

Process for Permanent Appointment of Players

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1 Purpose

This document defines the process to be used to appoint players to permanent positions in the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra. It applies to both “Principal” players and “Non-Principal” players.

The aim of this process is to ensure that all positions in the orchestra are filled by enthusiastic and proficient players to ensure that the overall standard of the orchestra is maintained and improved over time, whilst achieving an outcome that is fair and equitable to both the players directly involved as well as those who play with them.

2 Scope

The criteria and application process for membership of the orchestra for all players is defined in the Orchestra’s Rules. This document specifies the process to be used for complying with those rules, as well as additional requirements that apply only to the appointment of the Principal of each of the following sections:

1. Second Violin, Viola, Cello, Bass
2. Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon
3. Horn, Trumpet, Trombone
4. Timpani

It does not apply to appointment of temporary players to these positions, nor to the appointment of the Leader of the Orchestra, who is also Principal First Violin.

3 Overall Process

The process to appoint all players is as follows:

1. A player becomes a prospective member of the orchestra, or is promoted to a Principal position, for a trial period.
2. The Committee appoints a Review Subcommittee to monitor the player during the trial period. The Review Subcommittee comprises the Conductor and at least one other senior orchestra member as detailed below.
3. During or at the end of the trial period, the Review Subcommittee recommends to the Committee whether or not the player should be offered a permanent position.
4. Based on the recommendation of the Review Subcommittee, the Committee decides whether to offer the player a permanent position, and advises the player of its decision.

4 Selection Criteria

In offering a player a trial period or membership of the orchestra, (including a promotion), the following criteria shall be considered (in decreasing order of priority):

1. The technical and musical proficiency of the player, relative to the required standard of the orchestra as a whole and the demands of the position
2. Their desire to fill the available vacancy and their commitment to attend rehearsals and practice
3. Their experience playing in symphony orchestras or similar ensembles
4. The suitability of their personal qualities for a good “fit” with the orchestra
5. Their length of service with the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra or time on the waiting list, as appropriate.

5 Selection for trial period

1. Anyone interested in joining the orchestra should apply to the Orchestra Manager who will record their capability according to the criteria above, and if considered suitable, add them to a list of prospective players.
2. The Committee shall decide whether a player returning from an extended absence or a player who previously played temporarily with the orchestra is appointed for a trial period or is immediately offered membership.
3. Approval of the appointment of a player for a trial depends on the type of vacancy, as follows:
 - a. For a Non-Principal string vacancy, the player may join the orchestra for a trial period with the approval of the Leader, Deputy Leader or another string section Principal at or prior to the player’s first rehearsal.
 - b. For a Non-Principal vacancy in a section other than the strings, the player may be accepted for a trial period subject to approval by the Conductor or the Principal of that section at or prior to the player’s first rehearsal.
 - c. For a Principal position, the Committee shall select potential candidates from the following (in no particular order of priority):
 - i. Existing members of the orchestra
 - ii. Existing or previous temporary players
 - iii. Players on the waiting list
 - iv. Other players who may be invited

If the Conductor and Leader believe that an existing permanent or temporary player is likely to be clearly suitable for a Principal position, the Committee may appoint the player to the position for a trial period.

If the Committee, Conductor and Leader do not agree that an existing player should be trialed for the Principal position, the Review Subcommittee, appointed by the Committee as described below, shall recommend the trial appointment of one of the potential candidates selected by the Committee.

4. The Orchestra Manager shall identify any prospective, new and existing trial players to the Committee.
5. The Orchestra Manager shall ensure that players are aware that they are appointed for a trial period, either verbally or through the welcome letter provided.

6 Appointment of Review Subcommittee

1. The Committee shall appoint a Review Subcommittee for each trial player. The purpose of the Review Subcommittee is to recommend whether that player is to be offered membership of the orchestra.
2. The Review Subcommittee shall comprise the Conductor and as a minimum the following senior orchestra members:
 - a. For Non-Principal string players, the Leader or Deputy Leader and another string section Principal.
 - b. For Non-Principal players from other sections, the Principal of that section, or another senior orchestra member familiar with the instrument in question.
 - c. For Principal players, the Review Subcommittee shall comprise the Conductor, Leader or Deputy Leader, President and at least one other senior orchestra member familiar with the instrument in question.

The Committee shall appoint to the Review Subcommittee orchestra members who do not have a personal connection with the player under consideration.

3. When the Committee appoints the Review Subcommittee it should also determine a suitable trial period and ensure that the player is informed. The trial period should generally be for several months and include at least the next concert. It can be extended or shortened at the Committee's discretion.

7 Review and Decision

1. The Review Subcommittee shall periodically review informally the performance of the player during the trial period so as to ensure that the player is dealt with fairly and to avoid last minute vacancies prior to concerts. To this end, as a minimum the player should be reviewed:
 - a. Within four weeks of the player assuming the trial position
 - b. Prior to the next concert
 - c. Immediately after the next concert.
2. As soon as the Review Subcommittee has formed an opinion of the player's suitability, it shall advise the Committee of its recommendation without delay. This is particularly important if the player is considered not to be suitable.
3. The Committee shall promptly consider the Review Subcommittee's recommendation and decide the suitability of the player as well as when and by whom the player should be advised.
4. If the player is offered membership of the orchestra, the Treasurer should provide them with a membership application form at that time. Return of the completed membership application form to the Treasurer will constitute the player's formal acceptance of the offer.
5. The Committee shall then formally accept the membership application in accordance with the Rules.

Approved by the Committee of the Maroondah Symphony Orchestra on 11/11/2014.