



St John's Cathedral, Brisbane  
Anglican Church Southern Queensland

## Position Description Lay Clerk

### Background

In 1885 Bishop Webber, the third Bishop of Brisbane, commissioned the renowned architect John Loughborough Pearson to make sketches for a new cathedral. St John's Cathedral was constructed in three stages: the first completed in 1910, the second in 1969, and the third in 2009. The Cathedral Choir, which was first formed to sing in St John's Pro-Cathedral on the site of Queen's Gardens, has sung in the present Cathedral since 1909. Since this time, it has maintained a highly-regarded choral tradition.

The boy choristers are educated on partial scholarship at the Anglican Church Grammar School ('Churchie'), and rehearse at school on weekday mornings. The lower parts are sung by Lay Clerks (adult singers), as well as Choral Scholars.

While the Cathedral Choir is its musical flagship, the Cathedral is also home to other resident choirs, including the Cathedral Singers, a voluntary mixed-voice choir which sings Evensong every second Sunday. There is also a Girls' Choir which sings both on its own, and together with the Lay Clerks.

### The Position

The primary purpose of the position is to maintain the distinguished musical and liturgical traditions of St John's Cathedral, by singing countertenor (or alto), tenor, or bass in the Cathedral Choir to a high standard. There are six permanent Lay Clerk positions, translating to one person a part on either side of the choir. Given the nature of this role, this post is suited to a more experienced choral singer who is used to working both in a solo capacity, and as the sole contributor to a voice part.

### Reporting to

The Director of Music

### Inter-relationships

Cathedral and Diocesan clergy (including the Archbishop and the Dean), Director of Music, Assistant Director of Music, Organ Scholar, Choral Scholars, Boy Choristers, Girl Choristers.

## Responsibilities

Each Lay Clerk is accountable to the Director of Music for the following duties:

Attend **regular rehearsals and services** (as outlined in the *Regular Schedule* section in this document).

Attend **special liturgies** as required, especially (but not limited to) those on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Ascension Day. These additional commitments are published well in advance on the music schedule.

Attend **other performances** as scheduled from time to time. These may include concerts, tours, and recording sessions.

Book a deputy to replace them (from the approved list of Deputy Singers published by the music department), in the event they are unavailable for a service due to illness or for any other reason.

Maintain their vocal health and technique.

Prepare repertoire in advance of rehearsals and services, and perform in a confident manner. The Music List is published on a monthly basis, and therefore Lay Clerks always have at least two weeks' notice of upcoming repertoire to facilitate preparation.

Obtain and present a valid Queensland Government *Blue Card* demonstrating suitability to work with children, in accord with the Cathedral's legal obligations.

Act as a mentor to the Choral Scholars in a sympathetic and professional manner, and liaise with the Director of Music and Assistant Director of Music in monitoring the Choral Scholars' development and progress.

Other duties as required by the Director of Music.

## Qualifications and experience

The ideal Lay Clerk will have:

Experience of choral singing at a professional level;

Experience with solo singing, and confidence as a solo or verse singer;

Excellent sight-singing skills;

A well-trained voice, with a good range and flexibility;

An ability to provide a strong line as the only singer of their part on each side of the choir;

A demonstrated commitment to excellence in musical performance, a drive to undertake adequate personal preparation, and a willingness to be accountable for their performance;

Ideally, a good working knowledge of the Anglican choral repertoire and of Renaissance polyphony; and

A sympathy with the ethos and mission of an Anglican Cathedral, and the values of the Anglican Church more broadly.

## **Personal attributes**

Lay Clerks will demonstrate the following attributes:

Punctuality for all rehearsals and performances;

Professional manner and presentation;

A sense of humour;

Willingness to work as the member of a team, as part of a close-knit group, and the ability to respond quickly and positively to direction; and

An attention to detail and a well-ordered approach to work.

## **Performance management**

The performance of each Lay Clerk will be assessed on a regular basis, particularly with regard to:

Their performance of the key duties and responsibilities of the role;

Their ability to advance the musical reputation of the Cathedral Choir;

Their musical performance; and

Their ability to develop and maintain relationships with their colleagues at the Cathedral.

## **Regular schedule**

(Please note that the timetable below does not include such special services as may arise from time to time, and that it is current at time of writing and subject to amendments. It does not apply between 26 December and the last weekend of January, when the choir takes its summer break.)

Friday

5.30pm-7pm Full choir rehearsal

Sunday

8.30am Rehearsal \*

9.30am Choral Eucharist \* (or Matins on 5th Sundays)

5pm Rehearsal †

6pm Evensong †

\* Except 1st Sundays

† 2nd and 4th Sundays only

Additional contractual duties include Diocesan services, major festivals, feast days and solemnities, including (but not limited to) Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Ascension Day. Occasionally there will also be additional extra-liturgical duties including concerts, tours and recording sessions: these will be listed on the choir schedule well in advance, and are fairly infrequent.

## **Benefits**

Annual salary of up to \$6000, payable at the end of each term.

Opportunities for further solo work at the Cathedral are available, particularly at weddings and funerals. This attracts a separate fee, which is currently \$200 per service.

## **Recruitment process**

To apply for this position, please submit a cover letter outlining your suitability for the role, contact details of two referees, along with a copy of your Curriculum Vitae, to:

Dr Graeme Morton  
Director of Music  
St John's Cathedral  
373 Ann St,  
Brisbane, QLD 4000  
[gmorton@stjohnscathedral.com.au](mailto:gmorton@stjohnscathedral.com.au)

For an informal conversation about this post at any time, please contact the Director of Music by email, at the above address.

Your application must be received by **Friday 26 August 2022**. All applications will be acknowledged.

Applicants will be advised of the outcome of the initial short-listing of applicants, and an audition and interview date will be advised.

Any offer of appointment will be dependent on satisfactory references, and the confirmation of a valid Queensland Government Blue Card. Confirmed employment is subject to a three-month probationary period, and each Lay Clerk will be continually assessed on an annual basis.