



WORCESTER
CATHEDRAL

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Application Pack

Associate Soprano Lay Clerks

September 2025



WORCESTER
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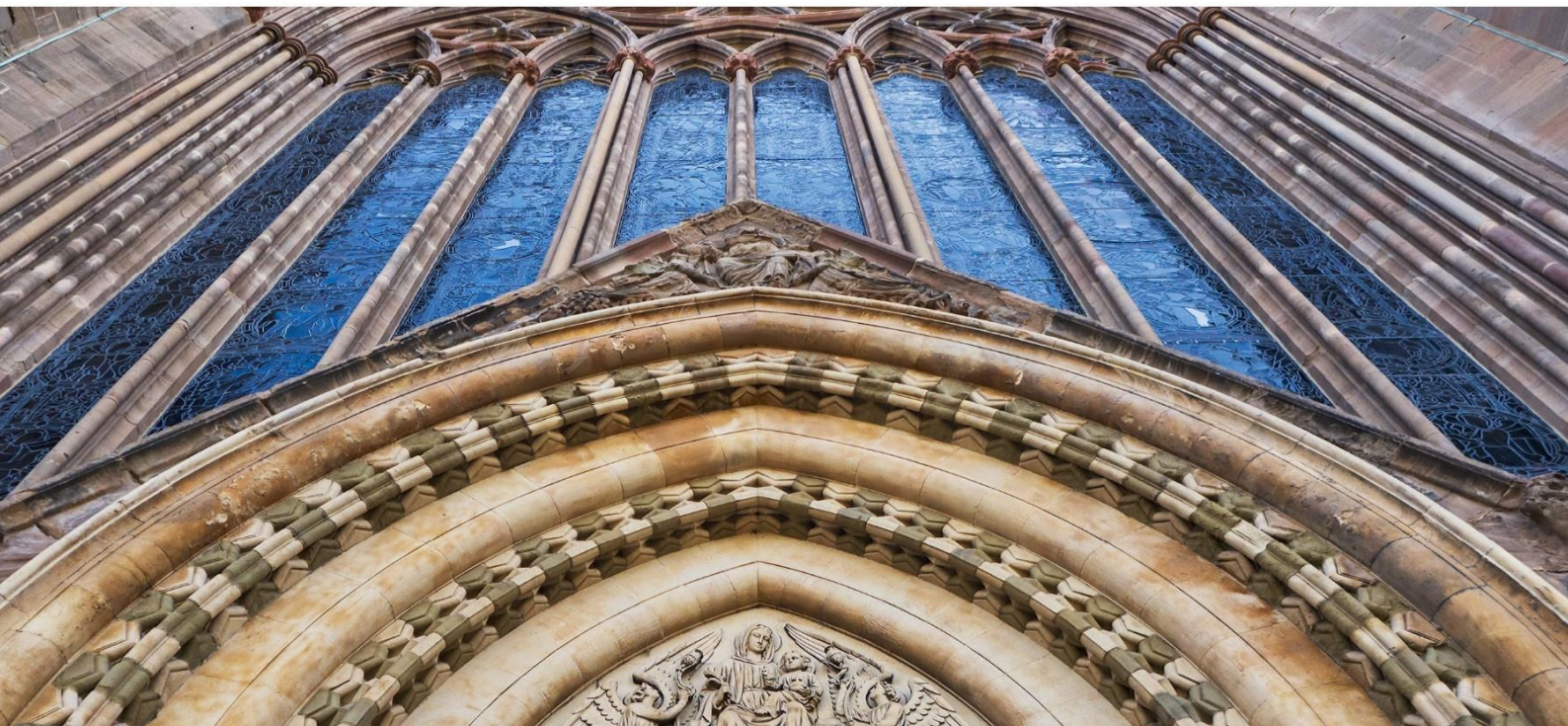
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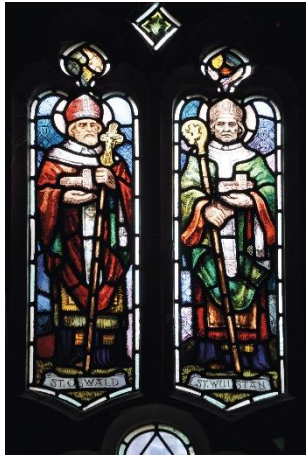
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About Worcester Cathedral



Worcester Cathedral is a magnificent sight as it rises majestically above the River Severn. Worcester has been the seat of a bishopric since the seventh century, and the Cathedral was served by monks until the Reformation. St Oswald and St Wulfstan were among the bishops.

