



## Position description Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars, St Mary’s Cathedral

Reporting to: Director of Music

The Position: The primary purpose of the combined role of Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars is to collaborate with the Director of Music in maintaining the long and distinguished tradition of sacred music at St Mary’s Cathedral, principally by singing in a leadership capacity within the Cathedral Choir, and undertaking the day-to-day musical direction to the Cathedral Scholars.

A key aim of this position is to provide stability and professional reliability within the Lay Clerks of the Cathedral Choir whilst offering the Scholars insightful, rigorous, and attentive musical mentorship.

To achieve this, the Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will be required to adopt a flexible approach to availability for both regularly scheduled and extraordinary Cathedral rehearsals, services, and other Choir engagements, and to a changing weekly Cathedral and College schedule.

Responsibilities: As a Principal Lay Clerk, the Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will be accountable to the Director of Music for the following tasks:

- Attend and sing at all **Regular Cathedral Services** and associated rehearsals as scheduled in the Lay Clerks’ Calendar
  - A calendar of Regular Cathedral Services is published by the Director of Music at the beginning of each year, and is subject to change during the course of the year
  - During Choir term time there are generally four “calls” per week for Principal Lay Clerks:
    - Sunday morning Mass
    - Sunday evening Vespers
    - Vespers followed immediately by Mass on two weeknights
  - Whilst leave from Regular Cathedral Services may be taken according to the conditions set out in the Letter of Appointment, ten Regular Cathedral Services are designated **Obligatory**, which means attendance at these services is a condition of employment. These are:
    - Palm Sunday Morning Mass
    - Mass of the Lord’s Supper (Maundy Thursday)
    - The Easter Vigil
    - Easter Sunday Morning Mass
    - Easter Sunday Vespers
    - Commemoration of the Lord’s Passion (Good Friday)
    - First Vespers of Christmas (Christmas Eve)
    - Christmas Midnight Mass
    - Christmas Morning Mass
    - Pentecost Sunday Morning Mass
  - Leave is generally to be taken during Choir holidays (during the month of January, and between school terms)

- Requests for leave from Regular Cathedral Services must be approved by the Director of Music
- Attend and sing at **Special Services** where available. These include, but are not limited to, Ordinations, Weddings, Funerals, and other liturgies that are in addition to the Cathedral's schedule of Regular Liturgies. Fees for special services are paid in addition to the salary.
- Attend and sing for **Other Performances** where available. These include, but are not limited to, concerts, recordings and other external engagements. Fees for other performances are paid in addition to the salary.
- Provide vocal musical leadership within the Cathedral Choir, primarily by setting an example for the other singers
- Prepare repertoire in advance and perform confidently. Music lists are published a minimum of two weeks in advance to support this
- Maintain their vocal technique and vocal health
- Not to use electronic devices of any sort during rehearsals, services or performances except in emergency situations
- Obtain and present to the Cathedral a valid Working With Children Clearance in accord with the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* on request of the Director of Music
- Other duties as directed by the Director of Music

As the Director of the Scholars, the Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will be accountable to the Director of Music for the following tasks:

- Rehearse and train the Scholars' ensemble, directing regular and special rehearsals
- Prepare the Scholars to perform the prescribed repertoire for the regular Cathedral services at which the Scholars sing
- Direct the Scholars' ensemble when it performs liturgically in the Cathedral, and at other performances as requested by the Director of Music
- Formulate a clear developmental plan for the ensemble, taking into account the abilities, potential, and educational needs of the individual members, in collaboration with the Director of Music
- Liaise with the Scholars' individual singing teachers, maintaining a high level of oversight in order to ensure integration of vocal training with the Scholars' program
- Plan liturgically appropriate repertoire to be prepared and performed by the ensemble, in collaboration with the Director of Music
- Manage the administration of the Scholars' ensemble with assistance from the Music Administrator and other Music Department staff
- Communicate with the Director of Music about the progress of individual scholars, and on occasion provide feedback to parents of scholars
- Obtain and present to the Cathedral a valid Working With Children Clearance in accord with the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* on request of the Director of Music

Other duties as directed by the Director of Music

Inter-relationships: The Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will interact with the following internal and external groups in the performance of their duties:

- Cathedral Clergy and Staff
  - Archbishop of Sydney
  - Auxiliary Bishops
  - Cathedral Dean
  - Cathedral Assistant Priests
  - Visiting Bishops, Priests, Deacons and other Religious
  - Cathedral Sacristan
  - Cathedral Precinct General Manager and Office Staff
- Cathedral Music Department
  - Director of Music
  - Assistant Director of Music
  - Assistant Organists
  - Music Administrator
  - Singing teachers
  - Choristers
  - Scholars
  - Lay Clerks
- Cathedral College Staff
  - Principal
  - Music Coordinator
  - College Music Staff
  - Primary Teachers
- Chorister Parents

Qualifications and Experience:

The ideal Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will have:

- Experience of singing at an internationally-recognized professional level in both solo and ensemble situations
- Excellent sight-reading and ensemble skills
- Knowledge and experience of singing the full breadth of choral repertoire, especially Renaissance polyphony and Gregorian Chant
- Demonstrated commitment to excellence in musical performance and a willingness to be accountable for their performance
- Postgraduate music performance and teaching qualifications
- Experience as a choir trainer within an educational, secular or religious institution
- Proven success in working with and relating to young singers, especially boys with changing voices
- Experience and understanding of Cathedral chorister programs
- Demonstrated commitment to the ethos and values of the Catholic Church

- Attributes: The Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will demonstrate the following attributes:
- Professional, reverent manner and presentation, in particular with respect to the performance of their duties in the Cathedral
  - Excellent collaborative rehearsal/performance instincts
  - Musical leadership skills and experience
  - Punctuality for all rehearsals and performances
  - Attention to detail and a well ordered approach to work
  - An ability to inspire children and young adults
  - Determination and perseverance
  - Enthusiastic and imaginative teaching style
  - Group-management skills
  - Excellent interpersonal and verbal communication skills
  - Patience
- Performance Management: The performance of the Principal Lay Clerk and Director of the Scholars will be assessed on a regular basis having regard to:
- Their performance on the key responsibilities and attributes for this role
  - Their ability to advance the musical reputation of the Cathedral Choir
  - Their ability to enhance the quality of the Cathedral Choir's educative program
  - Service levels and the level of satisfaction expressed by key stakeholders
  - Their ability to develop and maintain relationships with other members of the Music Department and Cathedral community