

MTA Conference 2025 - Programme preview

Friday 16th to Sunday 18th May 2025

Trinity Academy, Bristol

Please note, this is a preview and subject to changes.

The final programme will be released in April.

[Click here](#) to read more
about each session

Friday 16th May

12.30pm Registration, trade fair, lunch

1.30pm Session 1

- Approaches to Primary Music Curriculum panel discussion with Kirsten Cunningham and Mimi Munro
- Engaging KS5 learners in challenging content James Manwaring
- Conducting workshop with a school ensemble Eiron Bailey
- How the key to whole school initiatives can be found in the Music Department Liz Dunbar, Simon Toyne
- How to get started with Cubase Trinity Academy

2.30pm First time at the conference? Meet the MTA - all welcome

3.15pm Session 2

- Building a co-curricular curriculum Naomi Charatan, Liz Gleed
- Partnerships and choral commissioning Alexander L'estrage, Kirsty Barry
- Introducing the Musical Literacy Network and musical phonics project panel discussion with Dr James Olsen
- Getting to grips with technology including demonstrations
- Achieving a good grade in GCSE Composition: approaches with and without stave notation Ed Watkins

4.30pm Let's Make Music workshop

5.30pm Keynote: Dr. Jim Frankel Music Education at the Crossroads: The Impact of AI on Music Making and Learning

Dr. Jim Frankel is the Founder and President of MusicFirst. Previously, he was the Managing Director of SoundTree, and before that he was the instrumental and general music teacher for 15 years in New Jersey Public Schools, and taught graduate courses at Columbia University for 25 years. Jim is a widely published author in various state, national and international journals of music education. He is the author of The Teachers Guide to Music, Media & Copyright Law, co-author of YouTube in Music Education, contributing author for Critical Issues in Music Education and co-author of Making Music with GarageBand & Mixcraft. In addition to his writing, Jim is a highly sought-after clinician and keynote speaker in the local, national and international music education community.

Followed by welcome drinks, an informal supper, and evening entertainment

Saturday 17th May

9.30am Session 3

- The ADHD Advantage: A Choir Designed for Neurodiversity Karen Marshall
- Success at KS4 for classroom musicians panel discussion with James McEvoy-Stevenson
- You can sing, but can you swing? Alexander L'estrage
- Next steps with Cubase Trinity Academy
- **Coaching:** where to start? James Manwaring

10.30am First time at the conference? Meet the MTA - all welcome

11.10am / 11.30am Session 4

- Five a Day: simple ideas for primary classroom activities Charles MacDougall, Mike Simpson, Ollie Tunmer
- An exploration of 'Music with Mr Gray' David Gray
- Developing Musical Understanding at KS3 - balancing creativity and academic rigour Liz Dunbar, Asha Bishop
- Teacher Training in Music in Primary and Secondary Schools panel discussion with Rebecca Berkley
- The Independent Sector Music Department: Challenges and Opportunities panel discussion with Tim Garrard
- Getting to grips with technology including demonstrations
- **Coaching:** curriculum planning James Manwaring and Catherine Barker

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1.30pm Keynote: Mark De-Lisser

Mark De-Lisser is one of the most sought after choral directors and vocal coaches in the UK. He has worked with some of today's top vocal talent, including Ariana Grande, Jessie J and Beverley Knight, and on some of the UK's most watched TV shows, including BBC's BAFTA nominated Our Dementia Choir with Vicky McClure, Songs of Praise and ITV's award winning The Masked Singer. Driven to inspire and motivate everybody to succeed, Mark helps to increase confidence and self-awareness, whilst improving technique and delivery. Anybody who is fortunate to work with Mark is left feeling uplifted and invigorated. Mark is perhaps best known for his arrangement of Stand by Me, performed by the Kingdom Choir at the Royal Wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in 2018, which has now been streamed more than 4 million times on Spotify and has over 10 million views on YouTube.

2.15pm Music Teachers' Association Annual General Meeting

2.45pm I'm a Music Teacher, Get Me Out of Here! Coffee and questions

3.15pm Session 5

- Courageous conversations - mentoring student and early career music teachers [Rebecca Berkley](#), [Mark Aitchison](#)
- Building voices, building communities: cultivating outstanding school singing [Don Gillthorpe](#)
- Jazz in the classroom [Mark Armstrong](#)
- Developing best practice for building partnerships across your school network [panel discussion](#)
- **Coaching:** extra-curricular activities [James Manwaring](#)

Followed by a drinks reception and gala dinner

[Click here to read more about each session](#)

Sunday 18th May

10.00am Session 6 Practical Workshop

- Singing is Life: practical session introducing the world of Barbershop Fifth Element Barbershop Quartet

The conference will close at 12.00noon

Coaching sessions

Designed specifically to support those new to the profession, or new to a Head of Department role. James Manwaring and members of the MTA committee will cover topics including: where to start, introducing technology, curriculum planning as a one-person department, building relationships with colleagues and families, extra-curricular activities and more. We are also pleased to have **Marion Friend MBE** with us again, who will offer 1-1 mentoring via bookable appointments.

Trade Fair

Built into the programme between CPD sessions is your opportunity to visit our lively trade fair. From instrument suppliers to technology platforms, touring companies and exams boards, this is your opportunity to meet with some of our corporate partners to find out more about their latest products and developments. Visit each exhibitor over the course of the weekend to be in with a chance of winning some top prizes in our prize draw, taking place late Saturday.

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