



CHRIST CHURCH
CATHEDRAL

FURTHER PARTICULARS

Job title	Lay Clerk (alto and tenor)
Location	Christ Church Cathedral
Department	Cathedral
Salary	Stipend of £9,093 per annum plus shared housing
Hours	Part-time
Contract type	A Lay Clerk is appointed to hold office in the first instance for a period of two years, of which the first year is probationary. Thereafter the position becomes permanent.
Responsible to	Reports to the Organist
Application deadline	Noon on Monday 23 February 2026
Vacancy reference	HT25_ Lay Clerk
Additional information	The post will start on 1 st September 2026, or earlier if successful candidates' circumstances allow, and will be part time. It is possible to combine the role with a second occupation or research. The role is subject to a 12-month probationary period.

Christ Church Cathedral

Oxford's cathedral has a unique dual role in the Church of England. Christ Church Cathedral is the College Chapel as well as the cathedral church for the Diocese of Oxford, and welcomes worshippers from Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and beyond. The site has been a place of worship for more than a thousand years. A monastery was founded here early in the eighth century by St. Frideswide. Records show Henry I granted a charter to an Augustinian priory in 1122. Although no evidence of the earlier buildings remains, parts of the 12th-century structure are still visible in the Cathedral today. Wolsey suppressed the priory in 1524, and work began on the building of Cardinal's College – with part of the west end of the church removed to make space for Tom Quad. After Wolsey's fall, the college was re-designated as 'King Henry VIII's College'. In 1546, the priory church became both the cathedral for the newly formed Diocese of Oxford, and the chapel of the new college of Christ Church, a college of the University of Oxford. Today, the Cathedral is a tourist destination, with over half a million visitors every year, and it is a venue for worship, services, concerts, exhibitions, talks, and recordings.

Music at Christ Church

Music plays a major part in Cathedral worship and ministry, and the foundation supports four choirs.

The majority of the daily services are sung by the Cathedral Choir. Established by Cardinal Wolsey in 1526, the Cathedral Choir has a special and distinctive place within the great English choral tradition. Throughout its history it has attracted many distinguished composers, organists and singers, from its first director, John Taverner, appointed by Wolsey, to William Walton in the 20th century. Historically, the Choir is set apart from all other collegiate and cathedral choirs since it serves both an Oxford college and a diocese at once, as a unique and celebrated and dual foundation. It has become revered for the



vibrancy of its collective sound and its artistic flexibility.

There is a total of forty-five choristers across the treble lines, with the adult singers including Lay, Stipendiary and Academical Clerks. The boy choristers attend Christ Church Cathedral School, where they are boarders, while the girls are members of Frideswide Voices, the adoption of which into the Foundation in 2019 has enabled the Cathedral to provide an excellent musical education for girl choristers.

Outside term time the pattern of choral worship is chiefly sustained by the Cathedral Singers, a voluntary choir which has its own music staff and organising committee, with visiting choirs singing services during the month of August and occasionally throughout the year. During term the College Choir, made up of and directed by undergraduate and graduate students, pursues its own programme of concerts and College services.

The Cathedral's music is under the overall direction of the Organist (Director of Music) Peter Holder. He is supported by the Sub-Organist, the Associate Choral Director and the Organ Scholars, together with a team of administrative staff and support staff.

Role of the Lay Clerk

The six Lay Clerks are the permanently employed professional singers who form the core membership of the choir and sing for the Cathedral's choral services all year round. They are expected to act in sympathy with the work and ethos of the foundation, as well as fulfilling the musical requirements of the post and acting as mentors to the undergraduate Academical Clerks. A commitment to Christ Church Cathedral, and an appetite to take an active part in its liturgical life, is expected. Lay Clerks often combine their work at the Cathedral with a portfolio of other singing work.

Christ Church is seeking to appoint talented musicians with considerable experience of singing to a professional standard in a university college chapel, cathedral or other significant ecclesiastical setting. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a well-developed singing voice of appropriate range and quality, together with a high level of technical proficiency and excellent musicianship, particularly in sight-reading.

Key Relationships

The Lay Clerks report directly to the Organist (Director of Music); other key relationships include the Sub-Organist, Associate Choral Director, Stipendiary and Academical Clerks, Organ Scholars and Cathedral Clergy.

