills.

You'll develop high-level communication and critical-thinking skills, and foster resilience and independence. You'll also participate in creative and practical musicianship studies.

Your third year will be spent studying or working in a country where your chosen language is used. This experience will offer you opportunities for professional and personal development, and a route into deeper social and cultural understanding, friendships that cross borders and adventure.



**“Cardiff is a great city to be part of - it's a great student city.”**

There's loads of performance opportunities and activities to do with music; it's affordable, accessible and has plenty to do.

**Emily Connor, Music and History (BA)**



# Applications

To be considered for entry onto any of the undergraduate courses offered by the School of Music you should apply through UCAS.

## Applicant days

Once we have received an application, if it meets our entry requirements, we'll invite you to visit the School for a tour of our world-class facilities and a one-to-one meeting with a member of staff. During this visit, you'll have the opportunity to attend talks and workshops, speak to staff and current students, and get a feel for what it's like to study with us. It also gives us the chance to get to know you better.

One-to-one meetings take the form of an individual 15-minute meeting with a member of academic staff, during which you will be invited either to perform a short piece of unaccompanied music on your principal instrument or voice or—for those whose interests lie more in composition or musicology—to bring along a composition for discussion, or suggest a musical work or topic about which to have an informal chat. This is followed by a short discussion about your musical interests and a chance for you to ask us any questions you may have.

A lot of people who come for an applicant day say how much they enjoyed the day, and it allows us to have a fuller picture of you than a UCAS form provides.

## Typical entry requirements

### A-levels:

AAB-BBB. Must include Music.

Applicants without an A-level in Music will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Extended/International Project

**Qualification:** Applicants with grade A in the EPQ/IPQ will typically receive an offer one grade lower than the standard offer. Please note that any subject specific requirements must still be met.

### BA joint honours

Please refer to our online course information for specific requirements for each joint honours programme. International Baccalaureate: 32-31 overall or 665 in three HL subjects. Must include grade 6 in HL Music. Applicants without HL Music will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

### Baccalaureate Wales:

From September 2023, there will be a new qualification called the Advanced Skills Baccalaureate Wales (level 3). This qualification will replace the Advanced Skills Challenge Certificate (Welsh Baccalaureate). The qualification will continue to be accepted in lieu of one A-Level (at the grades listed above), excluding any specified subjects.

