

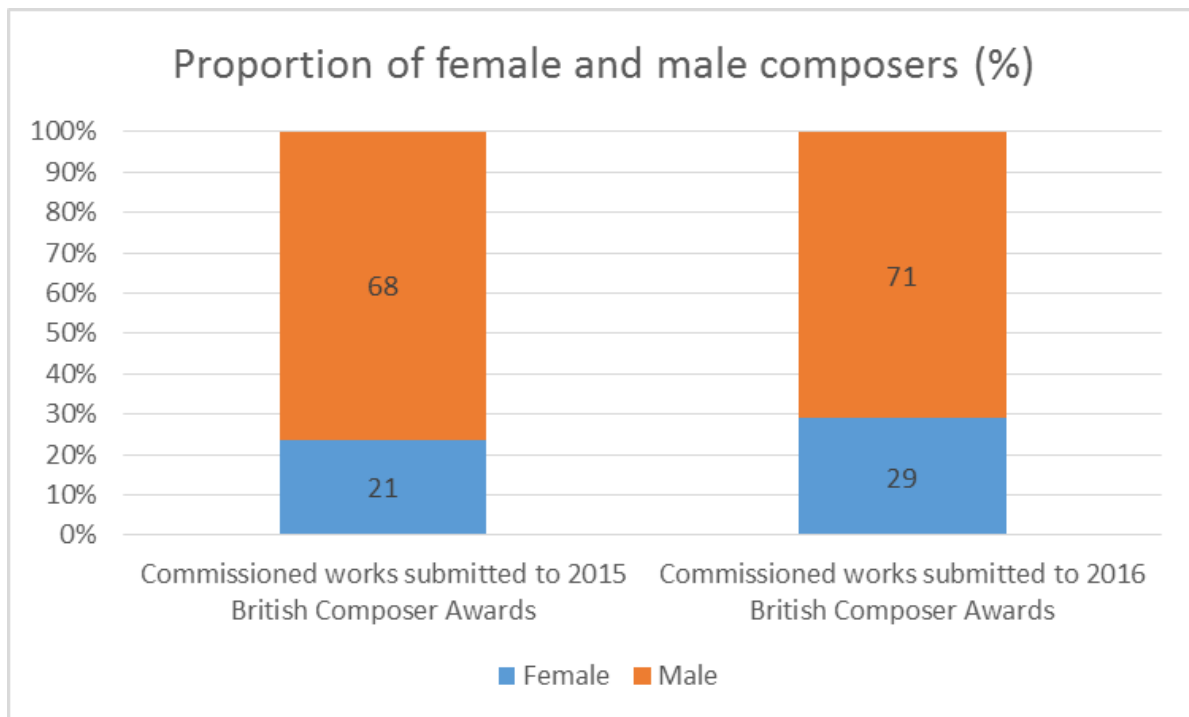
Equality & Diversity in new music commissioning – updated report from 2016 British Composer Awards entries

In 2016 BASCA published a report on equality & diversity in new music commissioning, comparing demographics of those studying composition and applying for professional development schemes for composers with those receiving new music commissions. The data for the new music commissions was taken from 299 commissioned works which were submitted to the British Composer Awards.

We made two major changes to the submission process for the British Composer Awards in 2016. From 2003-2015 anyone could nominate a work except the composer themselves; in 2016 we opened nominations to everyone, including the composer. And in 2016 for the first time, judging in 8 out of the 11 categories was undertaken anonymously with composers' names removed.

We received the same number of submissions to the British Composer Awards in 2016 as in 2015, but a slightly higher number of them were commissions (325 compared to 299) and some of the demographics were significantly different.

