

Britten Sinfonia

Principal Clarinet Auditions 2027



Introduction from Meurig Bowen, CEO and Artistic Director

Thank you for your interest in this position, one which comes about with the retirement of our Principal Clarinet, Founder Member Joy Farrall.

Britten Sinfonia came into being in the early '90s and continues to be a distinctive and much-admired presence in the UK's orchestral scene (we were recently listed in the Daily Telegraph's Top Ten UK Orchestras ranking). We aim to create impactful and meaningful musical experiences through both our varied performance schedule and our Learning & Participation programme. Alongside working with established, acclaimed collaborators, nurturing and celebrating the work of younger, emerging artists is important to us. New music has always been baked into our identity too: our musicians have now premiered nearly 300 works over three decades.

Britten Sinfonia's repertoire and range of projects are extraordinarily broad. To give a sense of this, recent work has ranged from tours with folk duo Stevens & Pound and Max Baillie's ZRI Quintet to concerts with Anoushka Shankar and Jacob Collier; Mozart, Pärt and Higgins in a Bristol Beacon BBC Prom/Snape Maltings pairing, and a triple bill of chamber operas at the ROH's Linbury Theatre. 2026/7 highlights include a tour of UK cathedrals with our Surround Sound Playlist project, Beethoven symphonies in Bilbao, performances of Beethoven's *Septet*, and John Adams' *Chamber Symphony*. Our 14-strong management team is as experienced and committed to excellence as our wonderful players are.

The Role

The newly appointed Principal Clarinet will join our team of Member Players. This is a freelance position and member players receive a Forward Schedule of anticipated work to enable advance planning. It is expected that Member Players have a reliable regular presence and undertake the majority of work offered to them. Britten Sinfonia also has a very active Learning and Participation department, who are keen for Member Players to be involved in the various programmes run in the areas of composer development, schools and family participation, and wellbeing and health.

This job requires exposed playing of both E-flat and Bass Clarinet, and you will be required to demonstrate this should you make it to the Second Round of auditions.

Audition Process

Britten Sinfonia is signed up to and gradually adopting the requirements of the *10-Point Plan for Hiring and Recruitment in UK Orchestras*, drawn up by the ABO, Black Lives in Music and the Musician's Union, to encourage fair recruitment in the orchestral sector. As such, all applications will be anonymised, and First Round auditions will be screened. No candidates will be put to trial without having auditioned.

In-person auditions will take place on 12 and 31 January 2027. Candidates who are unable to make either of these dates are still invited to submit an online application and are able to make us aware via the application form. We are not able to offer alternative dates to those unable to attend, but if a suitable number of trials are not awarded after the initial dates, a further date may be scheduled, and these candidates will be notified.

Online Application

Applicants should complete the online application form via Musical Chairs. The First Round of auditions will be held in an 'open call' style, so any candidate available on the audition dates will be invited to audition.

The application deadline is 23:59 GMT on Tuesday 1 December 2026. Please note if we receive more applications than we are able to process, we may bring the closing date forward, so if you are interested in auditioning, we recommend submitting your application as soon as possible. We kindly ask that if you decide not to audition, you withdraw your application as early as possible.

In-Person Audition (First/Second Round)

Following the online application, candidates will be invited to attend a live, screened First Round audition at The Warehouse, Waterloo, on one of the following dates in January 2027:

- Tuesday 12 January
- Sunday 31 January

First Round auditions will take place in the mornings.

Once all First Round candidates for the day have been heard, the panel will invite a selection of candidates back for a Second Round audition, which will happen on the afternoon of your First Round audition. Therefore, candidates should keep both morning and afternoon available. It will not be possible for a candidate to have their First and Second Round auditions on different days.

Second Round auditions will comprise repertoire demonstrating ability on E-flat and Bass Clarinet, and chamber music with panel members on B-flat Clarinet. Please see the required repertoire list for further information.

The Second Round will not be screened.

Trial

Following the Second Round, selected candidates will be invited to trial with the orchestra.

Right to work in the UK

Candidates for this role must be a British or Irish citizen, or have eligibility to work in the UK on a freelance basis. Candidates invited to trial with the orchestra will be asked to prove their right to work in the UK before a trial period commences.

If you have any access requirements or need any other adjustments to take part in this audition process, we encourage you to get in touch with us in advance. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible and will do our best to accommodate individual needs. To discuss access or request support, or for any other questions, please contact auditions@brittensinfonia.com.