Main Duties and Responsibilities

The post-holder will be required to:

1. Sing for the Cathedral's statutory and special services according to the following regular schedule:

Sunday	11:05am Sung Eucharist	(rehearsal 10am)
Tuesday - Friday	6:05pm Evensong	(rehearsal 5pm)
Saturday	6:05pm Evensong	(rehearsal 5pm)
	6:05pm Evensong	(rehearsal 4.45pm)

(The 6:05pm service on Monday does not usually involve the Cathedral Choir. In cases when it does, the choir is given another weekday service off in lieu.)



2. Sing for the Cathedral Choir's extensive programme of special projects (including concerts, touring and recording), some of which take place offsite and regularly overseas.
3. Sing solos as required.
4. Undertake the necessary advance preparation for rehearsals and performances, learning new repertoire as required.
5. Mentor academical clerk desk partners and offer coaching, as required, up to an hour each week (beyond which additional payment would be made).
6. Engage with the ongoing professional development needs of academical clerk colleagues and monitor wellbeing, reporting to the Organist on all matters arising.
7. Engage suitable deputy singers in the event of absence (including arranging cover for academical clerk desk partner's absences as required).
8. Participate in the non-performing activities of the Choir and wider Foundation (for example attending meetings, auditions and photo calls from time to time).
9. Consistently perform to and maintain the highest musical standards, commensurate with the reputation of the Foundation and its tradition of musical excellence.
10. Pursue appropriate ongoing professional training and take care to maintain good vocal health.
11. Undertake all duties in a professional and reverent manner, acting as an ambassador for the Cathedral.
12. Undertake appropriate Safeguarding Training and adhere to all relevant Christ Church Safeguarding Policies.
13. Adhere at all times to Christ Church's other policies, protocols and codes of conduct, and undertake training as required.

Selection Criteria/Person Specification

Essential

- Educated to degree level or equivalent
- At least three years' choral experience, preferably within a cathedral, university college, or chapel setting
- Singing study to an advanced level
- Wide tenor vocal range of consistent quality and projection
- Excellent musicianship and technical proficiency
- Advanced sight-reading skills
- Aptitude for ensemble singing
- Familiarity with a broad range of liturgical repertoire, with the ability to perform with stylistic fidelity in a variety of different idioms
- Ability to work with a diverse set of stakeholders with courtesy, professionalism and respect
- In sympathy with the aims and objectives of the Cathedral.
- An effective team player



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Desirable

- Music degree or relevant professional qualification
- Previous professional employment with a collegiate or cathedral choir
- Working knowledge of the Church of England liturgy

Terms and Conditions

The Lay Clerk will be a member of Christ Church Cathedral staff.

Appointment Posts (alto and tenor) are available for a 1st September 2026 start, or earlier if successful candidates' circumstances allow.

Appointment Term The Lay Clerk appointment is subject to completion of an initial probationary period of 12 months. A Lay Clerk is appointed to hold office in the first instance for a period of two years, of which the first year is probationary. Thereafter the position becomes permanent.

Stipend £9,093 per annum which is reviewed in September each year and will be reviewed again in 2026. This sum includes an allowance for a certain number of pre-recorded and livestreamed services, details of which will be set out in the contract.

In addition, a Lay Clerk receives furnished, rent-free (shared) accommodation. The Lay Clerk is responsible for paying for heating and lighting bills as well as council tax. (Although the council tax liability rests with the Lay Clerk, it is paid in full by the Cathedral and repayment is made by 12 equal deductions from Lay Clerk's salary). The accommodation is maintained by the College. If accommodation is not available, the Lay Clerk may be offered a housing allowance in lieu.

Additional Income Whilst extra income from tours, concerts, recordings and television work cannot be guaranteed, the Lay Clerk may expect to earn additional income from such work. Any such additional income is paid through the monthly payroll.

Annual Leave

i. Paid Leave

In normal circumstances, Stipendiary Clerks are given the following paid leave of absence:

- 2 weeks after Christmas
- 3 weeks over Easter (the Choir sings during Holy Week from Palm Sunday to Easter Day)
- 9 weeks in the Summer
- 1 week during the school half-term each term.

It is possible for paid leave to be granted outside these periods in exceptional circumstances. The exact times of holiday periods may change but the aggregate of holiday entitlement will not be less than this.