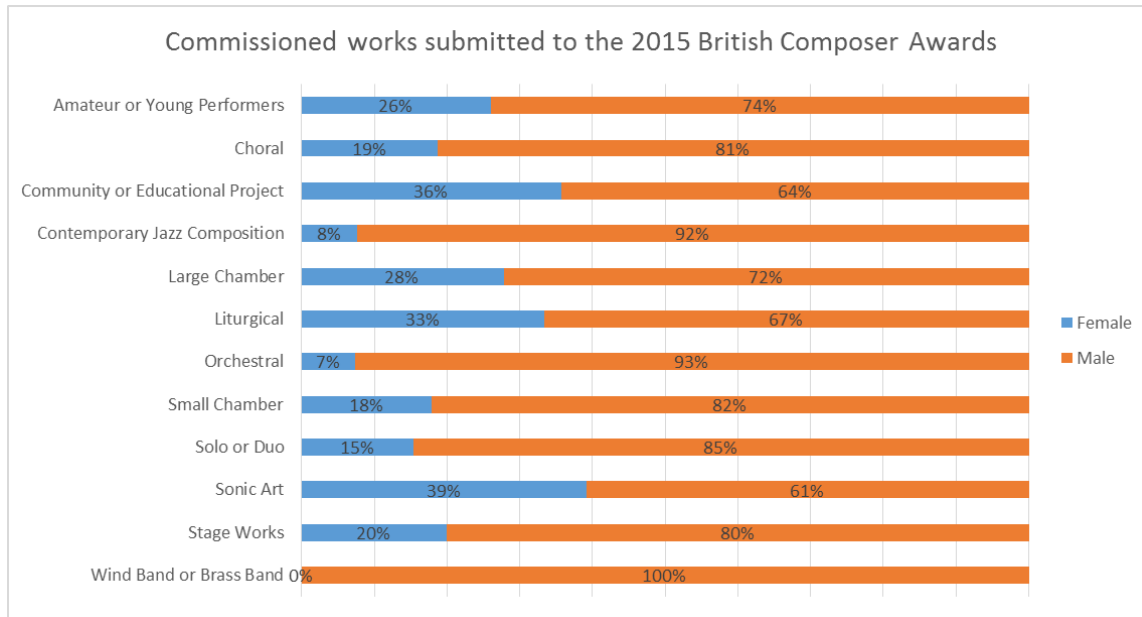
Our findings: gender

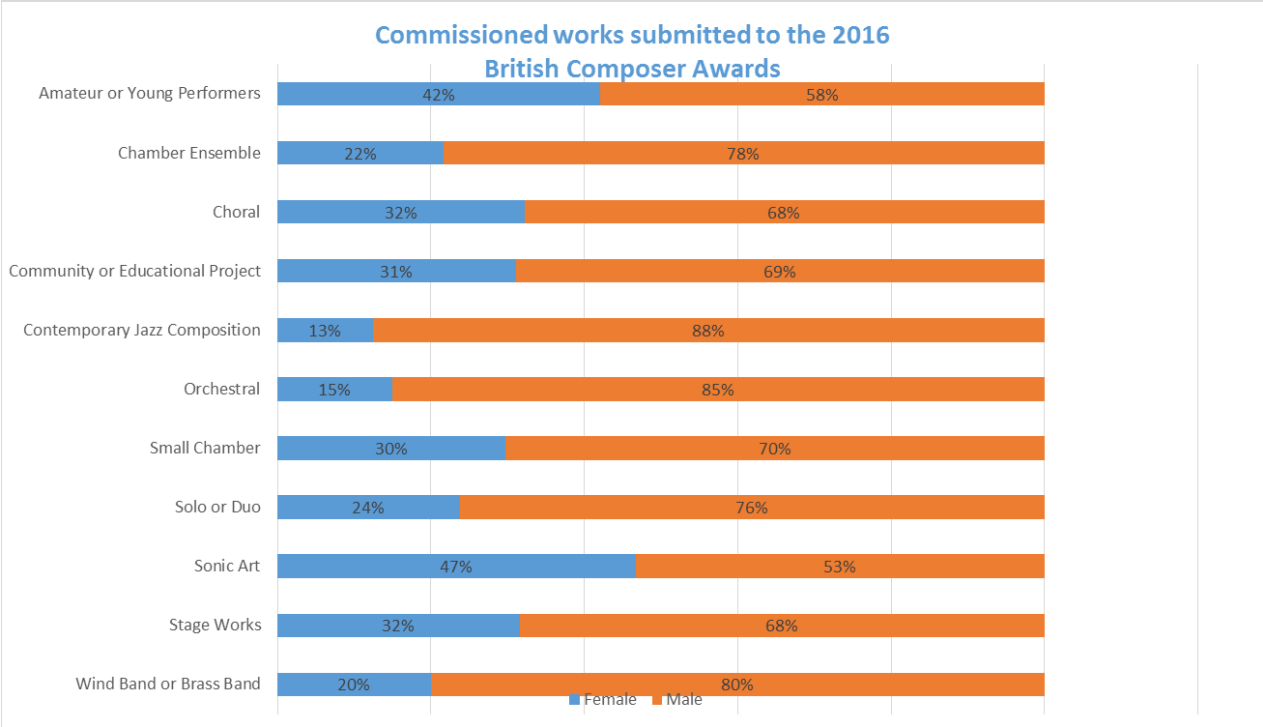


In 2015, just 21% of commissioned works were by female composers. In 2016, this was 29%. We believe that allowing composers to nominate their own works may have encouraged more

works by women to be submitted by removing the barrier of feeling awkward about asking someone to nominate on your behalf.

In 2015, the proportion of female and male composers varied with the category pieces were entered in. Comparing 2015 with 2016 isn't comparing like-with-like because the number of categories was reduced and some works were re-categorised; for example, in 2016 works for choir and orchestra went into the Orchestral rather than Choral category. However a similar pattern still emerges.