**BTEC:** Extended Diploma in Music DDM-DMM.

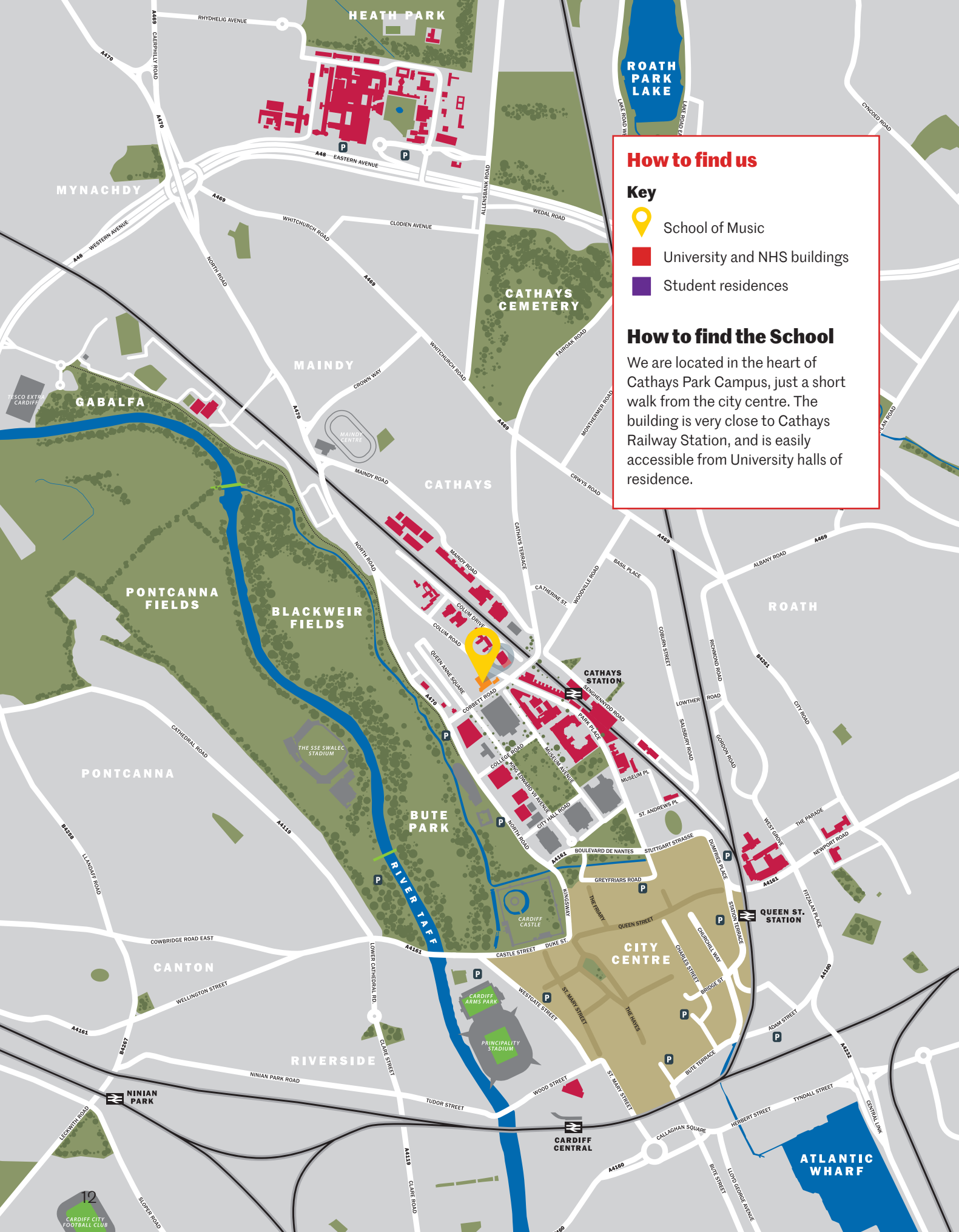
**GCSE:** GCSE (or equivalent): Maths and English Language at Grade C or Grade 4.

**Specific requirements:** All applicants are expected to have gained or shown evidence of working towards Grade 8 in one instrument, or voice, at the time of application.

**Other:** Applicants without A-level Music will be considered, provided they can show evidence of appropriate music performance and theory skills (such as Grade 6 Music Theory) and/or are studying appropriate qualifications. We also welcome applications from those who may have combinations of qualifications or other relevant work/life experience.




**English language:** For those applicants whose first language is not English or who have not had a substantial part of their education taught in the English language, evidence of ability in English is required, such as a score of 6.5 in IELTS with a minimum score of 5.5 in each category, or an equivalent qualification.





## How to find us

### Key

-  School of Music
-  University and NHS buildings
-  Student residences

## How to find the School

We are located in the heart of Cathays Park Campus, just a short walk from the city centre. The building is very close to Cathays Railway Station, and is easily accessible from University halls of residence.





**“ I couldn't have picked anything to study other than music, as it's my biggest passion. ”**

I like that the School is close-knit, and there's plenty to get stuck into. I did work experience with the English Symphony Orchestra, assisting the orchestral manager. I thoroughly enjoyed it, and it was very useful to see how they operate professionally.

To anyone considering studying music at Cardiff - go for it, you won't regret it and I really believe you won't find anywhere better!

**Thomas Hooper,**  
Music (BMus 2022)

## Important Legal Information

The contents of this brochure relate to the Entry 2025 admissions cycle and are correct at the time of going to press in December 2024. However, there is a lengthy period of time between printing this brochure and applications being made to, and processed by us, so please check our website at [www.cardiff.ac.uk](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk) before making an application in case there are any changes to the course you are interested in or to other facilities and services described here. Where there is a difference between the contents of this brochure and our website, the contents of the website take precedence and represent the basis on which we intend to deliver our services to you.

Your degree: Students admitted to Cardiff University study for a Cardiff University degree.



This brochure is printed on paper obtained from well managed sources using vegetable-based inks. Both the paper used in the production of this prospectus and the manufacturing process are FSC® certified. The printers are also accredited to ISO14001, the internationally recognised environmental standard.

Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.

This document is also available in Welsh.

Cardiff University is a registered charity, no. 1136855

This prospectus can be made available in alternative formats, including large print (text), Braille and on audio tape/CD.

To request an alternative format please contact Laura Roberts:

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visit our website:**



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