



Stockport Youth Orchestra  
Curzon Building, Offerton High School  
The Fairway, Offerton, SK25DS  
Web: <http://www.syo.org.uk>  
Tel: 0161 4084467

## Equal Opportunities Policy

### 1. Background

The Stockport Youth Orchestra (SYO) needs to draw on the widest possible pool of musical talent for its players, conductors and tutors, to attract the widest possible audiences to its concerts and to have the broadest possible range of players and sponsors. It is therefore important that we are not excluding people from our activities, either deliberately or inadvertently, on irrelevant criteria such as gender, ethnicity, religious beliefs, disability etc.

It is acknowledged that such discriminatory practices would not only contravene legislation but would be harmful for the SYO.

As such the SYO acknowledges the absolute requirement to avoid such discrimination and, as an organisation drawing on public funding, the need to be able to demonstrate that we are actively avoiding such discrimination.

This Policy sets out the requirements to which all persons involved in the SYO are required to adhere to ensure that equal opportunities are afforded to all involved, or wishing to be involved in the SYO in any way.

### 2. Policy Principles

The SYO is committed to selecting Trustees (being a Trustee of the SYO as defined in the Constitution adopted by the SYO on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008 )(Trustees), Members (being a member of the SYO as defined in the Constitution adopted by the SYO on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2008 )(Members), players, staff, and sponsors exclusively on criteria that are relevant, and to running and promoting the SYO in such a way as to avoid discrimination.

The SYO will ensure that it is able to provide evidence of the effectiveness of this approach in the case of player selection.

### 3 Aims

The SYO aims to:

- Select Trustees, Members, players, staff and sponsors exclusively on criteria that are relevant;
- Be sensitive to religious and cultural issues in the selection of rehearsal, audition and concert times and venues and in the choice of repertoire;



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Registered Charity, registration number 1006205



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- Promote the SYO in such a way as to avoid discrimination;
- Produce annual statistical analyses of the makeup of the SYO compared with the makeup of all those applying for membership;
- Take steps to ensure that financial considerations do not prevent potential players benefiting from membership of the SYO.

## 4 Guidelines

### 4.1 Player Selection Criteria

Players will be selected on the following criteria alone:

- Ability to play an orchestral instrument to the required standard;
- Access to the required instrument (a limited number of loan instruments are available);
- Availability of places within the SYO for the instrument concerned;
- Age – players must be 21 or younger; and
- Commitment to attend rehearsals and concerts.

### 4.2 Monitoring

The gender, ethnicity and disability of the orchestral players will be analysed and compared to that of the children applying for membership in order to demonstrate that the selection process is not producing any bias. The information will be gathered anonymously.

### 4.3 Publicity

Given the makeup of the regional population, it is reasonable for written publicity material to be in English. It would not be reasonably practicable to produce written material in Braille, however small font sizes will be avoided. Given the generally accepted standard of the World-Wide-Web, and the makeup of the expected audience, it is reasonable for the website to be in English. The website shall conform to recognised web accessibility guidelines.

### 4.4 Financial Support

Financial support shall be available for players who would otherwise find difficulty in paying the membership fees or taking part in activities organised by the SYO. Confidentiality will be respected for those needing to take this up.

Depending on its financial position at the time, the SYO will endeavour to provide necessary financial support for players in furtherance of their musical development. The SYO proposes also, funds permitting, to seek ways to support the development of musical skills amongst the youth of the wider community.



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#### **4.5 Rehearsals, Auditions and Concerts**

The location and timing of rehearsals, auditions and concerts may present problems for religious reasons. Due to the nature of orchestral playing, and the need to avoid disturbing school commitments, potential clashes are inevitable and it is not always going to be possible to accommodate the needs of all players.

Rehearsals, auditions and concerts will therefore be scheduled respecting the religious needs of as many of the players as possible, and dates will be published as far in advance as possible.

Players who are unable to attend pre-scheduled rehearsals, auditions or concerts for religious reasons are expected to bear this in mind before committing to join the SYO. Dates and venues which are scheduled during the course of the year may present difficulties to players for religious reasons, and the SYO will respect this.

#### **4.6 Repertoire**

The repertoire will be selected to avoid reasonably foreseeable offence to any group. It is anticipated that it would be exceedingly rare for this consideration to change the intended repertoire.

#### **4.7 Staff Selection**

Staff shall be selected on their ability to meet the musical needs of the SYO, their commitment and ability to provide the services needed and their clearance to work with children. No other consideration will be taken into account.

#### **4.8 Patrons Selection**

No selection criteria shall be applied to individuals seeking membership of the SYO (as referred to in its' Constitution).

### **5. Responsibilities**

All paid professionals and Trustees are responsible for abiding by this policy and encouraging a culture for mutual respect.

The Trustees are responsible for regular review of this policy, for ensuring all Trustees, staff, Members and players are aware of it, and for arranging financial support where appropriate.



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The Musical Director or Directors (as the case may be) are responsible for applying the policy with regard to rehearsals, audition and concert dates and venues, for selection of suitable repertoire, and for ensuring that player selection is carried out solely on the basis of the agreed criteria.

The webmaster is responsible for ensuring that the website complies with this policy.

The publicity sub-committee is responsible for ensuring that the written publicity material is designed and distributed in compliance with this policy.

The Trustees are responsible for the operation of the equal opportunities monitoring scheme.

## **6 Training**

The Trustees will ensure that all of them and all staff, players and Members are familiar with this Equal Opportunities Policy.

## **7 Approval, review and document control**

This Equal Opportunities Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis by the Trustees of the SYO. The review will be carried out in accordance with legislative developments and the need for good practice.

No changes to this Policy shall be made without the approval of the Trustees of the SYO at a duly convened quorate meeting.

Approved by the Trustees of the Stockport Youth Orchestra on 23 January 2009.

Reviewed and Approved by the Trustees of the Stockport Youth Orchestra on 30 November 2012.



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