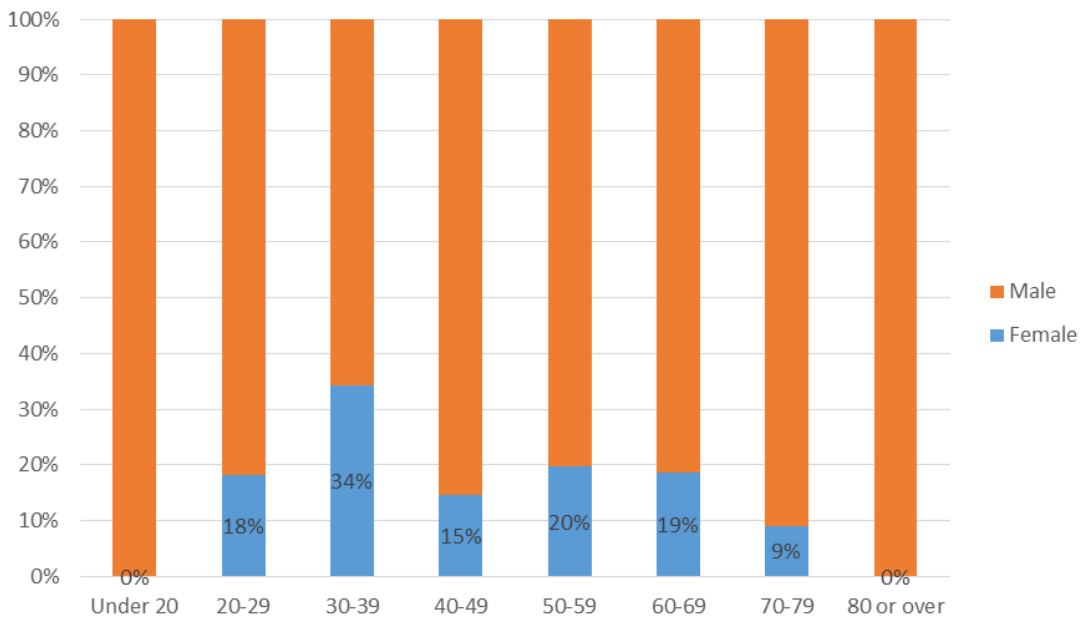




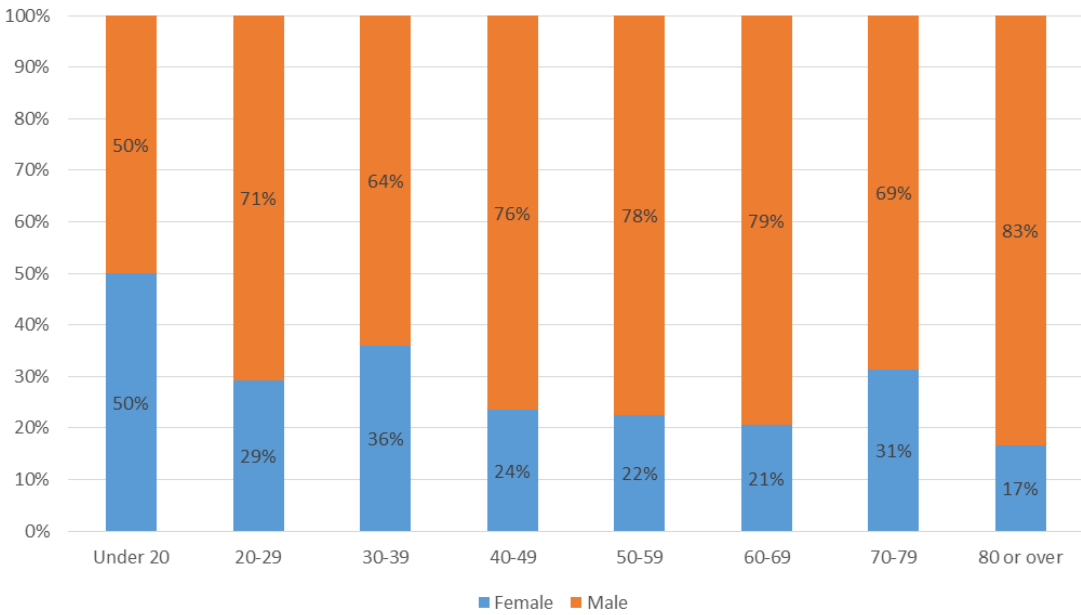
Women were still most likely to receive commissions for works for Amateur or Young Performers, Community or Educational Projects and works of Sonic Art and least likely to receive Orchestral, Jazz or Wind Band or Brass Band commissions. Orchestral commissions by female composers rose from 7% in 2015 to 15% in 2016, but this is still much lower than the proportion of women studying composition and the overall proportion of female commissioned composers.

In 2015, the age group with the highest proportion of female composers was 30-39 in which 34% of commissioned composers were female. However in the 20s age group the proportion was no higher than 40s, 50s and 60s. Although the overall proportion of female commissioned composers was higher in 2016, the same pattern emerges in that the age group with the highest proportion of commissioned composers is 30-39, if we discount the under 20's with only two representative commissions. We certainly don't see a pattern of commissions being more equal amongst the younger generation.

Age and gender of commissioned composers (2015)



Age and gender of commissioned composers (2016)



Our findings: Ethnicity

In 2016, where ethnicity was known, 293 (93%) of composers were white and 22 (7%) were BAME. This compares with 94% white and 6% BAME in 2015 and 86%/14% in the UK population as a whole according to the 2011 Census.

Composer Ethnicity	Number of commissioned works submitted to 2016 British Composer Awards	Number of commissioned works submitted to 2015 British Composer Awards
Asian or Asian British – (Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi)	1	1
Black or Black British	5	3
Chinese	1	1
Other (including mixed)	10	11
Other Asian background	5	3
White	293	275
Total	315	294

The figures are very similar in 2016 to 2015. The changes which were made to the awards in 2016 which effected the number of works received by female composers did not affect the number of works received by BAME composers.

The age profile of works by white vs. BAME composers (where both ethnicity and age were known) was as follows:

Ethnicity of composers of commissioned works in each age group (2016)

Age	BAME	White	Grand Total
Under 20		2	2
20-29	7	38	45
30-39	6	82	88
40-49	5	66	71
50-59	2	48	50
60-69	2	32	34
70-79		16	16
80 or over		6	6
Grand Total	22	290	312

Again, the results are similar to those seen in 2015.

