

NCO Student Placements 2027 Application Pack

Tutor Placement

At NCO, our purpose is to champion the life-changing power of music.

Nearly 2,000 children aged 8-14 connect with National Children's Orchestras each year through:

- auditioned Orchestral Weeks and Weekends
- non-auditioned workshops and Orchestral Days
- activities with schools, music education hubs and other partner organisations
- free tickets to concerts

We empower children to uncover the joy of orchestral music, unleash their creativity, realise their ambitions and embrace a future filled with endless possibilities. We use the power of music to create supportive communities that enrich lives. The confidence, resilience and teamwork learned through music become skills for life, wherever each young musician's journey takes them.

Play together. Be unstoppable.

NCO Student Placements

NCO's Student Placement scheme supports around 40 students from across the country on our Orchestral Weekends and Orchestral Weeks programmes. NCO is committed to supporting and engaging with the UK's emerging musical leaders to provide them with insight, opportunity and experiences that inform and develop their understanding of working with children and within music education, particularly orchestral training. NCO's Student Placement programme:

- Enhances students' understanding of how to work with and to lead large youth ensembles
- Supports the development of best practice in music education in emerging music leaders
- Provides peer learning opportunities with students from across the country
- Provides an insight into NCO's learning framework and creative thinking

We have four different types of placement available at NCO - Insight, Tutor, Advance and Conductor.

[For more information on each of the placements available please visit our website.](#)

NCO Tutor

NCO's Tutor Placement takes place on our residential Orchestral Weeks. This programme consists of three symphony orchestras - Under 14 (13-14 year olds), Under 13 (12-13 year olds) and Under 12 (11-12 year olds) - who meet for two week-long residencies (one in the spring and one in the summer school holidays), culminating in astounding concerts in public concert venues.

Our Tutor placement provides the opportunity for young people studying Undergraduate or Postgraduate music to deepen their understanding, experience and skills in supporting youth ensembles through innovative approaches to orchestral coaching. You will improve your confidence

in tutoring and leading young musicians, and build a toolkit based on NCO's distinct approach to learning with a focus on facilitating creativity, child voice and wellbeing.

What will you do?

You will become part of our professional tutor team for 4 days on one of our residential Orchestral Weeks in the spring of 2027. Working alongside 2-3 other students, you will gain experience in:

- Planning/pacing sessions and outcomes
- Coaching styles
- Group dynamics, child engagement and behaviour management techniques
- Creative composition through our 'Surround Sound' project
- Teaching musical content - technical, listening skills, prep skills
- Wellbeing for musicians

You will have the opportunity to:

- Run a sectional rehearsal
- Observe other music tutors and participate in musical, creative and recreational activities
- Meet with wider members of our residential teams to expand your knowledge of running youth activity

You will also attend an online briefing prior to the placement which will include an overview of NCO's learning approach and information on safeguarding and working with young people and neurodiverse young musicians.

Who should apply?

- Musicians who are studying music at undergraduate or postgraduate level
- Musicians who play traditional orchestral instruments
- Musicians who are passionate about developing their knowledge and experience of music education
- Musicians with an interest in large ensemble or orchestral playing
- Musicians who are creative and critical thinkers
- Musicians who like to roll up their sleeves and get involved
- Musicians with an interest in and passion for improving access, inclusion and diversity within the industry. We are particularly interested in hearing from students from diverse backgrounds and those who feel underrepresented in the current music industry

When is it?

You will need to be available for one of the following:

Orchestra	Dates	Residential Location
Under 14 Orchestra	5 th – 8 th April 2027	Sherborne, Dorset

Under 13 Orchestra	29 th March – 1 st April 2027	Sherborne, Dorset
Under 12 Orchestra	30 th March – 2 nd April 2027	Shrewsbury, Shropshire

Additional online activity:

- Online NCO Weeks 2027 Activity Launch (optional): Sunday 17th January 2027, 3pm
- Online briefing & training (mandatory): Monday 25th January 2027, 5pm

What do I need?

You will receive a briefing and safeguarding training prior to the first weekend. You will need an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) clearance to support any NCO events. If you do not have a current certificate, we will apply and pay for one for you. Please also enquire with your university or college as they can often provide this as part of your course.

Travel, Accommodation and Expenses

This is an unpaid opportunity, but NCO will cover all costs relating to the placement including travel, training and a DBS application where needed. On-site accommodation will be provided for your residential Orchestral Week placement.

NCO would welcome any contribution partnering institutions can make towards travel costs for their students. Please speak to your university or college to find out more.

How do I apply?

[Applications will be open from Tuesday 6th October 2026 through our website here.](#)

We will ask for details of your current study and your placement preferences, why you are interested in taking part in our Student Placement scheme and what skills and qualities you can bring to the opportunity.

Applications will close at midday on Thursday 12th November 2026. We receive a large number of applications each year and will contact applicants as soon as possible to confirm whether they have been successful.

Please get in touch with Emily Pieczko (e.pieczko@nco.org.uk) if you have any questions!