

External Engagements – Notes to performers

Public performances are a key part of a musician's development. The RNCM has long-standing links with numerous music clubs and choral societies both in the North West and further afield. The Professional Engagements team acts as an agency, liaising with senior academic staff in order to match the most suitable performers to a wide range of external professional engagements. Details of eligibility for and entry onto the External List are given in the Student Information Handbook. This document contains useful information about external engagements that you need to know.

21/22: Given that the national and regional restrictions can change rapidly, our priority is of course the health, safety and wellbeing of all involved. As professional engagement staff continue to mainly work from home, any External List application can be done digitally and authorised by your tutor, ensemble's coach or Head of School via email.

Offering the engagement

When a promoter contacts us asking for musicians, we first obtain recommendations of suitable performers from the Head of the appropriate School of Study. If you have been recommended for an engagement we will contact you. We will ring or email first to check your availability, and if you confirm you are available, we will create an offer form for you. Engagements are only offered on the condition you are not needed in any College activity, including rehearsals. Please note that **offers remain provisional until absence request forms have been signed** by the Orchestras office or the relevant Head of School. We will produce absence request forms for you.

Offer Forms

Offer forms will be sent to you via email. We need written confirmation from you that you are able to do the engagement, and we also need an approval from your tutor and authorisation from the Head of School to confirm that you have their permission. This can all be done via email. We cannot contract any engagement until we have received email confirmation from both your tutor and Head of School, so these are very important – **if we do not hear from you by the date specified on the form, we may offer the engagement to somebody else.**

Contracts

When we have received the offer form from you, we will then send a booking form and an invoice to the promoter for them to sign and return. We will send a copy of the booking form, along with Performers' Instructions (which you should read carefully – it is **your responsibility to call or email the promoter well in advance to check details**) and a Health and Safety checklist, to you via email.

Biographies and Programmes

Promoters usually require biographical details some time before the concert, in order to publicise it. Please provide an up-to-date biography and a suitable publicity photo when returning your application form.

We will not be able to offer you any external engagements without this information.

Biographies may be edited according to the promoter's requirements. If we already have a biography for you on file, we will use that one unless you supply a more up-to-date one by the specified date on your offer form.

Photographs should be supplied in electronic format as the majority of promoters ask for them to be emailed.

Programmes should be set out clearly, and **must include full details:**

- Full title of piece, including key and opus number
- Titles of movements
- Opera / oratorio from which piece is taken
- Composer
- Arranger
- Any other relevant information

Payment

We allow promoters seven days from the date of the engagement in which to forward payment to us. Upon receipt of this, we aim to process your fee by BACS transfer within ten working days. **Cheques are no longer being issued** so it is imperative that you provide your bank details, by using a form that can be downloaded from Moodle.

Travel expenses should be paid directly to performers by the promoter on the day of the engagement. Travel expenses are calculated from Manchester unless special arrangements have been agreed.

The rate of commission deducted from fees is 15% for current students and those who have graduated within the last two years, and 10% thereafter. The fee we state when first offering an engagement is **pre-commission**.

Contact Details

For ease of communication your telephone number and email address will be given to the promoter. If you do not wish us to do this, please tick the appropriate box on your offer form.

If you change your contact details (especially telephone number), please let us know – you may miss out on work if we can't contact you!

Deps Procedure

Deps are not normally acceptable. If you have a valid reason for providing a dep, you **must** discuss it with us beforehand, as any personnel changes have to be authorised by the Head of the relevant School.

Engagement release

Engagements are usually organised a long time in advance, in order for contracts to be signed, publicity to be arranged, and so on. Once you have signed for an engagement, you are committed to fulfilling it. **Only in absolutely exceptional circumstances will a request for release from an engagement be considered.** After permission has been verbally granted, a form must be filled in and signed by the student, tutor, and Head of School.

International Students - Visa Restrictions

International students on Tier 4 visas can only legally perform outside of College if this has been organised through the Professional Engagements department as a work placement. (If the project is being run by the RNCM, this does not apply). If you are on a Tier 4 visa you **MUST NOT** perform in public unless you have been contracted to do so through the Professional Engagements office. This applies to paid and unpaid performance opportunities and also affects conductors.

If you have been offered a performance of any sort, please come and discuss this with us at the first opportunity, no later than a fortnight before the date of the engagement. Wherever possible we handle your contracts for you.

If you undertake professional performance work that has not been organised through the RNCM you will be breaking the conditions of your visa.

If you are at all unsure about a public performance that you have been offered please come and discuss it with us.

It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand exactly which forms of work you are allowed to undertake and how many hours you are allowed to work each week. **It is extremely important that you follow the UK Border Agency rules and restrictions for your visa.** You can get further advice from the Registry Office.

Questions / problems?

If you have any questions or problems about any aspect of the external engagement procedure, or anything to do with an engagement, please come to the Programming/Professional Engagements Office (Room 219).

Amy Whitehead (Professional Engagements Manager) on ext. 352 or at amy.whitehead@rncm.ac.uk