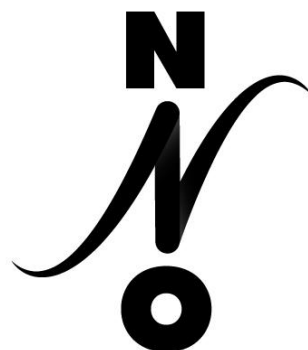


Audition rules

A component of the recruitment and selection process for musicians

Effective date: 1 January 2021



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0. General terms and conditions

Confidentiality/privacy

- 0(1) All that occurs or is discussed during the audition or the audition assessments is confidential; the director alone shall announce the results. In this respect, all committee members are jointly responsible.
- 0(2) In the event of a clear breach of these rules, be it deliberate or the result of negligence, the director may suspend the offender as a member of the audition committee for a period not exceeding twelve months. The director shall inform the Works Council (*Ondernemingsraad*) of such an event in writing, stating the grounds for such action.
- 0(3) The making of recordings in any form is not permitted during the audition or the audition assessments.

Terminology/responsibilities

- 0(4) The director is ultimately responsible for the entire recruitment and selection process (and for all audition preparations).
- 0(5) The director shall perform the duties of committee chair. In the director's absence, the artistic director shall fulfil this role. If an audition is held to fill the position of a member of a given section or an assistant principal, the audition shall be held by a principal (see Article 3(1)). If an audition is held to fill the position of principal, the committee chair shall appoint a replacement. The duties of the committee chair are set out in Article 6(7). The committee chair is responsible for ensuring compliance with these rules.
- 0(6) The artistic director performs the role of quality auditor. The artistic director shall perform the chief conductor's advisory task as defined in these rules should the NNO have no chief conductor.
- 0(7) Pursuant to Section 27 of the Works Councils Act (*Wet op de Ondernemingsraden*), the Works Council has a right of consent with respect to the recruitment policy, meaning that the Works Council must approve any regulations involving the recruitment and selection of new employees, such as these audition rules. The Works Council must, inter alia, ensure that the selection procedure is fair and non-discriminatory, that the privacy of applicants and employees is protected and that the audition rules are properly observed.
- 0(8) The Artistic Committee (AC) provides input with respect to updating the audition rules. The AC does not play an active role during auditions or audition assessments.
- 0(9) The probationary period normally consists of a one-year contract, during which period the three-, six- and nine-month assessments take place. In such cases, the probationary period is also referred to as the 'probationary year'.
- 0(10) The 'probationary period' shall be taken to mean the statutory probationary period as referred to in the first fixed-term contract. The statutory probationary period is one month for temporary contracts of at least six months.
- 0(11) The trial period can be considered an extension of the audition, so that an audition winner can be declared after this period. A trial period is normally offered to two candidates, both of whom have obtained a sufficient number of votes (more than 66 per cent).
- 0(12) Where these rules refer to the position of principal, 'principal' shall also be taken to mean the position of leader when relating to the first violin section.

- 0(13) Where these rules refer to the position of assistant principal, 'assistant principal' shall also be taken to mean the position of assistant leader as well as second leader or assistant second leader when relating to the first violin section.

Further provisions

- 0(14) These rules shall take effect when the director designates a vacancy for an orchestral musician.
- 0(15) In the event of force majeure, the director may choose to deviate from these audition rules.
- 0(16) All cases not provided for in these rules shall be decided by the director.
- 0(17) Amendments to these rules shall be made only after the Works Council and the AC have been consulted.
- 0(18) The Works Council approved these rules in the consultation meeting between the Managing Board and the Works Council held on 14 December 2020. They shall come into effect on 1 January 2021.

Groningen, 14 December 2020

1. Advertising vacancies and recruiting candidates

Advertising vacancies

- 1(1) Vacancies for orchestral musicians are filled by means of an audition unless the director should, after consulting the Works Council, decide otherwise.
- 1(2) The date and place of an audition shall be announced at the earliest possible opportunity.
- 1(3) The audition shall be announced (both internally and externally) by means of a job advertisement drawn up by the HR Department in consultation with the principal(s).

Recruiting candidates

- 1(4) The job advertisement shall be posted on multiple job sites for musicians, on networks and on the NNO's own website and social media channels.
- 1(5) The NNO observes the provisions of the Foreign Nationals (Employment) Act (*Wet arbeid vreemdelingen*) and all related laws and regulations when carrying out its recruitment and selection process. On that basis, the NNO applies the following criteria when recruiting applicants for auditions:

(a) Vacancies for upper-level positions

Starting from the first audition, the NNO may recruit candidates from both the European Economic Area (EEA)¹ and Switzerland, and outside the EEA and Switzerland should a vacancy arise for a position on the following list:

<https://ind.nl/Paginas/normbedragen-inkomenseis.aspx#functies-kunst-cultuur>.

