



aitken
COLLEGE
In Mind and Spirit

Instrumental Music

HANDBOOK 2023

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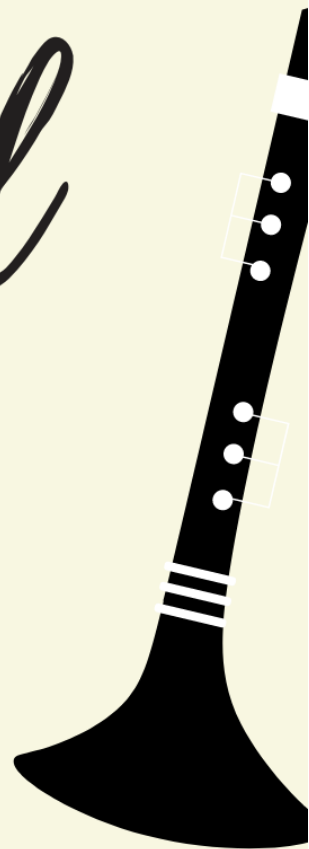


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Getting Started

Here is everything you need to know about enrolling in the instrumental and ensemble program at Aitken College.



Before completing the application process, **thoroughly read through** the contents of this document; making sure that you understand fully the commitment required of your child and the terms and conditions of enrolment.



Have a conversation with your child as to the instrument they might like to learn. When deciding which instrument to choose, you should take into consideration the age, size, interests of your child. As a general guide, please refer to the table on Page 5 'Instruments Available for Tuition'.



Nominate whether you wish to hire an instrument. Hiring an instrument is an affordable option available for Woodwind, Brass and String instruments. Hire is not available for Guitar, Bass Guitar, Piano and Drums, these instruments are strongly encouraged to be purchased for home practice.



Participating in an ensemble is an important part of a child's musical development. Ensembles are available for all instruments. Beginner students are encouraged to develop their skill level and have the opportunity to participate in an introductory ensemble.



Complete the Online Enrolment Application Form, located within the MyAitken site. Late applications will be considered during the school year, however, will only be accepted upon conditions of payment of the relevant fees and if lesson times are available.

PLEASE NOTE:

Applications for tuition are processed at the start of each term. Applications received mid-term will be held over until the commencement of the next term, at which time tuition will commence.

SECTION A: INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Instrumental Music Tutors

Specialised music tutors deliver music lessons to students at Aitken College. Instrumental Music Tutors are dedicated to providing all students with the experience, expertise and care necessary for their ongoing development and growth as musicians. Many of our tutors enjoy productive careers as professional musicians and are well-respected artists, performers and composers within the wider musical community.

Instruments Available for Tuition

Aitken College has a large variety of instruments available for tuition. Tuition is available on woodwind, brass, strings, and contemporary-popular instruments, including classical and contemporary voice. Each instrument has a unique technique and approach, and different physical requirements. Therefore, careful consideration in selecting an instrument is required. For example:

- *Bass guitar: larger scale length than a guitar, requires an amplifier*
- *Alto Saxophone: is smaller than tenor saxophone and requires less air*
- *String Instruments: (Violin, Viola, Cello) come in different sizes (3/4, 1/2, 1/4 etc.) so are suitable for a range of age groups*
- *Percussion Instruments: require space at home for practice*

If you have any questions about specific considerations for an instrument, please discuss these with members of the Aitken College Music Department.

Table 1: Instruments available for tuition

Instrument	Tuition available to students in year levels			Available for Hire
	P to 2	3 to 6	7 to 12	
Woodwind				
Flute	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clarinet	✗	✓	✓	✓
Alto Saxophone	✗	✗	✓	✓
Tenor Saxophone	✗	✗	✓	✓
Brass				
Trumpet	✗	✓	✓	✓
Trombone	✗	✗	✓	✓
Strings				
Violin	✓	✓	✓	✓
Viola	✗	✓	✓	✓
Cello	✗	✗	✓	✓
Contemporary - Popular				
Voice	✓	✓	✓	✗
Piano	✓	✓	✓	✗
Guitar	✗	✓	✓	✗
Bass Guitar	✗	✓	✓	✗
Drumkit	✓	✓	✓	✗
Percussion	✗	✓	✓	✗

Private Instrumental Music Lessons

Enrolment in private instrumental music tuition is on a **term** basis, consisting of an average of **8 lessons per term (or 32 lessons over a full year)**. Fees are payable, in full, at the commencement of each term.

To assist parents and tutors, Aitken College facilitates lesson timetables and provides its premises for the lessons. Correspondence with Instrumental Music Tutors will be made through the Music Coordinator or Performing Arts Administrator and appropriate methods of communication will be organised accordingly.

