



Audition Process (Updated June 2021)

Western Australian Wind Symphony

Since its inception in 2008, WACO ensembles have always held a thorough audition process. By holding annual auditions, our ensembles are experiencing substantial increases in quality. Auditions allow the ensemble to be well-balanced musically and encourage a healthy social dynamic.

As our ensembles grow and evolve, we will continue to make changes to improve our audition process. The WA Wind Symphony's audition process for 2021 is outlined below.

AUDITION PROCESS

To ensure an environment that is as free from bias as possible, our instrumental ensembles are auditioned using a **screened process**. The personal information of candidates including age, gender, name etc. is kept confidential and not provided to the audition panel. This ensures anonymity for the candidate and enables the panel to make their decisions based solely on performance and without the influence of conscious or unconscious bias.

To increase accessibility and to ease the audition process among the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all auditions for the September 2021-July 2022 season will submitted as pre-recorded videos.

Auditions must first be received in a **video format** to ensure validity and authenticity. WACO staff will then convert each video audition into an anonymous audio file for assessment by the panel.

RECORDED AUDITIONS

It is within an applicant's best interest to provide a video recording with a **high level of sound quality**. If you believe you do not have access to suitable equipment, you are encouraged to contact the WACO committee who will do all they can to assist you with this. The committee can be reached via info@waco.org.au.

- Recordings are to be emailed to samuel.parry@waco.org.au and must be submitted by 11:59pm on the due date.
- Recordings must be audio-visual, not just audio. Recordings that are audio only will not be accepted by the committee.
- You must be visible in the video recording so we can prove that it is you playing the excerpts, and that they were played in one take. After we have received the recording, we will convert it into an MP3 before presenting it to the panel to ensure your anonymity.
- All excerpts are to be recorded in one take without pausing the recording equipment. You are not permitted to edit the recording. *However, you may make as many takes as you wish and submit the one that you feel best represents your playing abilities.*
- The set excerpts must be played in numerical order.
- You must not speak during the recording.
- Recordings must be made in, or converted to, one of the following formats: MPEG, WMV, AVI or MP4.

AUDITION MATERIALS

Excerpts for the auditions are taken from concert band repertoire. Excerpts will be provided via email 14 days in advance of the due date. *Auditions will not be accepted beyond the due date.* If there are extenuating circumstances that render you unable to prepare the excerpts within the 14 days, special permission will need to be received from the music director to submit your audition beyond the due date.

Our music director can be reached via samuel.parry@waco.org.au.

AUDITION ADJUDICATING PROCEDURE

Each candidate will be awarded a score by the audition panel using a set marking key. The panel will be marking you on details such as intonation, tone, rhythm, articulation, note accuracy, etc. Your score will determine your eligibility for, and position within, the ensemble.

PRINCIPAL AND TUTTI AUDITIONS

The differences between principal and tutti roles are that principal players lead their sections (principal flute, principal bassoon, etc.), and tutti players fill all other roles (all flutes other than principal, bassoons other than principal, etc.). Principal audition excerpts are more challenging than the tutti excerpts, and often more soloistic in nature.

- Principal flute and principal piccolo are considered separate roles, and have different audition materials. The principal flute and principal piccolo work together to lead the flute section.
- Principal clarinet and principal bass clarinet are considered separate roles, and have different audition materials. The principal clarinet is the leader of all Bb and Eb clarinets, and the principal bass clarinet is the leader of the lower clarinets including alto, bass, contra alto and contrabass clarinets.
- Bass trombone is considered a tutti position.

PRINCIPAL VS TUTTI AUDITIONS

To determine leaders for each section, principal auditions are held on an earlier date than tutti auditions. A principal audition will consist of three contrasting excerpts that will be different than those set for tutti auditions.

The panels for principal auditions will be made up of external music professionals. If you are successful in your principal audition, you may be invited to act as a panel member for the tutti auditions.

If you are unsuccessful in a principal audition and still wish to be a member of an ensemble, you may be required to complete an additional tutti audition. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis.

RESERVE LIST

In some situations, candidates may still meet the standard required for the ensemble but may not be awarded a place in the orchestra due to competition. These candidates will be placed on the reserve list. In the case that an orchestra member is unavailable to perform during the year, or should a vacancy arise in the ensemble, reserve candidates will be offered the opportunity to participate first before the committee seeks an outside player to fill the role.

AUXILIARY WOODWINDS, CORNETS & FLUGELHORN

Assignments for auxiliary woodwinds (piccolo [other than principal], alto flute, cor anglais, contrabassoon, Eb clarinet, alto clarinet, bass clarinet [other than principal], contra alto clarinet, and contrabass clarinet), as well as cornets and flugelhorns, etc. will be negotiated throughout the season by the music director and principal players.

All woodwind applicants will be required to express their interest, experience and access to auxiliary woodwinds as a part of the application process. For further explanation on how auxiliary woodwinds will be assigned, please contact the music director by emailing samuel.parry@waco.org.au.

Usually, separate auditions are not held for auxiliary woodwinds. However, if *all* candidates express interest in an auxiliary woodwind and have access to that instrument, then an excerpt for that instrument may be included in the set audition materials.

SAXOPHONES

The principal alto saxophone is considered the leader of the saxophone section, while all other saxophone positions are considered tutti roles. Saxophonists should audition on the saxophone which they are most comfortable with, and on which is their first preference to play if should they be awarded a place in the ensemble.

The audition panel will assess each saxophone candidate equally, regardless of which saxophone they use in their audition. During the application process, saxophonists are given the opportunity to express their interest in playing different saxophones. After reviewing the auditions, the audition panel may decide to award a player a position on a saxophone they did not play in their audition, based on their performance and on their preferences.

HARP & PIANO PLAYERS

As the repertoire for the West Coast Phil does not always call for harp or piano, musicians who play these instruments are invited to play with the ensemble as the need arises. In some cases, musicians who play these instruments may be required to audition. Players can register their interest with the music director by emailing samuel.parry@waco.org.au.

If you have questions about the audition process, please contact us for more information. We look forward to receiving your application and your recorded auditions.

Best wishes,

The WACO Committee