(b) Vacancies for other positions

If a vacancy is not included in the job list referred to in point (a), the NNO shall initially attempt to recruit candidates from the priority candidate pool – specifically applicants from the EEA or Switzerland, or applicants with foreign national status who are in possession of a residence permit for the Netherlands stating that the bearer is subject to no employment restrictions.

Only if the NNO has been unable to recruit a suitable candidate from the priority candidate pool within the period specified in the Foreign Nationals (Employment) Act shall it recruit candidates outside the priority candidate pool.

- 1(6) If auditions have been held three times yet have failed to produce a winner, another means or method of recruitment shall be sought in consultation with the relevant section and the Works Council.

¹ The 'EEA' shall be taken to mean the EU countries in addition to Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

2. Organising auditions

Aim of the audition

- 2(1) Members of the orchestra may attend the audition.
- 2(2) The purpose of the audition is to compare candidates in order to identify the candidate(s) most suitable for the vacancy. An audition allows the committee to determine whether a candidate is artistically qualified for the position. Immediately following the audition, the relevant audition committee shall make recommendations (based on the scoring) to the director.
- 2(3)
 - (a) The chief conductor is entitled to address the committee chair directly with any recommendations should he or she be of a different opinion with respect to the recommendations made by the audition committee.
 - (b) Should the chief conductor wish to exercise this right, he or she shall inform the audition committee at the end of the deliberations.
- 2(4) If the recommendations made by the audition committee and/or the chief conductor result in the director deciding not to offer the winner a probationary period, the director shall notify both the candidate and the audition committee, stating the grounds for such a decision.

Preselection/preliminary round

- 2(5) On the basis of the applications received, either the principal(s) or the principal and the assistant principal of a given section shall make a preselection in consultation with the artistic director (or the director) on behalf of that section. Should the number and quality of the applications so warrant, a number of candidates may be invited to take part in a preliminary round preceding the first round of the audition, meaning that a greater number of candidates may ultimately be admitted to the first round. Candidates invited to participate in such a preliminary round shall be assessed by a committee consisting of five members of the relevant section. Other members of the orchestra shall be added to the committee if the section is small. The chair is appointed from among the members of the committee. All vacancies require that candidates obtain at least 66 per cent of the votes to advance to the first round.
- 2(6) In relevant cases, the director may invite one or more persons to apply.

Audition: two rounds

- 2(7) The audition consists of two rounds preceded, if applicable, by a preliminary round. The first round shall take place behind a closed curtain or screen so that the candidates' identities are kept secret.

Solo and orchestral works

- 2(8) The required solo works, orchestral works and the piece to be sight-read, if any, shall be chosen by the principal(s) of the section in respect of which the audition is being held in consultation with the artistic director. The required solo works will have already been announced in the job advertisement.
- 2(9) One week before the audition gets under way, the principal(s) of the section in respect of which the audition is being held shall make a selection from the orchestral works to be performed.
- 2(10) Should they so wish, candidates may avail themselves of the services of a pianist provided by the orchestra to accompany them in the solo pieces.

Exemption from the first round

- 2(11) The following persons are exempt from the first round:
- musicians employed by the NNO;
 - musicians employed by one of the other eight professional symphony orchestras in the Netherlands; and
 - candidates who have reached the second round of an NNO audition held no more than two years previously.

3. Working method of the audition committee, procedure followed during auditions, audition assessment

General

- 3(1) The audition shall be overseen by the principal of the section in respect of which the audition is being held. Should the audition involve a section with two principals, the principals shall agree beforehand which of them will perform this task. Their choice shall be communicated in a timely manner to the committee chair and the Works Council delegate.
- 3(2) Should the audition involve a position as principal, the committee chair shall, by agreement, appoint a replacement for this purpose.