Since the eighteenth century, the Cathedral has been famous for its part in the annual Three Choirs Festival (the 2026 festival will take place in Gloucester Cathedral), the oldest choral festival in existence. Today, the Cathedral is the centre of a vibrant community of clergy and laypeople; offering the praises of God each day, serving the city and diocese of Worcester, and attracting visitors from all over the world.

The Cathedral community is diverse with over 100 staff and 300 volunteers. We are rightly proud of the tremendous heritage and number of partners we work with across the Cathedral to provide a warm welcome to our visitors to learn more about the history of the building, attend our many events and activities, and to experience the spiritual opportunities of the Cathedral.

The governance of the Cathedral is the responsibility of the Chapter, which comprises residentiary canons and lay canons with professional expertise. The Chapter is responsible for the strategy, oversight and delivery of the operational plan.

There are a team of Departmental Managers led by the Chief Operating Officer, who meet regularly and work collaboratively to achieve the annual objectives and plan. The Cathedral has a diverse range of income, all of which is either achieved through donations, fundraising, earned income, investment income or other support.



Worcester Cathedral Music Department

Members of the Music Department currently include:

Organist and Director of Music	Mr Samuel Hudson
Assistant Director of Music	Mr Nicholas Freestone
Organ Scholar	Mr Benedict Braddock <i>(from September 2025)</i>
Music Administrator	Mr Alan Sheldon

Regular service timetable:

(Services sung by the Cathedral Choir unless otherwise stated)

Monday:	17:30	Evensong
Tuesday:		Morning chorister rehearsal (no Evensong)
Wednesday:	17.30	Evensong (Choral scholars only)
Thursday:	17:30	Evensong
Friday:	17:30	Evensong *
Saturday:	17:30	Evensong
Sunday:	10:30	Eucharist
	16:00	Evensong
	18:30	Evening Worship (voluntary choir)

* Evensong on a Friday is sung by Principal lay clerks only, and with trebles every other week.



Worcester Cathedral's Choirs

Worcester Cathedral Choir consists of up to 20 boy and girl choristers, 9 lay clerks (altos, tenors, and basses) and 3 choral scholars. In September 2021 the cathedral implemented a series of changes to the configuration of the music department, one aim of which was to achieve parity between the boy and girl choristers of the cathedral choir. In this new model, both boy and girl choristers receive an equal scholarship to the King's School, and from September 2025 the boy and girl choristers will sing in one combined treble line. These arrangements are for the coming academic year only. The cathedral will consider keeping one combined treble line or resuming the running of two separate lines over the course of the year.

The lay clerks sing for six choral services each week. Six principal lay clerks sing for all of these services, with three assistant lay clerks joining them for services on Saturday and Sunday, and for major festivals. The back row is completed by three Choral Scholars, one of each voice part.

The cathedral choir takes a central role in the Three Choirs Festival, held in the final week of July every year and hosted in turn by the cathedrals of Worcester, Hereford, and Gloucester.

Worcester Cathedral Voluntary Choir is an upper voice ensemble for boys and girls, recruited from a variety of local schools. The choir sings at the weekly 6.30pm Sunday service and is directed by the Assistant Director of Music.

Worcester Cathedral Youth Choir was formed in September 2021. Directed by the Assistant Director of Music, the choir aims to provide an opportunity for former choristers and other singers from the local area from year 9 and above to contribute to the cathedral's music. The choir rehearse once per week and sing at a number of services and concerts throughout the year.

Worcester Cathedral Chamber Choir is an adult choir of some 30 singers, directed by its founder and former Senior Lay Clerk, Stephen Shellard. The choir sings regularly at cathedral services, as well as at services and concerts in the local area.

Worcester Festival Choral Society is an autonomous group of approximately 120 singers linked to the cathedral, conducted by the Director of Music. They rehearse on Mondays every week in the cathedral, and present three concerts in the first two terms of each academic year.



The Role



Worcester Cathedral are seeking to appoint 3-4 Associate Soprano Lay Clerks. These new posts will provide the first regular opportunity for adult sopranos to contribute to the worshipping life of the cathedral as members of the cathedral choir.

The one regular weekly commitment for Associate Soprano Lay Clerks will be Evensong on Saturdays at 5.30pm, with a rehearsal from 4.45pm. However, there will also be times when the music department's schedule is such that this will be swapped for a Sunday Eucharist or Evensong, for example. It is not anticipated that regular commitments will fall on other weekdays, though it is hoped that associate soprano lay clerks will contribute to the singing of services at key points in the year including Christmas and Holy Week. A full schedule will be provided in due course with as much notice as possible of future dates.



