

NZDO: Process for selection of players and allocation of parts

We aim to offer a place in the orchestra to the vast majority of applicants. However, every year some applications are unfortunately declined. Our process and principles for selection and allocation of parts for the orchestra are:

1. Our selection process is guided by a desire to balance the following considerations:
 - a. A balanced orchestra.
 - b. Inclusiveness.
 - c. Logistical constraints.
 - d. Maintaining a consistent musical standard and a good performance standard.
 - e. Ensuring that all musicians selected will be capable of participating in the orchestra, to a reasonable standard.
2. Each year the conductor of the orchestra will be asked to specify, for each section, the number of players required, taking into account:
 - a. The repertoire for that year.
 - b. The available space in the performance and rehearsal venues.
 - c. The need to be inclusive of as many players as possible.
 - d. The need for balance between different sections of the orchestra.
3. Any New Zealand-based doctor or medical student wishing to play in the orchestra must submit a written application within the publicly advertised timeframe. In this application they will be asked to provide information relating to their level of playing and orchestral experience. For certain sections, applicants may also be asked to provide information relating to preferred part and any auxiliary instruments played.
4. The organisers may decline to allow a New Zealand-based doctor or medical student to apply if unusual circumstances would make it logistically difficult to accommodate that person (for example, if that person would be unable to bring their own instrument). This decision will be made openly and in dialogue with the person concerned.
5. The conductor of the orchestra will assess all applications received. In the first instance they will be asked to comment on the suitability of the applicant for the orchestra. If the conductor does not think that an applicant meets the minimum standard required to participate in the orchestra then their application will be declined. In the second instance, if the number of applications exceeds the spaces available for a particular section, the conductor will be asked to rank the applicants.
6. In order to make the decisions outlined in point (5) above, the conductor will consider all information presented in the written application. However, further information may also be considered, such as how well the applicant contributed to the orchestra in previous years and their reliability. The conductor may also request assistance in interpreting the information in the written application. The conductor may therefore seek advice from the organisers, former players in the orchestra, and other musicians. This is advice only – the final decision rests solely with the conductor.
7. In the event that the number of applicants for a section of the orchestra exceeds the number of spaces available, then places will be offered to those applicants who are ranked highest by the conductor. In the event that the conductor expresses that they are unable to fairly distinguish between a group of applicants, then the following process will be used for selecting those remaining applicants who will be offered a place in the orchestra.
 - a. Preference will firstly be given to doctors ahead of medical students.

- b. Following this, preference will be given to applicants who have not played in the orchestra before, with priority given to those who have unsuccessfully applied in the past.
 - c. Following this, a ballot will be used.
- 8. In applying, we expect that offers will be accepted, as this helps considerably in organisation and providing certainty to other players. If an applicant is offered a place in the orchestra, and declines this offer, then that place will be offered to the unsuccessful applicant ranked highest by the criteria above.
- 9. It may be necessary to invite a number of guest players to play in the orchestra. These players will be invited at the discretion of the conductor and the organisers, who may seek further advice as needed. Guest players are not required to submit a written application.
- 10. Guest players will only be invited after applications from New Zealand-based doctors and medical students have closed, and after these applications have been considered. They may be invited where a section requires more players, or where the conductor is of the opinion that the existing players in the section would benefit from the presence of a stronger player. However, no guest player will be invited if this would result in declining an application from a New Zealand-based doctor or medical student who meets the minimum standard and who submitted their application within the advertised timeframe.
- 11. Late applications from New Zealand-based doctors or medical students may be considered, however these applicants will not necessarily be given priority over guest players.
- 12. Applications from overseas-based doctors or medical students may be considered, however these applicants will be considered as guest players. They will therefore only be offered a place if space remains in the orchestra after all New Zealand-based applicants are considered.
- 13. Guest players will not be offered any payment for playing in the orchestra. However, they will not be charged any fees and in certain circumstances (at the discretion of the organisers) they may receive assistance to cover travel costs. The exception is overseas-based doctors, who will be expected to pay a fee equal to that paid by New Zealand-based doctors.
- 14. The conductor is ultimately responsible for seating and allocation of parts, however they may choose to delegate this responsibility (e.g. to section principals).
- 15. Once selected for the orchestra, no preference will be given to doctors ahead of medical students for the purposes of seating and allocation of parts. Similarly, guest players will be allocated parts in accordance with the needs of their section, with the caveat that they will only be appointed section principal or seated in the front desk of a string section in exceptional circumstances.