

ISA Composer Competition

Open to KS2-KS5

Competition open to ISA Members' schools only.

Visit the ISA website for more information.

**DEADLINE
WEDNESDAY
14 MAY
2025**

ISA

ARTS

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This competition offers pupils an opportunity to use both mathematical and creative thinking by composing an original piece of music. Open to Key Stages 2-5.

Eligibility

This competition is open to ISA Members' schools only. Schools can submit a maximum of three entries per age category. We encourage schools to run their own competition in house and submit their successful entries in the competition.

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.

Competition Categories

Solo Instrument or Instrumental Group or Instrument & Voice under the below age categories:

- Key Stage 2
- Key Stage 3
- Key Stage 4
- Key Stage 5

How to enter

Entries must be submitted via the online entry form on the ISA website [here](#) by Wednesday 14 May 2025.

- 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 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'.
- Any computer-generated score should be sent in PDF.
- Manuscripts (handwritten or computer generated) should be sent as full score (there is no need to generate individual playing parts) in PDF.
- Scores are not a requirement but can be used if entries wish to demonstrate their skills at writing a piece.
- While we recognise the potential benefit of AI, we kindly request that participants are using it for inspiration and support and in line with their schools policies on its use, rather than using it to generate their compositions. Please include details about the process of using AI under "any special circumstances" box if applicable, so judges are aware.
- Copyright: the music must be an original piece, not an arrangement.
- The copyright ownership of the piece is retained by the composer.
- Staff must confirm that all work submitted is the student's own.
- Pieces must have been produced within 12 months of the competition deadline. All entries must be submitted based on the pupil's age and key stage at the time of creation.

Judging criteria

- Overall effectiveness of the piece in portraying the message or emotion.
- Suitability of the composition for the chosen instrument(s)
- Demonstrating good musical understanding, including awareness of musical conventions, rhythm, melody, harmony, structure, and compositional devices
- Technical control and coherence
- Show an understanding of the chosen style/genre.

Rules

- Any style of music is welcome. Examples include: classical, contemporary, alternative, pop, jazz, film score, orchestral, minimalism, gospel, folk, indie.
- There is no limit in group sizes.
- Use of music production software is allowed.
- The maximum length of composition is 5 mins (no minimum).
- Entries must include a video or audio recording of the piece being played.
- Students have the option to submit a written or computer-generated score if they wish to support their entry.
- You may use any instrument you choose, including computer generated sound - conventional or not – i.e., a piano, guitar, or even kitchen utensils. Be as creative as you like.
- Entries with lyrics can be written in any language, provided an English translation is given.
- Paired or group compositions may be submitted to any age class. These may be judged separately from the individual works. Students submitting group work must be from within the same key stage.
- It is possible to submit a composition written for an external exam.

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

We look forward to receiving your entries.