

Audition Policy for New Members

The Royal Tunbridge Wells Symphony Orchestra (RTWSO) is always interested to hear from musicians of grade 8 standard and above who want to join. The purpose of this policy is to make the entry process clear, and to give aspiring players the best possible starting point with us.

About half of the players who play in concerts are amateurs but only in the sense that they don't earn a living by playing in orchestras. All are accomplished musicians; some are retired or retired professionals. The other half are professionals drawn mainly from top London orchestras. Many of these are regulars including most of the principal chair players. Such a combination of musicians, plus the dynamic leadership of our music director, has made the RTWSO one of the finest orchestras of its kind in the South East.

All prospective new members

All prospective new players start by registering their interest with the Orchestral Manager (details are on www.rtwso.org). It is suggested that, ideally, prospective players should attend a concert to understand the musical standard of the orchestra.

Please note that orchestral memberships are offered at two levels, both requiring a subscription; rehearsal-only membership (£45), and full concert membership (£95). Places will only be offered on successful completion of the audition process, and only then if vacancies exist. We are a particularly friendly orchestra and you can be assured that our entry procedure is a very informal process.

String players

As a new player you may be invited to attend a couple of rehearsals to provide an opportunity to familiarise yourself with the music and the way the orchestra works.

At a subsequent rehearsal you may be asked to sit at the front of the section alongside the section leader. There may follow an informal audition although this is not always necessary and you will be given reasonable notice to prepare.

Woodwind, Brass and Percussion

New players are invited to attend an initial rehearsal to be scheduled with the relevant wind principal and/or the Orchestral Manager. Subsequently we may ask you to attend an informal audition however this is not always a necessary requirement and is at the discretion of the Music Director.

All players please note – if membership at rehearsal-only level is offered, it is at the discretion of the Music Director and Orchestra Manager as to whether you will be invited to play in concerts.

A subscription will not be required until you are confirmed as a member. Subscription fee levels will be confirmed when a place is offered; they are comparable with those of other semi-professional orchestras, and should not discourage players of the quality we are seeking!