Our findings: Disability

The demographics questions on the submission form for the 2016 British Composer Awards included a new question “Does the composer consider themselves to have a disability?”

This question was answered for 298 commissioned works, of which 7 were by composers who considered themselves to have a disability (2.35%). Of these, all were aged between 20 and 49.

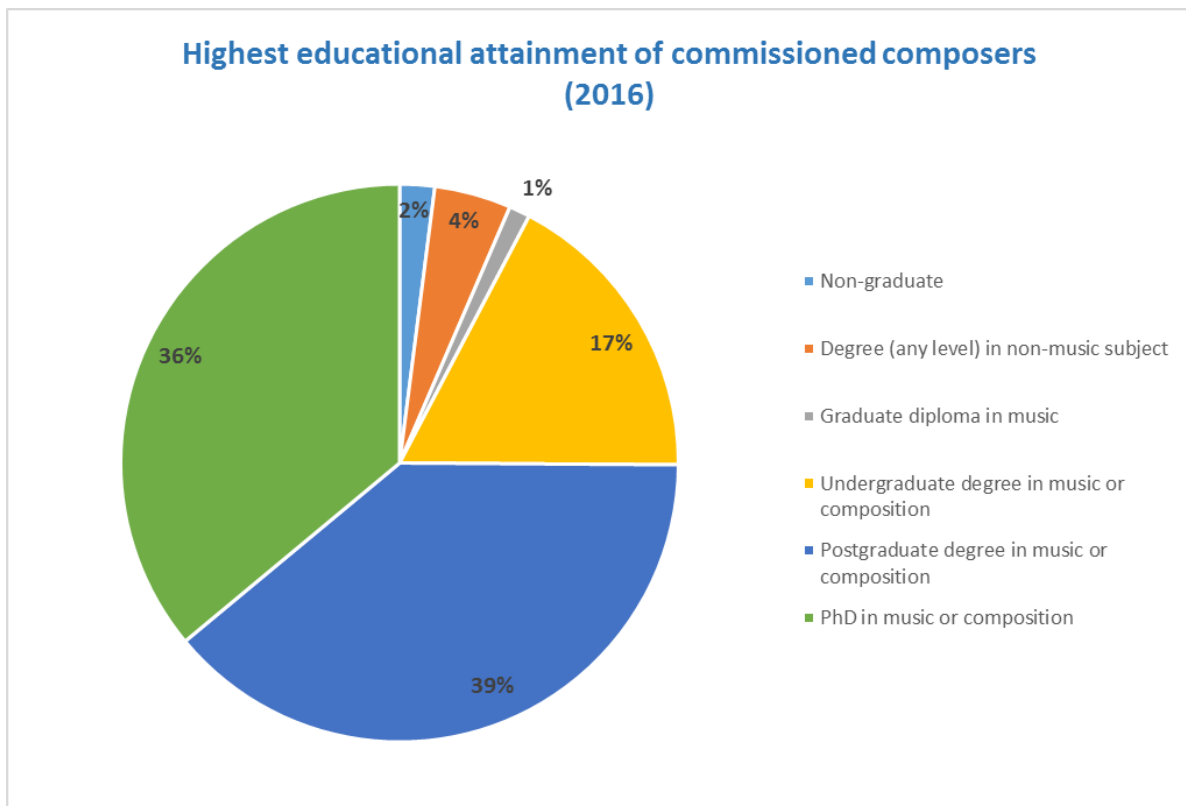
According to the UK government Office for Disability Issues and Department for Work and Pensions, 5.7% of adults of working age have a disability.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/disability-facts-and-figures>

A number of factors are likely to affect the likelihood of people with disabilities becoming professional composers. They may include direct limitations caused by disability, access to higher education, financial considerations and opportunities to engage in networking and self-promotion. Further research is required to investigate these factors.

Our findings: Educational background

In 2015 we asked nominators what the composer's highest educational attainment was.