First round

- 3(3) Candidates shall perform behind a curtain or screen.
- 3(4) (a) During the audition, the candidate shall demonstrate his or her proficiency by
- performing solo works (selection from chosen pieces) and
 - performing parts from orchestral works.
- (b) The works to be performed shall be announced at the start of the audition.
- (c) All candidates shall perform the same orchestral works (or excerpts therefrom).
- 3(5) (a) At the end of the first round, the committee members are asked whether the candidate should proceed to the second round. They have only two voting options to choose from: *yes* (to the second round) or *no* (not suitable for the position).
- (b) All vacancies require that candidates obtain at least 66 per cent of the votes to advance to the second round unless the principal and chief conductor advise otherwise (see Article 3(6)).
- (c) A second round is held even if only one candidate proceeds to the second round.
- (d) Each committee member agrees to complete and sign the appropriate audition forms for each candidate if they are to be considered valid.
- (e) The committee shall hold no exchanges amongst themselves or open discussions regarding the candidates prior to voting.
- (f) The committee chair shall inform the candidates of the results immediately after the end of the first round.
- (g) Each committee member casts one vote, and all votes carry equal weight.
- (h) Blank votes and abstentions are not permitted.
- 3(6) If all committee members of the section indicate on their form that a candidate may proceed to the second round, the principal, the chief conductor, the committee chair and the Works Council delegate shall discuss whether that candidate may proceed to the second round, even if he or she has not received a sufficient number of votes. The chief conductor is also so entitled.

Second round

- 3(7) The composition of the committee shall remain unchanged.
- 3(8) In the second round, the candidate no longer performs behind a curtain or screen and demonstrates his or her proficiency by
- (a) performing solo works (both a required and a choice of solo work) and
 - (b) performing parts from orchestral works (all candidates shall perform the same orchestral works and/or excerpts therefrom).

- 3(9) (a) In the second round, every committee member shall state whether he or she deems each of the second-round candidates suitable for the relevant position. The successful candidate must again obtain at least 66 per cent of the votes in the second round.
- (b) Should only one candidate receive more than 66 per cent of all 'suitable' votes, that candidate shall be recommended for the remainder of the procedure.
- (c) If multiple candidates obtain more than 66 per cent of all 'suitable' votes, the committee members shall vote to determine whether only the candidate with the greatest number of 'suitable' votes is to be recommended for the position or whether multiple candidates are to be offered a trial period.
- (d) The trial period shall consist of the candidate performing as part of the orchestra in several productions, after which the audition committee chooses one of the candidates.
- 3(10) If multiple candidates successfully complete an audition and there are vacancies for positions of a varying number of working hours to be filled in a given section, the candidates' wishes regarding working hours shall be ascertained in the selection interview, on the basis of which the director shall make a final offer.
- 3(11) After voting and any deliberations, the committee chair shall discuss the results with the audition committee. The candidates are informed of the results immediately following this discussion.
- 3(12) The audition winner(s) shall receive a letter of congratulations outlining the rest of the procedure (namely a selection interview and, for principals, a leadership assessment).
- 3(13) After the audition and after having consulted the rest of the section, the principal may inform the orchestra supervisors of any candidates who may be placed on the list of substitutes.

Selection interview

- 3(14) (a) The candidate(s) recommended by the audition committee is/are then invited by the director for a selection interview in order to assess the candidate(s) on grounds other than artistic ones, such as
- communication and social skills, as well as language proficiency;
 - the candidate's reasons for wishing to join the NNO and his or her affinity with the orchestra;
 - leadership qualities and coaching experience (if applicable); and
 - any other requirements or criteria mentioned in the profile.
- The selection interview will determine whether the candidate's knowledge, skills and personality match the job requirements.
- (b) In addition to the director, one of the principals of the section shall attend this interview should the candidate be applying for a position as a member of a given section or as assistant principal. Should the candidate be applying to fill a vacancy as a principal, either the second principal or the principal of a similar section shall, by agreement, be requested to attend the interview, as will the artistic director.
- (c) The director shall ensure that a written record of the matters discussed is retained for the personnel file.
- (d) If the interview reveals that the candidate is not suitable after all, the director is entitled not to offer the candidate a trial period (see Article 2(4)). The director shall communicate the reasons for such a decision to both the candidate and the audition committee.

Leadership assessment

- 3(15) Leaders and principals must also submit to an assessment revealing their strengths and areas for development with a view to leadership. This will ensure that a more nuanced personal principal profile can be built up.

4. Procedure followed during the probationary period

Probationary period: fixed-term contract

- 4(1) Once the selection interview has also been completed satisfactorily, the candidate recommended by the audition committee shall be offered a fixed-term contract (normally for a duration of one year). In the event of a trial period, as referred to in Article 3(9)(c) and (d), a fixed-term contract shall also be agreed.
- 4(2) During the probationary period, the director shall regularly ask the principal(s) of the relevant section about performance.

