



Department of Liturgy and Music

Choral Scholarships at Exeter Cathedral

The choral scholarships at Exeter Cathedral (two each of counter-tenor or contralto, tenor and bass) are *either* held in conjunction with degree courses at Exeter University, (any subject, provided that lecture times do not clash seriously with choir commitments), *or* are offered to 'gap' students for either one or two years immediately before or after full-time tertiary study. The choral scholarships offer experience of singing daily in the cathedral choir alongside the six lay vicars. Former choral scholars have gone on to positions at some of the country's major foundations.

Exeter

The city of Exeter lies in the south west of England, and is the administrative capital of the county of Devon. With a population of around 118,000 Exeter is consistently rated as one of the best places to live in the UK. The city centre itself has an impressive new £235 million retail centre with over 60 new shops and restaurants. It is a safe, student-friendly city with a vibrant and fun culture and relaxed atmosphere. The cathedral is geographically and spiritually at its heart, a fact reflected in the high profile it enjoys in the local media and community. The city has rail services to London (Paddington and Waterloo), Birmingham, Manchester and Bristol, and a busy commuter airport, giving good connections nationwide.

The cathedral

Exeter Cathedral is one of the nine 'Old Foundation' cathedrals of England and its architecture dates primarily from the Norman period, although the building has been extensively restored, including the extensive reconstruction of the chapel of St James, which was completely destroyed by the Luftwaffe in a bombing raid in 1942. Notable features of the interior include the misericords, the minstrels' gallery, the astronomical clock and the organ. The Diocese of Exeter was formed in 1050 and covers the county of Devon. Both clergy and congregation are fully supportive of the cathedral's music programme.

The cathedral choir

Music has been an important part of the cathedral's life for hundreds of years. There has been a choir since the thirteenth century and today it maintains a regular schedule of seven choral services a week (during term time). The choir's full complement numbers twenty boy choristers, twenty girl choristers, six lay vicars, and six choral scholars.

The cathedral's music department consists of the Precentor, the Director of Music, the Assistant Director of Music, Organ Scholar, and the Singing Development Leader. The Director of Music will assume day-to-day responsibility for the Choral Scholars' training, and any feedback relevant to the Choral Scholars is directed through him.

Basic Expectations

The Choral Scholars attend all full cathedral choir rehearsals and services (see timetable below), and will normally be expected to sing at each service. This means being in Exeter from around mid-September up to, and including, Christmas Day when there are three services, including Evensong, following which there is a holiday of two to three weeks. There is a holiday of a similar length after Easter (beginning after Evensong on Easter Monday) and there is a long half-term of twelve days from the last week of October. There is a half-term of about a week in the Lent Term and a similar one in the Summer Term, with the academic year usually ending before the middle of July. Although the annual pattern of Choir Terms is fairly consistent (taking into account where Easter may fall), Choral Scholars will be informed of the actual dates well in advance. They will also be expected to take part in choir broadcasts, concerts, recordings, tours, and other events falling outside the regular timetable.

The Choral Scholars will be expected to take their own responsibility for ensuring that all of their notes are learnt in advance of rehearsals. This includes the complete psalms for the day which are not usually



rehearsed with the lay vicars. The Director of Music and other members of the music department will assist them in this by arranging separate rehearsals for the Choral Scholars, as required.

St Peter's Singers

The Choral Scholars also sing with the St Peter's Singers (The cathedral's voluntary choir). This choir, directed by the Assistant Director of Music, is auditioned, and numbers about twenty-five men and women, who sing cathedral services (generally one per month) when the cathedral choir is off duty or unavailable. The choir also gives concerts throughout the county.

Tuition

The Director of Music has responsibility for mentoring the Choral Scholars' duties at the cathedral and for feeding back to them detailed comment. Choral Scholars are encouraged to take private singing lessons with a teacher of their choice, and at their own expense. Time off may be arranged to take these, if they are out of Exeter.

Time off/absences

Normally, Wednesday will be a complete day off. In weeks where this is not possible, a different day will be arranged. The Choral Scholars, like the other musicians, should normally also have a free Sunday plus six weekdays (except in the event of a choir tour) at half-terms, after Christmas and after Easter, as well as at least six complete weeks off in the summer. This may involve occasional days off in lieu. Up to three absences may be taken per term with the Dean and Chapter covering the cost of the deputy. These, and any further absences must be agreed in advance with the Director of Music (or the Assistant Director of Music in the case of the St Peter's Singers). In the event of illness preventing a Choral Scholar attending a practice or service, he/she should first inform the Director of Music.

Dress code and general behaviour

Choral Scholars should be smartly presented at all times, especially when working with the choristers or the general public; this will normally mean wearing black shoes, with a jacket and tie (white shirt on Sundays), or its equivalent for female altos. They are representatives of the Cathedral at all times and must be aware at all times of the importance of discretion in conduct and behaviour, especially with all under-18s. Choral scholars should be in sympathy with the Christian ethos.

Safeguarding

Choral Scholars are required to have enhanced DBS clearance, and to complete Safeguarding training as required.

Weekly timetable

Sun	Full practice	0915-0950
	Eucharist	1000-1120
	Full practice	1515-1550
	Evensong	1600-1700
Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, some Sat	Full practice	1655-1720
	Evensong	1730-1820
some Tue	St Peter's Singers rehearsal 1830-1930	
Wed, some Sat	day off	

Saturday Evensong may be sung by the Cathedral Choir, or The St Peter's Singers (or a visiting choir). The service on Thursdays may be followed by a short rehearsal of up to thirty minutes. Choir practices are usually held in the Cathedral or the Song School. Variations to this timetable and additional events are shown on the printed termly schedule, which is circulated by the Director of Music.

Terms and conditions

The scholarship, payable by the Dean and Chapter, will be not less than £3,885 per annum in 2024 and will be paid in monthly instalments in arrears, directly into a bank account. Cathedral accommodation may be available for Choral Scholars at a modest rent (currently £200 per month, which includes bills but *not* council tax if applicable). Although not technically employees, Choral Scholars will be given a copy of the employee handbook, which contains details of the Chapter's disciplinary and grievance procedures, as well as general information about the cathedral.

Applications

Prospective candidates should have a promising voice, a reliable ear and a fluency in sightreading. Audition requirements consist of the following:

- a) Prepared singing - two contrasting pieces of the candidate's choice. At least one should be sacred.
- b) Sight-singing tests - usually two pieces of repertoire: 16th century polyphony and a modern idiom.
- c) Psalm - chanting at sight: Anglican Chant.
- d) Ear tests.

Candidates should complete the application form and send it, with a covering letter, to:

The Director of Music, Exeter Cathedral
1 The Cloisters
Exeter
EX1 1HS
Email: timothy.noon@exeter-cathedral.org.uk

On receipt of your application, we will arrange a convenient date for you to visit Exeter for audition and interview as soon as possible. This can be scheduled on the same day as the candidate's University interview (if appropriate). Prospective choral scholars are also welcome to telephone Timothy Noon (07973 220769) for an informal discussion.

These details and other information about Exeter Cathedral music can be found on the Cathedral website www.exeter-cathedral.org.uk

September 2023

Application for a Choral Scholarship at Exeter Cathedral

Name:
Date of Birth:
Home address:
Tel: Fax: e-mail
Voice: <i>(alto,tenor,bass)</i>
Present or last school/college:
Singing experience <i>(including singing lessons if any)</i>
Instrumental playing: <i>(including current grades)</i>
GCSE grades:*
A Level Predictions (or Grades if known)*
Proposed subject at University*:
Proposed date of entry*:

