

Propel Pathway Policy 2025/26

Introduction

1. The School will operate a Propel Pathway in the Music department, in a two-year pilot. Two versions of the Propel Pathway will be administered:
 - a. **Pre-application Propel:** designed for eligible students in year 12 (or equivalent) who intend to apply to Guildhall School for September 2027 entry.
 - b. **Post-application Propel:** designed for eligible applicants for 2026 entry who are just short of the standard of entry, but who have the potential to become entry-ready with targeted tuition.

Pre-application Propel

2. Eligibility – applicants **must be**:
 - a. UK-domiciled
 - b. Current year 12 pupil (or equivalent stage of education)
 - c. State-educated for the entirety of their education
 - d. Living in a household with an annual income below £35,000 – or Free School Meals recipient
 - e. Intending to apply to one of the School's Strings, WBP, Vocal or Keyboard undergraduate degree programmes for entry in September 2027.
3. Applicants will apply to pre-application Propel via an online application form.
4. **Applications will open in September 2025 and will close at midday on 3rd November 2025.**
5. Eligible applicants will be invited to submit an audition video via a freely available video service (e.g. Vimeo), to be assessed by the Music department.
6. The applicant should play/perform **two** contrasting pieces in their audition video.
7. The assessment panel will consider the following when determining who will be offered a place on the programme:
 - a. Financial eligibility
 - b. Prior music education opportunities
 - c. Musical potential
 - d. Potential to become audition ready in one year
 - e. Ensuring representation of varied instruments on the programme
8. **Six** young people will be invited to join pre-application Propel.
9. Pre-application Propel participants will benefit from 20hrs of tuition with a Guildhall tutor, ending by July 2026.
10. Participants will be invited to join the Supported Application Scheme when they apply to the School the following year.

Post-application Propel

11. Eligibility – applicants **must be**:

- a. UK-domiciled (home-fundable)
- b. State-educated for the entirety of their education
- c. Current applicant to the School's Strings, WBP, Vocal or Keyboard undergraduate degree programmes
- d. Living in a household with an annual income below £35,000 – priority will be given to applicants who note Free School Meals or an IMD¹ Quintile 1 or 2 postcode on their undergraduate application form
- e. Assessed by their undergraduate audition panel as not quite ready for study

12. Candidates will apply for- and audition for- the school in the standard way. For candidates who are issued with a 'reserve' offer following audition, the Access and Participation team will review the information declared on the application form. They will reach out to all reserve offer holders who indicate that they are UK-domiciled and have been state educated for the entirety of their education.

13. These candidates will be asked to provide further information about household income and invited to apply to Propel if they meet the criteria. Applicants must provide evidence to support their application.

14. Candidates will apply to post-application Propel via an online application form, the link for which will be exclusively available in the email from the Access and Participation team.

15. Applications to post-application Propel will open in November 2025 and will close at midday on 5th January 2026.

16. There are **six** places available on post-application Propel – should more applications be received than there are places the Music department will consider and prioritise the following when awarding places:

- a. Representation across all participating departments, ensuring at least one per department where possible
- b. Instruments that are high priority for the School and that may have scholarship support attached
- c. Applicants that have an IMD Q1 or Q2 postcode or who have flagged they receive Free School Meals on their undergraduate application
- d. The level of tuition and support a candidate has previously received, prioritising those who have experienced less support
- e. The written statements in the Propel applications, considering the applicants' reasons for applying

17. Post-application Propel participants will receive 20hrs of tuition with a Guildhall tutor, commencing in January/February and concluding in May/June.

18. At the end of the Propel tuition the participant will be invited to a follow-up audition to determine the progression made, and this will be considered alongside a progress report written by their Guildhall tutor.

¹ Indices of Multiple Deprivation – a government dataset which measures relative deprivation in an area (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>)

19. Where the department are satisfied that the participant has made sufficient progress and is ready for study, an offer will be made for September 2026 entry.
20. Where progress is still required, the department will provide constructive, actionable feedback for the participant to work towards, and they will be invited to reapply in the following application cycle via the Supported Application Scheme.

Essential information

21. Participation in either iteration of the Propel Pathway **does not** guarantee entry to Guildhall School's degree programmes.
22. Only applicants/prospective applicants to the Strings, Vocal, Keyboard and Wind, Brass and Percussion departments are eligible for the Propel Pathway.
23. Propel Pathway tuition will primarily occur online. Travel bursaries are available for each participant to visit Guildhall School twice during their time on the programme, and ideally their first session will take place in person. If the participant is local to Guildhall School they may request to attend more of their sessions in person, where space permits.
24. The content of the tuition will be at the discretion of the Music department and tailored to the specific needs of the participant.
25. Participants may be allocated more than one Guildhall School tutor, depending on their tuition needs.
26. Guildhall School tutors will liaise with the participant's current music tutor throughout the project to ensure consistency of support. The contact details for the tutor will be obtained through the relevant Propel application form.
27. Participants will be invited to Guildhall School concerts and have access to online recordings. They may also be invited to other relevant events and projects, as opportunities arise.
28. The Propel Pathway is supported by Purposeful Ventures². A key requirement of the funding is the robust evaluation of the project and the outcomes of participants. As such:
 - a. Participants will be asked to complete evaluation activity, including surveys, progress reports and potentially interviews and case studies.
 - b. Participant data will be entered into the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT), which will show their Higher Education outcomes.
 - c. Information about participants' progress and outcomes will be shared with Purposeful Ventures via quarterly and annual reports.

² <https://purposefulventures.org/>