Three-month assessment

- 4(3) The director shall invite the candidate to an assessment interview approximately three months after the start of the probationary period. In addition to the director, one of the principals of the section shall attend this interview should the candidate be applying for a position as a member of a given section or as assistant principal. The director is informed in advance by the artistic director, and the principal is informed by the section. Should the candidate be applying to fill a vacancy as a principal, either the second principal or the principal of a similar section shall, by agreement, be requested to attend the interview, as will the artistic director. In this case, too, the principal shall include the observations of the section and, if relevant, the neighbouring section, in the assessment. In the assessment interview, strengths and learning points are identified so that the candidate may consider them and have time for further development.
- 4(4) The director shall draw up a report of the personal interview.
- 4(5) String section players will, by agreement with the principal(s) in the trial year, sit first stand beside the principal in one or two productions (depending on the number of principals). In the event of a trial period for string section players as referred to in Article 3(9)(c) and (d), these players shall also sit first stand beside the principal in one or two productions (depending on the number of principals).

Six-month assessment

- 4(6) After six months, the audition committee shall meet to assess and make a recommendation with respect to the candidate. The audition committee makes its recommendation to the director.
- 4(7) At the earliest possible opportunity, the director shall inform the candidate of the results of the assessment in a personal interview attended by one or more committee members.
- 4(8) The director shall draw up a report of the personal interview.

Nine-month assessment

- 4(9) After nine months, the audition committee shall make a recommendation to the director as to whether the candidate's performance is such that a permanent contract may be offered immediately following the probationary period. Should the situation so warrant, the probationary period may be extended.² In such cases, the audition committee will again make an assessment in the second contract period.

² In accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement for Orchestras (*CAO Orkesten*), an orchestral musician who, prior to the commencement of employment with the employer, has, on the basis of similar activities, worked as a substitute, may be offered a fixed-term contract for a period not exceeding one year. Consequently, fixed-term contracts for this group of employees may not be renewed in this way after a one-year contract has expired.

- 4(10) At the earliest possible opportunity, the director shall inform the candidate of the results of the assessment in a personal interview attended by one or more committee members (preferably the same members as those who attended the six-month assessment).
- 4(11) The director shall draw up a report of the personal interview.

5. Composition of the audition committee

General

- 5(1) As a rule, a member of the orchestra may be appointed a committee member only if he or she is still expected to be permanently employed during the entire assessment period at the time of the audition.
- 5(2) Should a member of the NNO fail to attend, leave the orchestra's employ, retire or be absent, as described below, the director shall attempt to find a replacement (either internal or external) after consulting the principal(s) of the section in respect of which the audition is being held.
- 5(3) Should the audition committee need to meet multiple times to assess the proficiency of candidates for the same vacancy, the composition of the board should be the same.
- 5(4) External experts are sought on the advice of the principal(s) of the section and in consultation with the artistic director. Those involved are deemed to have no connection with the candidates, but are able to make an independent, well-informed judgement (see also Article 5(11)).

Composition of the audition committee

- 5(5) The audition is made up of the following members:
 - (a) the director or a deputy designated by the director;
 - (b) the chief conductor or, in the event of the chief conductor's absence, the artistic director; and
 - (c) a number of orchestral players preferably with permanent contracts with the NNO.
- 5(6) The director (or his or her deputy) shall chair the audition committee and act in an advisory capacity.
- 5(7) The duties of the chair shall consist primarily of
 - (a) overseeing the proceedings of the audition committee,
 - (b) observing and ensuring compliance with the rules,
 - (c) informing the candidates of the result of the vote and
 - (d) presiding over any deliberations after the audition.
- 5(8) The chief conductor shall, if possible, attend all auditions.
- 5(9) In the absence of the chief conductor and the artistic director, the director may, by agreement with them, request that a guest conductor or external expert sit on the audition committee.
- 5(10) A member of the Works Council shall attend the audition, any subsequent deliberations and assessments with the audition committee.
- 5(11) Because conflicts of interest (or the appearance thereof) must be avoided, any member of the audition committee must personally inform the chair beforehand of any family or other type of relationship* with respect to one or more of the candidates. The relevant committee member shall then be replaced by a person designated by the chair. If a family or other type of relationship has come to light only after the first round, the committee member in question shall have no voting rights in the second round. Should the candidate in question win the audition and be offered the position, that member of the audition assessment committee shall be replaced.

