

RNCM Orchestras & Ensembles: 2023-2024

RNCM
ROYAL NORTHERN
COLLEGE of MUSIC

Orchestras & Ensembles Projects at the RNCM

The RNCM Orchestras & Ensembles programme is unique both in its range and quality and provides students with many opportunities through which to learn and develop skills essential to a future performing career in music.

Projects range from single-instrument ensembles right through to Symphony Orchestras and fully staged Operas. The O&E team are also responsible for many of the RNCM's Chamber Music projects. There will therefore be a wide range of O&E projects and opportunities throughout the 23/24 Academic Year. To enable projects to run smoothly please check your RNCM emails regularly, as this is the main way that we will contact you.

Ensembles vary in size, genre of music played, length of rehearsal period and can be internal (with no public audience) or, more often than not, public with an audience. Occasionally, there are also opportunities to perform 'side-by-side' with professional ensembles, and also perform in venues outside of the RNCM in Manchester, across the UK, and further afield internationally. The Orchestras & Ensembles projects we normally run are listed below:

PERFORMANCE PROJECTS (PUBLIC)

ARKEnsemble
Big Band
Brand New Orchestra
Brass Band
Brass Ensemble
Chamber Choir
Chamber Orchestra
Concert Orchestra
MIUAWGA Ensemble
New Ensemble
Opera Orchestra
Session Orchestra
String Ensemble
String Orchestra
Symphony Orchestra
Wind Orchestra

WORKSHOP PROJECTS (INTERNAL)

Brand New Projects (ARKEnsemble, Brass Band, Chamber Choir, Composers' Ensemble, Sax Ensemble, String Ensemble)
Conducting Exams
Off-Beat Lab
Repertoire Orchestra
Wind/Wind and Brass Repertoire

Orchestras & Ensembles Team Contact Details

If you have any queries or are looking for some advice with anything Orchestras & Ensembles related, please contact a member of the Orchestras & Ensembles Team via the contact details below. The O&E team are based on-site and the O&E Office and Ensembles Library doors are regularly open (9-5, Tue-Fri), so if you are not sure who the best person is to speak to about a particular project or issue, just come along to the O&E office and a member of a team can direct you to the right person to speak with. The O&E team are always happy to discuss any queries so please don't hesitate to get in touch!

Andrew Bayly

Head of Ensembles

email: andrew.bayly@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 376

mobile: 07717 577851

Amy Gordon

Orchestras and Ensembles Manager (School of Strings)

email: amy.gordon@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 284

mobile: 07739 944763

Charlotte Ferry

Orchestras and Ensembles Manager (School of Wind, Brass and Percussion)

email: charlotte.ferry@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 418

mobile: 07887 990472

Edgar Divver

Orchestras and Ensembles Assistant Manager

email: edgar.divver@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 384

mobile: 07436 157058

Abby Flood

Ensembles Administrator

Email: abigail.flood@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 275

mobile: 07976 556983

Amy Brown

Ensembles Librarian

email: amy.brown@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 249

mobile: 07739 944760

Jack Grime

Chamber Music and Conducting Administrator

Email: jack.grime@rncm.ac.uk

tel: 0161 9075 463

mobile: 07976 563395

How does it all work?

Notification

Students are given notification of personnel lists, rehearsal schedules and updates – these will be via your college email and the RNCM Orchestras & Ensembles Noticeboards. All students have an RNCM email account set up and are required to check it regularly. The O&E Noticeboards are located outside the Concert Hall (opposite the Percussion Studio) and beside the Orchestra Office. Players are required to attend all rehearsals, concerts and recordings associated with each project.

Music

Parts for all O&E projects are usually available at least two weeks before the first rehearsal. **All students** are expected to prepare their individual parts in advance of the first rehearsal. If possible, you should take your part to your teacher, particularly when you have a solo. For string students, outside desk players will normally play from library material (“real parts”), while practice copies are available to inside desk players.

When you are given music by a member of the O&E team, **YOU** are responsible for its condition and safe return at the end of use. At the end of the final concert music should **ONLY** be left on the stand or handed back to a member of the O&E team. Late return or loss of music will incur a fine. All parts should be brought to all rehearsals. In the event of absence from a rehearsal for any reason, music must be sent into RNCM as early as possible for the use of a desk partner or a dep (it is not your responsibility to find a dep).

Absence Requests

A properly completed Absence Request Form must be submitted, via email, to OandE@rncm.ac.uk for **all** absences from college during term time, **whether they clash with a project or not, including weekend and evening absences**. Absence Request Forms can be downloaded from Moodle via the O&E page:

<https://moodle.rncm.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=520>

Illness

If you are unwell and need to miss a rehearsal you **must inform a member of the O&E team via phone call** before the start of the rehearsal. If there is no answer, please text and someone will get in contact. Marking yourself absent on ASIMUT **is not acceptable** for O&E projects. This is in line with professional practice. In some cases, absence through illness may affect your involvement in a project.

