

**NEW COLLEGE OXFORD**  
**LAY CLERKS' TERMS & CONDITIONS**

April 2016

**ROLE**

New College Choir is made up of both Lay Clerks and Academical (student) Clerks who provide the alto, tenor and bass sections. The choir sings a varied and challenging repertoire, and singing of professional standards is demanded from all members of the choir. Lay Clerks are expected to demonstrate a higher level of expertise and experience than the Academical Clerks, to whom they fulfil an important role as mentors. They are expected to provide a crucial measure of musical stability in a choir where a third of the students leave each year.

**STATUTORY DUTIES**

Lay Clerks are appointed by the Warden and Fellows of the college. The appointment is subject to a probationary period of six months/two terms.

They are required to sing at a choral service in chapel every day except Wednesdays during the eight weeks of the three university terms - Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity - beginning on the Friday immediately before Full Term and ending the Sunday immediately after Full Term. Dates of term can be found on the Oxford University website: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/facts-and-figures/dates-of-term>

Occasionally liturgies may replace evensong/sung eucharist (eg Compline).

Lay clerks are also required to sing at the following annual services for members of the college:

- Three Carol Services at the end of the Michaelmas Term;
- St Thomas' Dinner (Saturday of ninth week of Michaelmas Term);
- Two Gaude Evensongs and Dinner (currently in September, but dates may vary).

When necessary, lay clerks will be required to sing at memorial services for Warden or Fellows, and at the installation of a new Warden.

Rehearsals take place in chapel or the Song Room: additional rehearsals (eg for solos and verses) may be called by the Organist.

The description of duties is indicative of the expectations of a lay clerk, but is not definitive. There may be occasional additional duties that could be reasonably expected of a lay clerk; although account will be taken of a clerk's other commitments, a degree of flexibility is desirable.

**Timetable**

Monday	17.20	rehearsal	18.15	Evensong (ATB)
Tuesday	17.20	rehearsal	18.15	Evensong
Wednesday	<i>no duties, except for 'specials' such as BBC Radio 3 Choral Evensong</i>			
Thursday	17.20	rehearsal	18.15	Sung Eucharist
Friday	17.20	rehearsal	18.15	Evensong (unaccompanied)
Saturday	17.15	rehearsal	18.15	Evensong
Sunday	17.00	rehearsal	18.00	Evensong

The regular commitment is thus to rehearse for four hours and ten minutes per week during those weeks in which services are being sung. Further rehearsal of up to ten hours per year may be called at times determined by the Organist.

## **EXTRA DUTIES WITH ADDITIONAL FEES**

### **Tours and recordings**

The choir generally makes at least one recording a year, often but not always in early July. Tours take place during the vacations. Advance notice will be given as dates become available. There are ordinarily no choir commitments in August, but other months may be occupied with touring and other extra activities. Lay clerks are expected to discuss with the Organist any commitments which would make them unavailable for tours, concerts and recordings, and to give him suitable advance notice of major professional engagements which would take them out of any choir commitment.

### **Depts and absences**

There is currently no fixed number of services which Lay Clerks may miss for other professional engagements. However, the terms of engagement expect that in general choir activities will take priority, and attendance is expected at major services (such as Carol Services) and concerts. The Organist must be consulted well in advance before absence can be agreed. If a lay clerk wishes to be absent for a commitment for which the other lay clerk of his voice part is already absent, he must seek the Organist's permission, having first ascertained the availability of an accredited deputy.

Lay clerks are responsible for booking their own deputies, from the choir's accredited deputy list, after prior consultation with the Organist. Each lay clerk is responsible for the payment of any deputy, except in the case of illness.

### **Salary & fees**

The current annual salary (from October 2016) is £6066; the salary will increase in line with the College's annual pay award to staff. The college is unable to provide accommodation. Lay clerks can expect to supplement the annual salary with extra fees and expenses, which are payable for BBC recordings and broadcasts, commercial recordings, and concerts and associated rehearsals.

The post is pensionable (further details may be obtained from the Bursary) and includes free membership of the College MCR with associated benefits (including subsidised meals).

## **DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW**

A termly informal meeting between the Lay Clerk and the Organist will form part of a review process; this will also involve an annual assessment, in which the Organist and an external observer will hear the Lay Clerk sing a solo piece. Informal meetings will also provide both Lay Clerk and Organist with an opportunity to discuss any issues relevant to the individual's performance in the Choir. As part of this process all Lay Clerks are expected to receive regular singing lessons. All discussion will be part of a two-way process intended to enhance the Lay Clerk's personal development within and contribution to the choir. The records of all assessments will be agreed and retained by both parties.

### **Singing lessons**

As part of its commitment of lay clerks' professional development, the choir will pay for singing lessons up to the value of £720 per year, on receipt by the chapel office of the singing teachers' invoices. Singing teachers will be approved by the Organist, and may be contacted directly by him, with the Lay Clerk's consent, to discuss any issues in regard to which their input would be valuable. The allowance is renewed on an annual basis, and does not accrue from year to year if unspent.

### **Terms of appointment**

All clerks are required to hold an Enhanced DBS Clearance, paid for by the college, and to abide by the terms of the choir's Memo to Clerks.

## **NOTICE**

The terms of notice are set out in the accompanying Statement of Main Terms of Employment which should be read with these Terms & Conditions, along with the Employee Handbook.