* *The provisions of this article shall not apply should the type of relationship in question pertain to that of a teacher and his or her student if such a relationship was terminated more than five years previously.*

6. Composition of audition committees for each group/position

(A) String section

- (1) In the event of an audition for a **leader(concertmaster)**
 - the leader(s)
 - the assistant leader
 - the second leader
 - three members of the first violin section
 - the principal(s) of the other string sections
 - two principals representing the woodwinds
 - two principals representing the brass
 - the timpanist
 - the harpist
 - an outside expert

- (2) In the event of an audition for an **assistant leader, second leader or assistant second leader**
 - the leader(s)
 - the assistant leader
 - the second leader
 - three members of the first violin section
 - the principal(s) of the other string sections
 - a principal representing the woodwinds
 - a principal representing the brass
 - the timpanist or the harpist
 - an outside expert

- (3) In the event of an audition for a **principal (strings)**
 - the leader(s)
 - the assistant leader or the second leader
 - the principal(s) of the relevant section
 - the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
 - three players from the relevant section
 - the principal(s) of the other string sections
 - a principal representing the woodwinds
 - a principal representing the brass
 - the timpanist or the harpist
 - an outside expert

- (4) In the event of an audition for an **assistant principal (strings)**
 - a leader
 - the assistant leader or the second leader
 - the principal(s) of the relevant section
 - the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
 - three players from the relevant section
 - the principal(s) of the other string sections
 - a principal representing the woodwinds
 - a principal representing the brass
 - the timpanist or the harpist
 - an outside expert

(5) In the event of an audition for a string section player

(a) First violin section

- the leader(s)
- the assistant leader
- the second leader
- three members of the first violin section
- a principal representing each of the other string sections (second violins, violas, cellos and double basses)
- a principal representing the woodwinds
- a principal representing the brass
- the timpanist or the harpist

(b) Second violin section

- a leader
- the assistant leader or the second leader
- the principal(s) of the relevant section
- the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
- three members of the second violin section
- a principal representing each of the other string sections (violas, cellos and double basses)
- a principal representing the woodwinds
- a principal representing the brass
- the timpanist or the harpist

(c) Viola section

- a leader
- the assistant leader or the second leader
- the principal(s) of the relevant section
- the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
- three members of the viola section
- a principal representing each of the other string sections (second violins, cellos and double basses)
- a principal representing the woodwinds
- a principal representing the brass
- the timpanist or the harpist

(d) Cello section

- a leader
- the assistant leader or the second leader
- the principal(s) of the relevant section
- the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
- three members of the cello section
- a principal representing each of the other string sections (second violins, violas and double basses)
- a principal representing the woodwinds
- a principal representing the brass
- the timpanist or the harpist

(e) Double bass section

- a leader
- the assistant leader or the second leader
- the principal(s) of the relevant section
- the assistant principal(s) of the relevant section
- three members of the double bass section
- a principal representing each of the other string sections (second violins, violas and cellos)
- a principal representing the woodwinds
- a principal representing the brass
- the timpanist or the harpist

(B) Brass sections

(1) In the event of an audition for a **principal woodwind player or assistant principal woodwind player**

- a leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- the principal(s) of the woodwind sections
- the other members of the section in respect of which the audition is being held
- two principals of the brass sections
- the timpanist or the harpist
- an outside expert

(2) In the event of an audition for a **woodwind section player**

- a leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- the principal(s) of the section in respect of which the audition is being held
- the other members of the section in respect of which the audition is being held
- a principal representing each of the other woodwind sections
- a player representing each of the other woodwind sections
- two principals of the brass sections
- the timpanist or the harpist

(3) In the event of an audition for a **principal brass player or assistant principal brass player**

- a leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- the principal(s) of the brass sections
- the other members of the section in respect of which the audition is being held*
- two principals of the woodwind sections
- the timpanist or the harpist
- an outside expert

- (4) In the event of an audition for a **brass section player**
- a leader
 - two principals of the other string sections
 - the principal(s) of the section in respect of which the audition is being held
 - the other members of the section in respect of which the audition is being held*
 - a principal representing each of the other brass sections
 - a section player representing each of the other brass sections
 - two principals of the woodwind sections
 - the timpanist or the harpist

* In the event of an audition for trombone or tuba, the players of these instruments count as one group.

(C) Percussion/timpani

- (1) In the event of an audition for a **principal timpanist or assistant principal timpanist**

- a leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- two principals of the woodwind sections
- two principals of the brass sections
- the timpanist
- all members of the percussion section
- the harpist
- an outside expert

- (2) In the event of an audition for a **percussionist**

- a leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- two principals of the woodwind sections
- two principals of the brass sections
- the timpanist
- all members of the percussion section
- the harpist
- an outside expert

(D) Harp

In the event of an audition for a **harpist**

- a leader
- the assistant leader or the second leader
- two principals of the other string sections
- two principals of the woodwind sections
- two principals of the brass sections
- the timpanist
- the harpist
- an outside expert