

# Song Appraisal Guide

Thank you for choosing to give song feedback to our students. Please read this guide thoroughly.

## Platform

We use a ticketing platform called Happy Fox for our appraisals. We'll set you up as a mentor on the platform and you will be notified automatically.

Kristian, our Student Support Manager, will contact you to guide you through how to use the platform.

You can reach Kristian at [support@thesongwritingacademy.co.uk](mailto:support@thesongwritingacademy.co.uk)

## How will you receive the demos?

You will be assigned an appraisal ticket from Happy Fox which will be submitted by the student as a form/checklist, including a link to their song and lyric (e.g. SoundCloud/Disco etc.).

The form is a checklist they have been asked to fill in so they are aware of the sort of things we will be looking for in their song e.g. song length, structure, hooks etc. The idea behind this is to teach them to think about songs the way professional writers do.

When you have listened to the song you will reply on the Happy Fox platform.

## General

### Time

As a guideline, appraisals should take an average 20-30 minutes to complete.

### **Format for your reply**

Appraisals are written as a reply to the ticket on Happy Fox. If you prefer to record yourself talking it through and/or offering musical changes then you simply attach the audio file to the ticket reply.

### **Broad strokes or fine details?**

If a song needs a great deal of work and there are many key issues with the composition, give the writer a slightly more 'broad stroke' approach in the appraisal, rather than feeling you have to go into the minutiae. i.e. Let's 'fix' the big things first!

In contrast, if a song is 'nearly there' those final subtle changes will be all that is needed, so dive in with the nuances.

Either way please be thorough with your appraisal, so the student has feels well equipped to advance their work, whatever stage it is at.

### **Demo recording quality**

For the song appraisals we ask students to send in *basic demos*, so we can hear the bare bones ideas of lyric, melody and chords. This prevents them spending valuable time and/or money fully recording something which often is not ready to go.

We have a separate category for production appraisals which are more highly polished and where the mentor focusses on the recording quality more than the song.

Please don't assess their playing/singing when this is clearly not a demo for pitching. Many of our students are not artists, producers or performers. Our job is to 'hear' the raw song.

There is a section on their appraisal checklist where they can choose to let you know what they are hearing for the final record, or which artists the song might be aimed at.

## Rights and ownership

Please be aware that, as a mentor, if you offer specific lyrical, melodic or harmonic changes to the song, this will not give you co-writer status or rights. We're here to help the student so its up to you how far you go with your suggestions. The song will always be 100% the copyright of the student(s).

## Guidelines on how to write the appraisal

Here are our guidelines of the areas to include in your appraisal, although the order and delivery method is entirely your choice.

### First Appraisal

£30 per song

- Structure
  - An outline of what works structurally e.g. do you really want 15 verses to this song?"
  - Timing of the sections of the song e.g. "You might want to reconsider your first chorus coming in at 2min 59sec..."
- Lyrics
- Music
  - Melody
  - Harmonic content
- The Feels
  - Overarching feel of the song; the balance and general vibe of the composition.

### Second Appraisal

£15 per song

Once you have completed your appraisal, the student has the option to submit a second version of the song which will come back to you. As this is more of a 'tweaking' of the first song and will be less comprehensive, the fee is £15.

## Important Information

**We pay mentors for a maximum of first and second song appraisal per song. Please do not request further submissions from the student and try not be enticed into further discussions with the student after the second appraisal.**

## Invoicing

Please send your invoice to [songwritingacademy@receiptbank.me](mailto:songwritingacademy@receiptbank.me)  
Invoices are paid in the first week of each month

Many thanks for being such a valuable part of the TSA team!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marta x". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a small 'x' at the end.