Job Description

Job title: Associate Soprano Lay Clerk

Department: Music Department

Reporting to: The Director of Music

Duties and responsibilities:

- To sing as a member of the Cathedral Choir usually once a week at Evensong on a Saturday, and at other times as laid out in the music department's schedule.
- To participate in extra commitments by invitation. Such events will command extra fees as notified in each case.
- To take part in training as required.
- To ensure that all safeguarding and health and safety instructions are followed, and that care is taken to ensure safety for self and colleagues, reporting concerns immediately.
- To treat everyone in a way that reflects the Cathedral's values.

Health & Safety

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, you must take reasonable care for your own Health and Safety and that of any other person who may be affected by your acts or omissions. In addition, you must co-operate with the Organisation on Health and Safety and not interfere with, or misuse, anything provided for your health, safety or welfare.

Safeguarding

This role requires a Basic DBS check.

The Cathedral is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk who visit our premises and precinct. All staff and volunteers are expected to actively demonstrate a commitment to a culture of safeguarding by:

- Understanding and adhering to cathedral safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Maintaining professional boundaries and demonstrating behaviour that prioritises safety and wellbeing.
- Taking responsibility for identifying and promptly reporting and safeguarding concerns in line with the policy and procedures.
- Undertaking safeguarding training and fulfilling any specific safeguarding duties required in their role.
- Actively contributing to an environment where everyone feels safe, valued and empowered to raise concerns without fear of reprisal.

Person Specification

This section outlines the knowledge, skills and abilities the job holder needs in order to fulfil the requirements of the post.

PERSON SPECIFICATION		
Key Criteria	Essential	Desirable
Education, skills and experience	<p>Familiarity with a broad variety of sacred liturgical repertoire</p> <p>High capability in sight-reading</p> <p>An ability to hold a vocal part on their own</p> <p>An ability to blend into the overall ensemble of the choir while understanding solo work accurately, confidently and musically.</p> <p>A sympathy with the mission and ethos of Worcester Cathedral, and the Church of England</p> <p>A clear understanding of safeguarding and how this relates to the role</p>	Experience singing in choral ensembles at a professional level
Personal qualities	<p>Excellent punctuality and personal presentation, with efficient time management skills</p> <p>Motivation to improve individual performance and a commitment to professional development</p> <p>A desire to become a member of a close-knit team</p> <p>A commitment to maintaining positive working relationships with colleagues, other members of cathedral staff, clergy, and chorister families</p> <p>A desire to represent the choir and cathedral in a positive manner</p>	



Working for us

Remuneration

Associate Soprano Lay Clerks will be paid as external freelance contractors, with invoices submitted monthly, half-termly, or termly in agreement with the director of music. Singing at each service will command a fee of £31.84. It is anticipated that there will be a maximum of 40 services on offer to Associate Soprano Lay Clerks over the coming academic year (2025 – 2026). Payments for any additional 'special' events will be paid separately.

Professional Development

The cathedral music department takes seriously the ongoing musical development of its professional singers. There is a designated annual allowance for singing lessons for each Soprano Lay Clerk.

Staff discount

All employees will receive a 10% discount on purchases in the Gift Shop and Café within the Cathedral.

Employee Assistance Programme

All employees and their immediate family have access to a range of confidential support through our commissioned employee assistance programme.

Post Availability

The projected start date for this post is September 2025.



How to apply

To apply for this post, please send your application by post or email to:

Matthew Hall,
Chief Operating Officer,
The Old Palace,
Deansway,
Worcester, WR1 2JE

jobs@worcestercathedral.org.uk

Your application should include:

- a current CV and contact details;
- a brief covering letter explaining why you are applying for the post and how your skills and experience match the requirements of the post;
- Details (name, address, telephone number and e-mail) of two referees who would be able to speak about your relevant experience and personal qualities. One must be your current employer (if applicable). References will usually only be contacted if you are short-listed for the post

Should you have any queries about the post, please don't hesitate to contact the Director of Music, Mr Samuel Hudson (samuelhudson@worcestercathedral.org.uk), to arrange an informal conversation.

Closing date: 5pm, Friday 22nd August 2025

Interviews and auditions: Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview and audition on 6 September, 13 September or 20 September. Part of this process will include singing at Evensong with the Cathedral Choir. Full details, including advance sight of Evensong repertoire, will be circulated to shortlisted candidates one week before each audition date.





The Chapter Office
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Worcester Cathedral is fully committed to Equal Opportunity policies.