Instrumental Music Tutors plan lessons for students incorporating a variety of music experiences such as performance, theory, ear training and sight-reading skills; and using standard curriculum and textbooks. Tutors may supply supplemental material of a variety of styles based on students' interest.

All students learning an instrument at school are encouraged to participate in at least one ensemble. Ensemble participation is a great benefit to a student's musical development and is highly recommended if an ensemble that caters to your student is available.

Students are withdrawn from class for half a period (30 minutes) once a week during the school term. Lessons occur on a rotating basis. There is limited availability for fixed before- and after-school times for VCE students. If you require a fixed time, this must be discussed with the Music Coordinator or Performing Arts Administrator. Fixed lesson times are reserved for senior students due to minimising interruptions to learning during VCE years. As such, there are no guarantees for lesson times to be fixed.

Lesson Attendance

Students are expected to attend every lesson unless officially excused, e.g., school activity or illness. Where students are absent due to illness, please give as much advance notice as possible by emailing the Music Coordinator or Performing Arts Administrator. The Music Department must be informed of any absences by **7.30am the morning of the lesson**. Failure to inform a tutor of an absences will result in a marked absence and a make-up lesson will not be owed.

Lessons that are eligible for make-up due to sufficient notice of absence will be organised by the Tutor in conjunction with the Music Coordinator.

Tutors are not expected to make up lessons that students miss through family holidays during school terms or for students forgetting to attend their lesson

Tutors will make every effort to locate students for their scheduled lesson according to the school timetable.

Tutors are also not expected to make up lessons if notification of absence is sent after the daily cut-off time.

From time to time, school tests may clash with a music lesson. Students are still required to attend their scheduled music lesson, negotiating a rescheduling of the test or lesson with the class teacher and tutor. Make up lessons will not be given. Year 12 students doing a SAC are exempt from this; however, they need to notify the instrumental tutor of the time and date of the SAC (at least 2 weeks in advance if possible). If no notification is given, no make-up lesson will be rescheduled.

Students should attend their lesson punctually and be fully prepared with their instrument and all appropriate materials such as their Music Diary and any other resources or sheet music.

When an instrumental music lesson is scheduled midway through an academic lesson, as a matter of courtesy, the student should alert their classroom teacher at the beginning of the lesson that they will be leaving halfway through. Lessons are published via a daily music lesson bulletin on MyAitken site. Tutors also complete an attendance roll.

Students must always make sure that teachers know where they are at all times.

Music Practice Diary/Journal

Students are encouraged to record information regarding their lessons, including lesson times and homework, in a music journal. Tutors expect students to bring their music journal to each lesson.

A music practice journal will be supplied by the College at the beginning of each year and included with first term tuition fee (one off payment of \$8.00). If students start lessons during the year, the music practice journal will be added to the term's billing. If a student loses their diary during the year, they will be provided a new one and charged an additional \$8.00 for the replacement.

Ensemble Participation

Aitken College offers an extensive ensemble program to develop every student's musical ability.

Creating music with others is an exciting experience and rehearsing and performing in small or large groups is an integral part of the music program. Ensemble participation offers students the opportunity to extend their musical skills, develop their organization skills and gain valuable group performance experience.

There is also benefit from the development of their social skills that such groups provide. If they wish, students may participate in more than one ensemble as it provides them with an opportunity to experience a variety of teaching and musical styles. If a student wishes to be involved in more than one musical ensemble, then they should discuss their interest with their Instrumental Music Tutor or Music Coordinator.

All students enrolled in the Instrumental Music Program are strongly encouraged to participate in a musical ensemble. Tutors will nominate a suitable ensemble according to the student's ability and the balance of instruments within an ensemble.

Ensemble Attendance

Ensemble experience is as important as the weekly instrumental lesson and contributes to the musical development of each student. Participation to an ensemble requires ongoing commitment from a student. If the Music Coordinator or an Ensemble Director has concerns about a student's attendance, participation, attitude, or effort in an ensemble then a student may be removed from the ensemble at the Ensemble Director or Music Coordinators discretion.

Ensembles rehearse once a week before school or during lunchtimes. If a student is participating in an ensemble, then students are expected to commit to every ensemble rehearsal and scheduled performances unless officially excused. Students should attend their ensemble rehearsal punctually and be fully prepared with their instrument and music. Students must notify their Ensemble Director at least the day before if they cannot attend any rehearsals for whatever reason. Ongoing or consistent absences will result in parents being contacted and a student being removed from the ensemble.

- It is expected that students arrive before the set starting time to help with the setting up, to warm up their instruments and to prepare for the rehearsal.
- Students are expected to assist the Ensemble Director and to help pack up all equipment at the end of the rehearsal.
- All music is to be kept in the allocated folders. Students are not allowed to take home original music. Students needing practice copies should see their ensemble conductor/director.

