



Organ Scholar 2021-2022

Remuneration:	£2,500
Reporting to:	Director of Music
Work base:	Coventry Cathedral and its offices and occasionally other locations as required.
Length of Scholarship:	Ten months from 1st October 2021
Application Deadline:	2 November 2020 at 11:59pm
Audition/Interview:	18 November 2020 or on a mutually agreeable date
Date of Issue:	1 October 2020

The Organ

Coventry Cathedral's organ is well-known as an excellent instrument both for recitals and for accompanying services. With four manuals, nearly five thousand pipes and an eclectic stop-list, it is a very versatile instrument, accommodating most schools of music with integrity. Its vibrant sound (and the Cathedral's cavernous acoustic) makes it particularly appropriate for 19th and 20th century works. Built by Harrison and Harrison of Durham, it was fully cleaned in 2001 and there is an on-going programme of restoration.

The Choirs

There are three choirs associated with the Cathedral:

The Cathedral Choir (three sections: Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers, Clerks & Scholars)

The Chamber Choir (adult mixed voices)

Coventry Cathedral Chorus (formerly Saint Michaels' Singers)

In term time, the Cathedral Choir sings on Sundays at the 10.30 a.m. Cathedral Eucharist and 4.00 p.m. Choral Evensong. Wednesday 5.15pm Evensong is sung by the Boy Choristers, and Thursdays by the Girl Choristers. Out of term time visiting choirs frequently sing on the weekends and occasionally Choral Evensong on Saturdays is sung by a visiting choir. As well as before each sung service the boys rehearse twice a week, the girls, Clerks and Scholars once. The Chamber Choir rehearses and sings less frequently. The choirs sing at many special occasions and services; in the last 6 years they have travelled abroad 8 times.

The Liturgical Department

The Liturgical Department of the Cathedral is headed up by the Canon Precentor (David Stone) and includes the Head Verger (Dan Anderson) and his team, the Director of Music (Rachel Mahon) and the Assistant Director of Music (currently vacant).

Main Duties and Responsibilities of the Organ Scholar:

1. Playing the organ to a high standard at statutory and other (including diocesan) services or events as directed by the Director of Music for two to eight occasions per month on average.
2. Attending and playing for the choir rehearsals before services as required.
3. Attending one or two meetings before each service/event at the organ, if requested by the Director of Music, to establish registrations, tempo and protocol directions pertaining to the upcoming services. These meetings are to be arranged at a mutually convenient time some time during the week(s) leading up to the service or event in question.
4. Practising to prepare the accompaniments and solo pieces adequately and for that purpose time will be booked on the main organ at a mutually agreeable time. Also, the scholar may practise on the electronic organ and on the pianos in the Undercroft when they are available. Practice time after hours will be restricted to times when the building is staffed and will need to be booked on the MRBS diary system on an occasional basis.
5. Depending on the strengths of the candidate, occasionally conducting one of the cathedral choirs in rehearsal or performance, as required by the Director of Music.
6. Assisting in the training and preparation of probationers and choristers
7. Carrying out such other tasks as may reasonably be required by the Director of Music within the capacity and experience of the post holder and as may be relevant to the purpose and needs of the Cathedral.
8. Attending a number services and rehearsals during the tenure of the scholarship to observe from the organ console.
9. It is expected that these duties will require about 208 hours over the course of the ten months, based on an average of about 7 hours per week, with the bulk of the hours taking place during the choir terms.

Accountability & Supervision received:

The Organ Scholar is accountable to the Canon Precentor through the Director of Music. The Director of Music, or the Assistant Director of Music will provide supervision, with regular meetings and ongoing appraisal.

Qualifications and Experience Required:

1. A musician and organist with exceptional gifts as an organist and accompanist, and with the confidence and skills necessary to conduct choirs and to train young singers.
2. A full member of a mainstream Christian Church, with a warm personality, a good sense of humour and the ability to work well in a team.
3. Experience of liturgical accompaniment, choir directing, knowledge or experience in the training of children's voices, and familiarity with Safeguarding guidelines and procedures will be essential.

4. Someone appreciative of the wide range in the styles of music that are a part of the Cathedral's worship.
5. The position is open to men and women and is subject to DBS clearance. It is likely that this position will suit someone who is a young adult and attending university, college or conservatory education.

Application Documents Required:

1. A CV listing all previous church music experience (playing, conducting, singing), education and music examinations achieved, and organ teachers
2. An example of a recent concert performance programme
3. A biographical paragraph for use in publicity
4. A letter or email giving your reasons for applying
5. Two referees whom the Cathedral may approach – one must be a church musician and one from a priest or teacher vouching for your character and musical skills.
6. Send applications to:
The Director of Music, Coventry Cathedral, 1 Hill Top, Coventry, West Midlands CV1 5AB
Applications may be emailed to: rachel.mahon@coventrycathedral.org.uk

Audition and Interview: to be held at Coventry Cathedral at a mutually convenient date in November 2020.

1. Candidates called to audition will be required to perform two contrasting works on the organ, lasting no longer than ten minutes together.
2. There will be sight-reading, score-reading, and transposition tests.
3. Candidates will be required to prepare an organ accompaniment to an anthem or canticle (music to be supplied to candidate at least a week before audition).
4. Candidates will be required to prepare a hymn accompaniment (intro & 3 verses) (music to be supplied to candidate at least a week before audition).
5. Candidates who indicate a willingness to conduct the choir will be given an opportunity to take a short rehearsal with the cathedral choir or the choristers. The music for this rehearsal will be determined about a week before.
6. The Candidates are welcome to play a short improvisation (max.3 mins).
7. There will be an informal interview to establish the candidate's suitability for the post.
8. 90 minutes practice time on the organ will be allocated to each short-listed candidate at a time mutually convenient.