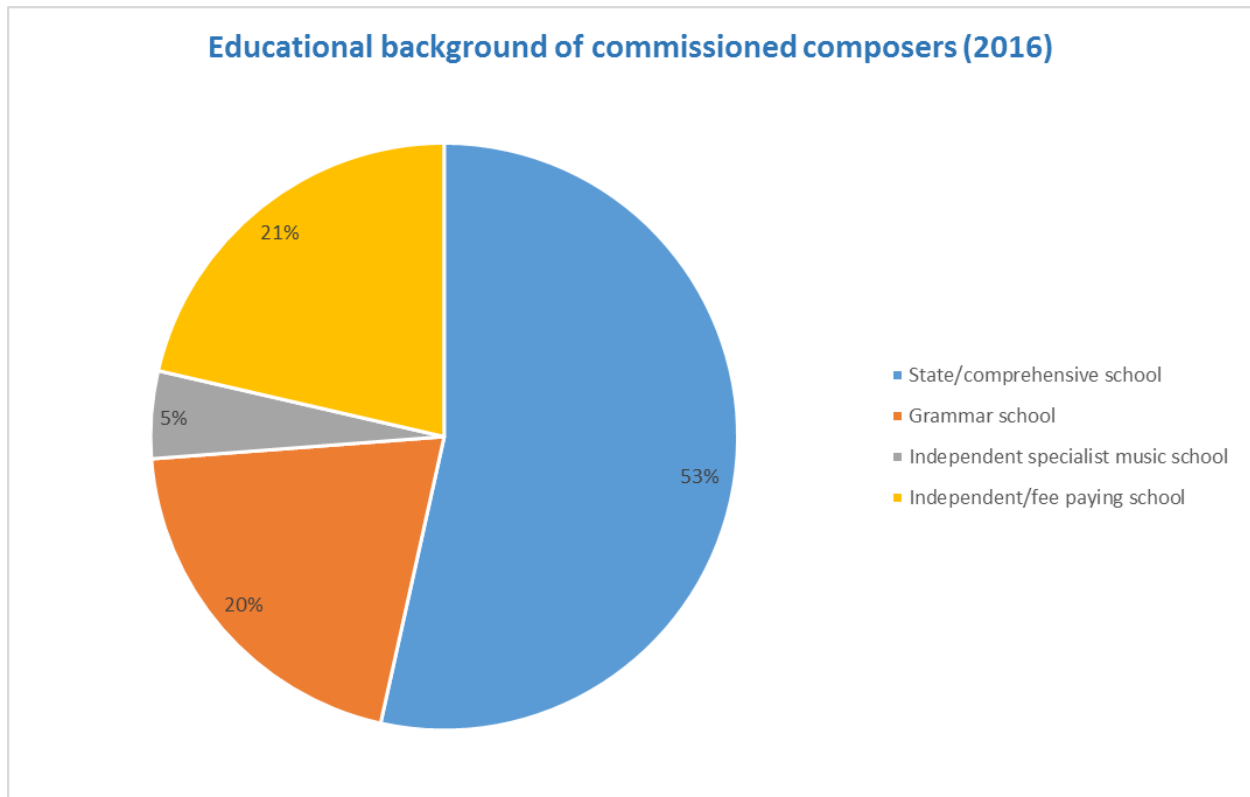
Compared with 2015:

Highest educational attainment of commissioned composers in 2015 and 2016:

	2015	2016
Non-graduate	3%	2%
Degree (any level) in non-music subject	5%	4%
Graduate diploma in music	4%	1%
Undergraduate degree in music or composition	19%	17%
Postgraduate degree in music or composition	41%	39%
PhD in music or composition	28%	36%

In 2016, more commissioned composers were holders of PhDs. All other categories are slightly lower. This could be due to the self-nomination of composers providing more accurate data; nominators might not necessarily know that a composer has a PhD.

For the first time in 2016 we asked what type of school composers attended at age 16. Answers were received from 192 composers, of whom 5 were educated overseas. Of the remaining 187:



If we include independent specialist music schools, 26% of commissioned composers attended independent schools at age 16. According to the [Independent Schools Council Annual Census 2016](#), just under 14% of 16-year-olds attend independent schools in the UK.