Schedule of Fees

All students participating in the Instrumental Music Program at Aitken College are expected to pay fees, levied at the beginning of each term, to cover the tuition and instrument hire (where applicable).

Students wishing to undertake tuition on a woodwind, brass or string instrument who do not currently own an instrument are able to hire an instrument from the College at very reasonable rates.

For more details, please refer to the table below:

Type	\$/Lesson	\$/Term	\$/Year
Individual Private Lessons	\$30.75	\$246.00	\$984.00
Instrument Hire •Woodwind •Brass •Strings	n/a	\$50.00	\$200.00
Practice Journal/Diary	n/a	n/a	\$8.00

Payment of Fees

Instrumental music fees are paid per term, prior to commencement of lessons. Lesson fees are billed separately, and the one-off music diary cost is added to the students' school fees account. When completing an enrolment form, parents/guardians are required to authorize this payment and complete the transaction upon payment of school term fees.

Withdrawal from Lessons

We encourage students to persist with their chosen instrument for at least a year. Learning an instrument can be challenging, however, if a student wishes to cease instrumental lessons, the College must receive notice in writing via a completed **Cancellation of Enrolment** form. Please ensure you have read this document for withdrawal dates. Cancellation of Enrolment forms are available from the Music Faculty. Please contact the Music Administrator to request this form.

Tuition shall cease at the end of the respective term, provided the signed Cancellation of Enrolment form is received by the following dates:

- **Friday 11 March for withdrawal at the end of Term 1, 2023.**
- **Friday 26 May for withdrawal at the end of Term 2, 2023.**
- **Friday 25 August for withdrawal at the end of Term 3, 2023.**
- **Friday 17 November for withdrawal at the end of Term 4, 2023.**

If the Cancellation of Enrolment form is received after the due date, the full-term amount is still payable. Refunds are not able to be processed.

Recitals, Music Events and Examinations

Aitken College offers a rich calendar of performance opportunities for music students. These opportunities include concerts, recitals, showcases and the annual college musical.

Students in the Instrumental Music Program are strongly encouraged to be involved in as many performance opportunities as possible. Performances develop allow students to develop their musical skills and confidence in a professional environment and more opportunities arise from their engagement in these activities. Performances can also be a great opportunity for students to showcase their learning throughout the year in front of the wider school community.

Music recitals may be organised in conjunction with the music tutor. They are a way for students to perform what they are learning in their lessons and provide parents and guardians the opportunity to see their child perform. It gives students a goal to work towards and a way to see a child's progress in the program. Some information about recitals:

- Recitals will run after school.
- ***Music Tutors will host the event and students should introduce themselves and their pieces they are performing.***

AMEB Practical Exams

Students may sit an external exam if they wish. The Australian Music Examination Board (AMEB) exams will be selected at the tutor's discretion. AMEB holds 5 exam sessions spread throughout the year and instrumental music students generally sit the 5th session in October or November.

Additional information about AMEB exams can be found on the Victorian website: www.ameb.unimelb.edu.au

AMEB exams are optional and will incur additional fees. Additional fees will depend on the grade the student is sitting for and whether they will require a piano accompanist. Fees for these examinations, including accompanist fees (if required), are paid directly to the Accounts Department upon receipt of an invoice from the Music Department.

For a student to sit an AMEB exam there should be a clear signed agreement between the parent, the tutor and the student. Parents will receive a notice that their child can be entered for an exam. The form to approve participation should be returned to the Music Faculty.

Accompanists for External Exams e.g., AMEB, VCE or Auditions

The choice of an accompanist is at the discretion of the tutor of each student, and the Music Coordinator.

Students are required to consult with their instrumental tutor and the Music Coordinator for advice, prior to engaging an accompanist.

Students may engage an accompanist or tutor from the College to accompany them for these exams, or they may engage an external accompanist of their choosing at their cost.

It must be stressed that students should engage an accompanist well ahead of their exam or audition and make sure that there is plenty of time to organise adequate rehearsals.

Rehearsals utilising the College accompanist will be arranged at the school.

SECTION B: MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Purchasing an Instrument

Students who play instruments which are not offered as hire instruments are expected to purchase their own instruments for home practice. Instruments will be available for use within the lesson, however; it will not be allowed to be taken home.

If you are purchasing an instrument for the first time, please speak to your child's Instrumental Music Tutor, Music Coordinator, or other Music Department Staff for advice. There are many considerations in purchasing the right instrument for your child and the Music Department is more than happy to offer advice that suits your individual circumstances.

Hire of Instruments

Instruments hired to students are not covered under the College insurance policy. Reasonable care must be taken against the instrument being damaged, lost or stolen.