Student Requests

Students may make a request (either to their Head of School, or to a member of the Orchestras & Ensembles team) to be involved in a particular project or concert, and where possible these requests will be accommodated. However, there is no guarantee that a request will result in an allocation, and requests will not be granted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Feedback / Comments

If you have any feedback regarding allocations, you are encouraged to talk to your Head of School or any member of the Orchestras & Ensembles team, and your comments will be treated confidentially. If you feel unable to talk to a member of staff, please contact a member of the Students' Union. You may also make a request via your Head of School to see the spreadsheets which show the allocations for all ensembles, for all students.

Feedback (both positive and constructive) for all projects is also strongly encouraged – we have a project feedback form which can be accessed via the link below, so please do submit your opinions on all O&E projects to make your voice heard:

[Project Feedback \(rncm.ac.uk\)](https://www.rncm.ac.uk/project-feedback)

RNCM O&E Concert Dress Code

The RNCM O&E concert dress code is designed to reflect professional engagements as well as college activity and reflects wider professional practice. The three types of usual concert dress are listed below:

Smart Black

- Smart all black (top half and bottom half)
- All clothes must be entirely true black (nothing faded) Tops and bottoms should meet in the middle when standing or playing
- Shoes – all black, but no casual shoes (e.g. trainers or flip flops) or casual sandals

Acceptable options include but not limited to: black tops /shirts / blouses; black dresses / skirts; black trousers (no jeans); black jackets / blazers

You must avoid: sportswear; jeans; trainers, sandals / flip flops; faded black

Formal Black

- Formal black attire
- All clothes must be entirely true black (nothing faded). Tops and bottoms should meet in the middle when standing or playing
- Shoes – formal black shoes, no casual shoes (trainers) or casual sandals
- Plain black socks / black tights
- All hair accessories should be black

Options include but not limited to: evening gowns/dresses; black suits; evening trousers / suit trousers / tailored trousers; evening skirts; shirts / blouses; black neck ties, waistcoats; jackets / blazers

You must avoid: sportswear; jeans; trainers, sandals / flip flops; faded black

Non-Standard Performances

On occasion (e.g. Family Day, Young Explorers and other RNCM Creative Engagement concerts / collaborations etc.) variations of the Smart Black dress code may be required.

Details of any specific changes / requirements will be communicated at an appropriate time.

School of Strings

Students in the School of Strings are allocated ensembles in collaboration between the Head of School (Chris Hoyle), Deputy Head of School (Catherine Yates) and Assistant Head of School (Louise Lansdown), and the Orchestras & Ensembles team. All violin, viola, cello and double bass students will be issued with an Orchestras & Ensembles String Agreement in Welcome Week which will detail orchestral commitments for the whole academic year. The School of Strings and the O&E team work together to try to ensure the projects allocated offer a broad range of exciting and professionally developmental opportunities. Following discussion with their Principal Study Tutor, students are welcome to either request changes to their agreement (deadlines will be outlined when the String Agreements are sent out), or accept by e-signing the document.

Orchestral Auditions

All students in the School of Strings students are auditioned in the Autumn and Spring Terms. Seating is determined by audition marks; there may however be certain circumstances when external factors affect the seating plan, in which case the marks will be used for advisory purposes only.

Harps

Harp students are allocated Orchestra projects by the Head of School and Anne-Marie O'Farrell, RNCM Harp Tutor.

Guitars

Occasionally, Guitarists are required to join Orchestra projects. On such occasions, guitar students will be allocated by the Head of School and Craig Ogden, Director of Guitar.

RNCM Professional Experience Schemes (PES)

Y3, Y4 and PG String students have the opportunity to apply for Professional Experience Schemes with the BBC Philharmonic, Manchester Collective and Manchester Camerata. Eligible students will be contacted directly by email to advise of application processes and deadlines.

School of Wind, Brass and Percussion

Students in the School of Wind, Brass and Percussion are allocated ensembles by its Heads of School (Kevin Gowland, Murray Greig and Simone Rebello). Saxophone student allocations are allocated by Rob Buckland, Senior Saxophone Tutor. They are advised by senior tutors where required. New students have the opportunity to play to a member of the SWBP team early in the Autumn Term. All allocations will be made by the relevant Head of Department. This will be based on each individual student's experience and ability, which will be monitored throughout the year.

Auditions

The School of Wind, Brass and Percussion will usually hold Orchestral Auditions during the Autumn and Spring Terms (dates to be advised by the School). These auditions will be screened and chaired by Heads of School and an external specialist. The results from these auditions will be used to seat certain O&E projects.

Doubling Instruments

Students may be allocated doubling instruments in ensembles after consultation with their individual tutors. If you have an interest in playing your doubling instrument in an RNCM ensemble, please let a member of the Orchestras and Ensembles Team know, along with your Head of School.

RNCM Professional Experience Schemes (PES)

Y3, Y4 and PG WBP students have the opportunity to apply for Professional Experience Schemes with the BBC Philharmonic, Hallé and Orchestra of Opera North. Students may also be selected to take part in other RNCM PES opportunities which happen throughout the year, such as the Band of HM Royal Marines .

