



Your guide to getting the most out of your **Platinum year**

Welcome to your Platinum year with The Songwriting Academy

Whatever level you've joined at, you've got an amazing time ahead of you. We've put together this nifty guide to help you navigate your way around everything the TSA has to offer and hit the ground running.

1. You get out what you put in

We've had some incredible successes among our students, whether they were on Lite, Plus, or Elite. The one thing which unites them all is their willingness to put in the work. Ultimately, the best mentor in the world won't be able to support you launch an amazing career if you haven't got any songs to your name!

- Set aside some time to regularly work on your music. It doesn't matter whether it's half an hour every day or all day every Saturday.
- Look at your schedule and block out some time to write. Make it **non-negotiable**.

You're a songwriter now and the one thing songwriters do is write songs!

2. Treat your music like a business

People have different goals when they join the program. Some have never written a song and would just like some help to get started. Others would like to start



monetising their music. Then there are those who are already making money from their music but want to take it to the next level.

Even if making money from your songs isn't a high priority for you, you still need to treat the program as seriously as if it were your job.

- Get clear on your goals. Your induction session will help with this.
- Take time out once a month or once a quarter to review your goals.
- Track your personal progress so you can identify where there are areas which need more support and then book a session with an appropriate mentor to tackle any problems before they get in the way of your progress.

3. Network like there's no tomorrow

One of the most important skills when it comes to your music is being able to build connections. People do business with people. People write songs with people they share common ground with.

There are a number of opportunities for you to work on your networking skills and build your team, even if you're the world's biggest introvert (like so many musicians are)!

Networking with mentors

It's very tempting to want to meet ALL the mentors. After all, we've got some incredible names on the faculty and every single one of them wants to see you succeed.



Booking sessions with all the mentors and flitting about from one to the next doesn't give you the chance to make meaningful connections.

We advise you take a more targeted approach:

Platinum Lite

- You have one session a month. We recommend you choose between 1-3 mentors who can support your journey.
- We suggest you then cycle between your chosen group of mentors so you see them on a regular basis and can discuss your progress with them at each meeting.

This will help you build a strong relationship with your mentor(s) which will help you progress faster.

Platinum Plus

- You have two sessions a month. We recommend you choose between 1-4 mentors who can support your journey.
- We suggest you use one of your two monthly sessions to cycle between these mentors and the other to meet up with other mentors who you feel would add value to your journey depending on your current work in progress.
- We would still recommend you keep these additional mentors to a minimum to help build closer ties, so you end up with seeing around 8-12 mentors in total.



This will support you to develop good relationships with your mentor(s) so you progress faster.

Platinum Elite

- You have four sessions a month. We recommend you choose between 1-4 mentors who can support your journey.
- We suggest you use two of your monthly sessions to cycle between these mentors and the other two to meet up with other mentors who you feel can bring something extra to your current projects/focus.
- We would still recommend you keep these extra mentors to a minimum to help develop closer ties, so you end up with seeing around 12-16 mentors in total.

All levels

- We'd also advise you review where you're at around halfway through your program. As you learn more about yourself and your music, your needs are likely to change, and it may be that different mentors would be a better fit for you as you progress.
- Use all your sessions, even if you don't have a specific song to discuss. Sometimes, just having a conversation can help you feel closer to a mentor, build your network, and come up with all sorts of interesting ideas that will make their way into the next song!



Feel free to reach out to our bookings manager at bookings@thesongwritingacademy.co.uk for advice on how to choose which mentors would be best suited to your needs.

Networking with other TSA students

Since we interview every student before accepting them on to the program, we know what a talented lovely bunch you are. There are many friends waiting for you to discover them in the TSA.

We are constantly examining ways we can support our students to network with each other. The songwriting industry is founded on collaboration and the more people you collaborate with, the better. You can't have too much collaboration! Have we mentioned the importance of collaboration..?

- **The Hub** offers you the perfect way to connect with other students who you feel you have something in common with. Use the search function to find people who seem to be on your wavelength and invite them for a Zoom coffee. (This is where you spend 10-15 minutes on Zoom just getting to know each other to see if you'd like to collaborate.)
- Don't be shy – this is what the Hub's for. We're all here to meet other musicians and if someone doesn't have space in their diary, there's always plenty of other people who'd love to meet you!
- Ask your **mentors** if they know of anyone who would be a good collaborator for you. Since they meet many students, they'll have a good idea of personalities and writing styles, so may have some great recommendations.



- Come to **PlatChats**. The first hour is dedicated to getting to know your fellow students. The more breakout rooms you go into, the more you'll start seeing familiar faces and the more you'll start realising just how many friends you've made – and you didn't even know it!
- Don't be afraid to comment in the chat box of PlatChats and masterclasses to find your next collaborator. Masterclasses usually have an assignment and what better way to connect with future writing partners than to ask during the live class if someone wants to work with you?
- PlatChats are geared towards collaboration and connection, so get into the habit of sharing your contact details there – your Instagram handle is a good place to start if you're not yet comfortable giving out your email address.

4. Breathe...

A year is a long time. Don't feel you have to do every masterclass and every assignment or meet your appraisal quota every month.

- This is a journey. Use what you need when you need it, relax, and you'll enjoy your time with us so much more.
- **The library** - If you have a spare moment, go back and watch an earlier masterclass that is relevant to you, but don't feel you have to watch everything in the library. You'll get so much more from a targeted approach than from trying to Do All The Things.



- **Song appraisals** - Write at your own pace and submit the songs which you feel are worth developing rather than trying to hit a number just so you can use all your appraisals. Quality over quantity every time!
- **Mindset coaching** - You can always book a session with one of our mentors who specialise in mindset to help you gain perspective. Remember – you're always making progress if you're doing something every day towards your goals.

For example:

- Watch a masterclass
- Look at the assignments and work on one which inspires you.
- Contact a potential collaborator and get writing.
- Write a first draft by yourself and bring it to a mentor for input.

Just do something!

5. Have fun!

This is the first rule...

The TSA really is a family, and we want you to know you're one of us. We're always here for you. We'll celebrate your wins and support you through hard times. The more fun you have, the better music you make – and the greater your chances of achieving and exceeding your goals by the end of the year. Enjoy!

Martin x