The hirer is fully liable for the instrument during the hire period and loss or damage of the instrument during this period will incur full replacement costs.

We recommend that parents consider insurance for loss or theft. It is highly recommended that parents register the instrument with their insurance provider.

The following conditions apply to the hiring of all Aitken College instruments:

1. An Online Instrumental Hire application form must be completed before an instrument can be hired for the year. The Instrumental Music Tutor and Music Coordinator will assign the hired instrument to the student.
2. The annual hire fee must be paid to the Accounts Department before taking the instrument home. This payment covers ongoing maintenance, reasonable wear and tear of the instrument and allows for the replacement of older instruments.
3. Students must return an Aitken College instrument to the Music Department in person immediately after cessation of lessons or a holding payment will be charged.
4. Any repairs necessary due to damage caused through negligence must be paid for by the hirer. **On no account may the student or any person attempt repairs or adjustments to the instrument.** Any repair necessary due to damage caused through the student's negligence must be paid for by the hirer. Any damage or defects to the instrument must be brought to the attention of the Music Faculty staff immediately.

5. All accessories such as reeds and strings must be replaced and paid for by the hirer if necessary.
6. When at school, the instrument must be stored in the student's homeroom (Prep-Year 9).
7. No person, other than the student or their tutor, may be allowed to play or handle the instrument.
8. At the end of the hire period the instrument must be returned to the Music Faculty personally, in clean condition and in good working order. Failure to do so will result in additional maintenance or cleaning fees.

All instrument cases should be clearly labelled with the student's name and contact details and a record kept of the instrument's serial number.

SECTION C: PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

What parents can do to help

Parents and friends are welcome to attend all College Music Events, from the small-scale recitals to major events such as the College Musical. Sharing in the performances your child is involved with adds immeasurably to their experiences in the Performing Arts.

Supporting home practice is vital for the success of all students. Here are some hints on taking the “pain out practice”.

Establish a regular practice routine:

- Where practical, it is helpful if the student does not have to put their instrument away in its case between practice sessions. Most orchestral instruments can be left assembled.
- For many instruments, including woodwind and brass instruments, instrument stands (not sheet music stands) can be purchased allowing instruments to be left out.
- Encourage mini-performances at home to family and friends.
- Where possible create an area for practice in your home and, importantly, a music stand makes all the difference.
- Practice must be daily and consistent to take full benefit of the tuition. Finding a regular window of time, such as immediately after school, or before or after dinner, helps when establishing such a routine

PLEASE NOTE:

- It is much better to practice for a small amount of time every day, rather than to have one or two big practices each week.
- Students should have a music stand and stable chair, in a quiet place without electronic distractions such as TV, radio, mobile.

SECTION D: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Can my child take part in the Instrumental Music Ensemble Program even though they learn music outside of the school?**
Yes! Participation in the Instrumental Music Ensemble Program is open to all students at Aitken College.
- **When do the ensembles start?**
Ensembles generally start in week 2 or 3 of Term 1.
- **Can we choose the ensemble in which my child participates?**
Ensemble participation is at the discretion of the Ensemble Director and Music Coordinator. Students will be assessed by a music teacher to ascertain the most suitable ensemble for them to participate in and asked to attend a rehearsal.
- **Can my child learn more than one instrument?**
Yes, students may learn more than one instrument.
- **If my child learns an instrument, including voice, at school, do they have to participate in an ensemble?**
We strongly encourage this. This is an essential part of the music student's development and an integral part of the Music Program.

SECTION E: SCHEDULES

Timetables

Timetables will be emailed out to parents at the start of each term. Lesson times must be recorded to ensure students bring instruments and tutorial materials to scheduled lessons. These weekly lesson dates and times should be transferred to the student's diary or iPad calendar, the family calendar and any other place to assist students to remember lesson times and dates. Posted timetables should be consulted regularly through the week for changes.

Lesson timetables are posted on MyAitken Daily Music Bulletin and are updated throughout the term. Any updates are also emailed out throughout the term. Parents and students should check emails and MyAitken regularly to be aware of the current version of the timetable.

Please be aware that the timetable is of utmost importance for the school community and as such, tremendous care is given to the organization of it. Therefore, once the timetable is finalised, changes can only be made under consideration from the Music Coordinator.

Notices and Schedules

Students are encouraged to check the Student Bulletin on My Aitken regularly for rehearsal, concert, and performance information. Updates to timetables are also sent to parents via email from the Music Administrator.

Music Events are advertised through the school website.

All notices regarding excursions, workshops etc. will be distributed at ensemble rehearsals. Further copies of missed notices or information regarding excursions can be downloaded from My Aitken.

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