



## Submission How-To

*Everyone's a musician.*

### General

This is not a competition. The orchestra's inclusive artistic policy is to rehearse all works presented to it and to perform as many of them as possible at that semester's concert. If you wish only to have your piece rehearsed, however, do let us know.

Performances will be recorded. Give us advance notice if you wish a rehearsal to be recorded (audio only).

Submissions are welcomed from both student and non-student fully paid members of the society. If a composer is not a paid member of the society, they will be required to join as a paid member for the semester that their work is rehearsed and/or performed.

Current subscription rates can be found on our [EUSA website page](#).

### Submission Guidelines

Submissions should last no longer than ten minutes for single pieces. We reserve the right to play select movements of longer works, so submitting a longer piece of work is permissible provided you accept this condition.

Submissions should consider that our orchestra is inclusive and non-auditioning, therefore it is most advisable to compose with the following in mind:

- We have players of mixed abilities.
- Our orchestra's size fluctuates each semester.
- We cannot guarantee any specific instrument will be available.

It is therefore quite advisable for composers to attend at least one of our weekly rehearsals **before** submission to get a grasp of what forces may be available. If in doubt, contact us.

We accept chamber works and solo works, but these will be programmed at the discretion of the committee and/or musical director.

We strive to provide feedback to composers. As and when this feedback is communicated with composers, we may expect alterations to part scores. This will be at the discretion of the committee and any new deadline for alterations will be communicated privately with the composer.

We endeavour to cover all parts composed but may require a change in orchestration or instrumentation to do so, in correspondence with composers. Composers may help recruit, at no further cost to the society, their own soloists or performers should we fail to provide a satisfactory solution.

Submissions should be sent as both: 1) a MIDI recording & 2) a full score and parts in PDF format to [composersorchestra@gmail.com](mailto:composersorchestra@gmail.com). Deadlines shall be posted on our social media accounts and emailed to newsletter subscribers as and when they are decided.

Closer to concert dates, we shall ask composers for brief programme notes. These should tell the audience about your music, not about you.

Compositions **must be** original works. We cannot accept arrangements.

#### Composer Obligations Post-Submission

To ensure that our interpretation of your piece is as intended, composers must attend at least one rehearsal of their piece. Failing this for reasons beyond your control, correspondence with our musical director may be sufficient at their discretion.

Composers are expected to attend the concert when their piece is programmed to take a bow and to join us at the after party.

Do not print parts for us; we print everything ourselves. Ensure any non-standard printing instructions are clear when submitting (one-sided, double-sided, A3, A4 etc.). You may, however, wish to bring a pencil and a score to our rehearsals to record any alterations.

As always, if you are unsure about anything, please contact us.

**Thank you for your submission and we look forward to bringing your music to life!**

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## Preparing A Score

There is no wrong way to make music. However, when it comes to preparing a score, it is important that your score meets notational standards for ease of reading as we have limited rehearsal time. The following will help us, and any future performers, interpret your music correctly:

### Layout

- Your score should have a title page followed by an introductory page with notational instructions (for any non-standard notations you may have invented or borrowed from, say, Lachenmann) and any other explanatory notes, along with a list of instrumentation. *Performers **never** read this and so you should also write notational instructions where they appear in the score and parts.*
- The first page of music should be on the right-hand page when looking at two pages.
- The first page of music should use full names of instruments. Each subsequent page should only use abbreviations. This applies to instrument change instructions (though do check with the player first that they have both instruments/can play them).
- The first page of music should show all staves of all instruments present, even if empty. Each subsequent page should hide any blank staves where it does not create a constantly changing line of sight (i.e., the conductor is reading from afar, so they will expect the same line on two adjacent pages to remain the same instrument).
- In the score it is permissible to place up to two instruments per staff to save space.
- Making your score A3 is acceptable. Parts should be A4 *or* easy to fit on a music stand.
- Parts should include page breaks where most convenient for a performer to physically turn the page. For example, during a long section of rests. If this is not possible, place the 'bad page turn' mark at the bottom of the page.
- The use of rehearsal markings (A, B, C etc.) is desired in orchestral music.

### Pitch, Harmony, and Accidentals

- Scores are in concert pitch. Parts are transposed.
- If using software for auto-making parts, re-read them to ensure they remain legible.
- Not all music requires a key signature – in fact, most modern music composition does not make use of key signatures! However, *if they make reading the score simpler then please use them!* **This is the golden rule for all choices made.**
- Please write in the key signature simplest to present your music; C $\flat$  major with 7 flats is harder to sightread than its *enharmonic* equivalent of B major with 5 sharps.
- When writing chromatically, use accidentals that make reading easiest. The basic advice is to use sharps to go up, flats to go down, and ideally have each letter accounted for once (i.e., do not use F and F $\sharp$  when you can have a G $\flat$  instead).
- However, **different instruments think about music differently**; this is a large part of learning composition. For example, a pianist will want to see accidentals that identify with the underlying harmony of what they are playing (i.e., you would write C-E-G as opposed to C-F $\flat$ -G); a wind or brass instrument, on the other hand, will think about their *line* and not the overall harmony. Guitarists tend only to think in sharps and forget flats even exist (and require tablature as well as 'sheet music notation'), and strings will be thinking in terms of the intervals they are playing. Harps have their own rules entirely!
- So, when deciding which accidentals to use, remember that each instrument has its own idiomatic language and spelling standards. [There are whole discussions on this topic](#). The easier something is to read the more likely an orchestra will play it cohesively in the same way! *Remember an orchestra is much more than just one of each instrument.*

### Dynamics, Articulations, and other Techniques

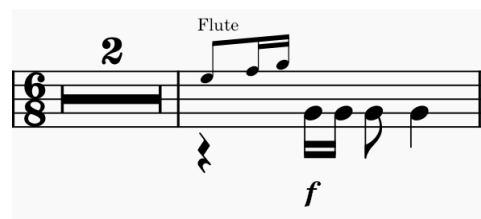
- Please provide as much detail as possible in your composition.
- Dynamic markings, articulations and techniques should be logically displayed.
- It is preferable to write more complex sounds in English than translating it to Italian (for example, if you want someone to clap, just say 'clap' and use a different note head for rhythms).
- Dynamic markings and techniques come **before** the word *subito*. This ensures we know when exactly the change occurs.
- Where a standard notational symbol is available, make sure to use it. E.g., tremolo slashes should be used instead of writing the word "tremolo" above the music.
- Similarly, graphic scores should be as detailed and simple to interpret as possible.

### Tempo, Rhythm, and Beats

- Tempo markings should be clearly presented.
- Time signatures are chosen for the beats they emphasise, not for how tidy they look. Do not write everything in 4/4 if your rhythmic ideas are better presented otherwise.
- Sing your rhythm to figure out the strong, 'downbeat,' and rewrite the bar so that it clearly indicates this. We are more likely to get your rhythms right if you do this!
- Sometimes you may find yourself using too many triplets where it may be easier to read if you change the tempo and time signature. [See Rhythm Rewriting for more.](#)
- In more complex music where you are playing with the feeling of the rhythm, beam your notes to show which beats are to be emphasised (keep in mind how it is conducted):



- Please add cues to parts where there are long rests or where the instrument enters on an upbeat or irregular rhythm. This makes it easy for us to know when to start playing again:



- In irregular time signatures, it is preferable for you to write out rests to denote the main beats of the bar rather than leaving the bars entirely empty:



If you have any questions, please contact us. Submitting to our orchestra can be a collaborative effort and we welcome your feedback as much as you may welcome ours. For further reading, we recommend the book found on every composer's bedside table, [Elaine Gould's Behind Bars](#).