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ii. Unpaid Leave

Lay Clerks are free to absent themselves from up to 20 statutory services across the academic year, provided that not more than one Clerk in any given voice part is signed out and two Clerks in total.

An absence for a special service or project may be negotiated separately with the Organist.

A further allowance of five services is available for professional development opportunities of particular significance. Such absence is granted by written permission from the Organist.

In such instances, the Lay Clerk is asked to fix a deputy, who is paid by the Cathedral through the payroll and an equivalent sum is deducted from salary.

Lay Clerks are required to be in attendance for broadcast services, concerts, recording projects, tours, and on the following days: College Gaudies, Advent and Christmas Carol Services, Christmas Day, Palm Sunday and Holy Week services, Easter Day, the annual Court Sermon Service and the St Frideswide Civic Service.

Pension

The successful candidate will be entitled to enroll in the NEST Pension Scheme, subject to the entrance criteria being met.

Safeguarding

Christ Church Cathedral places the utmost importance on the safety and wellbeing of all who come to worship, work and volunteer in the Cathedral, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults. Offers of employment are subject to satisfactory references and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. All employees are obliged to complete regular safeguarding training.

Probation period

During the initial probationary period of 12 months, notice will be one month on either side. Subject to satisfactory completion of probation, the notice period will be one choir term's notice in writing to the Director of Music, and the Dean and Canons.

**Pre-employment
Screening**

Please note that the appointment of the successful candidate will be subject to standard pre-employment screening, as applicable to the post. This appointment at Christ Church Cathedral is subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check at enhanced level. Where applicable screening will include:

- Eligibility to work in the UK
- Qualifications
- References



How to Apply

To apply, please provide the documentation listed below, no later than the deadline of **noon on Monday 23 February 2026** with a covering letter and a CV. Applications received after this time will not be considered.

Application documents should include:

- A letter of application and CV addressed to the Organist outlining:
- Singing experience and posts held
- Academic and professional qualifications
- Any second occupation or research interests
- Names and contact details of two referees, neither of whom should be related to the applicant. Referees will be contacted for the successful candidate.
- The completed Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

You should also send a recent audio recording of a solo song or aria, ideally via a link from a file-sharing site. Recordings made on a phone or similar device are acceptable.

Interviews

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to attend an interview and audition, further details of which will be provided. These are expected to be held on **4 and 5 March 2026**.

Applications should be emailed to recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk

Due to the large volume of recruitment that Christ Church administers we are unable to provide feedback to non-shortlisted applicants.

If you need help

If you have any questions regarding the application process, including any reasonable adjustments that you may require for the interviewing process, please contact recruitment@chch.ox.ac.uk. All enquiries will be treated in strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

If you would like an informal discussion regarding the role, please contact Peter Holder, Organist, at peter.holder@chch.ox.ac.uk. All enquiries will be treated with strict confidence and will not form part of the selection decision.

Important Information for Candidates

Applications will be judged only against the criteria which are set out in the Further Particulars, and applicants should ensure that their applications explain how they meet each of the selection criteria for the post using examples of their skills and experience. This may include experience gained in employment, education, or during career breaks (such as time out to care for dependents).

Christ Church is committed to fairness, consistency and transparency in selection decisions. Members of the selection panel will be aware of the principles of equality of opportunity, fair selection and the risks of bias. Applications are particularly welcome from black and minority ethnic candidates, who are under-represented in College staff.



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Data Privacy

Please note that any personal data submitted to Christ Church as part of the job application process will be used only for the purposes of determining suitability for the post and processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and related UK data protection legislation. For further information, please see the Christ Church Privacy Notice available at: <https://www.chch.ox.ac.uk/privacy-policy>.

Christ Church's policy on retirement

There is no normal or fixed age at which staff in non-academic posts have to retire. Staff at these grades may elect to retire in accordance with the rules of the applicable pension scheme, as may be amended from time to time.

Equality of opportunity

Christ Church is committed to equality of opportunity. It is our policy and practice that entry into employment and progression within employment will be determined only by criteria which are related to the duties of a particular post and the relevant salary scale. No applicant or member of staff will be treated less favorably than another because of their age, disability, ethnicity, marital or civil partnership status, parental status, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.