

ENSEMBLE HANDBOOK:

Jazz Sounds



WELCOME TO JAZZ SOUNDS

Ensemble Setup:

Jazz Sounds music is flexible and suitable for players of any instrument, including voice. Jazz Sounds is an open access band, and no audition is required. Open rehearsals are held at the beginning of each term, and you can register in advance using the form on our website.

Skill Set:

Typically, players in Jazz Sounds are keen musicians, with some experience of music reading and playing in a group.

Membership Commitment:

Jazz Sounds members are expected to commit to all rehearsal and performances in the period of time that they are a member, to arrive punctually and prepared for the rehearsal with their sheet music. Where attendance drops below acceptable levels (normally 90%) members may be asked to leave Jazz Sounds, and membership fees will not be refunded. We strongly encourage members to join for the whole academic year, or at least for a term. Music at Reading will issue the schedule of rehearsals and performances for all Music at Reading Ensembles before the start of the academic year in order that members can plan ahead to accommodate their membership commitments with other activities.

Normally, Jazz Sounds rehearse in L29 on Monday evenings in term time, 18.30 – 20.30. Members should arrive punctually. Additional rehearsals will be held on performances dates, to allow for sound check and dress rehearsal at the venue.

Musicianship:

In rehearsals, musicianship training focuses on developing and refining your skills. The ensemble director will determine musicianship content related to the repertoire played, the broad outline for Jazz Sounds is as follows:

Developing and Refining your Playing	Developing and refining your playing through technical exercises and physical work focused on breathing and posture to develop your sound and a range of different tone colours. Developing pitch and tonality awareness, focusing on effective intonation
Ensemble co-ordination	Refining your understanding of rhythm notation with a focus on delivering rhythmic feel in the music you're learning to play. Building two and three part hearing through group rhythm, pitch and harmony exercises and games so the individual player may learn to work in the ensemble team
Repertoire	Exploring the idiosyncratic stylistic features of the repertoire that Jazz Sounds play.

Leadership:

Members of Jazz Sounds are encouraged to develop a reflective attitude towards their playing in order to understand their contribution to the ensemble. Throughout rehearsals and after performances, the Director will encourage members to reflect on their progress and their contribution to the group. Players will be given opportunities to be section leaders, and may also have solo opportunities, depending on repertoire.

Musical Leaders:

In the Spring term, Music at Reading invites members to apply for the Musical Leaders scheme. This is an enrichment programme for advanced performers keen to develop their skills in solo and ensemble performance, and ensemble directing. Musical Leaders are expected to be regular performing members of Music at Reading ensembles. They may choose to take additional leadership roles in their ensemble, such as sectional leader, soloist, and assistant conductor. In Jazz Sounds, this could include warming up the ensemble, leading technical exercises and musicianship work, running sectional rehearsals, and directing the band. It may also include playing written and improvised solos, and making arrangements for the band to perform.

Musical leaders will model appropriate behaviours in terms of punctuality, attendance, self-organisation and personal preparation in rehearsals and performance. Being a Musical Leader can contribute towards the University RED awards.

PERFORMANCE DRESS CODE:

Jazz Sounds members should wear the following for performances, unless stated otherwise. The overall performance look for Music at Reading ensembles is black with red accents. Specific instructions for each event will be included in the Performer Briefing.

Formal:

- Plain black shirt or dress; no logos or patterns. Dependent on the event, glitter or sequinned dresses may be appropriate.
- All black lower half, including black socks or tights, and shoes (without patterns or logos). please ensure that skirts are of an appropriate length when seated.

Informal:

- Music at Reading t-shirt, available to purchase from Music at Reading
- All black lower half, unless specified by Music at Reading

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION:

Email:

Important information will be emailed out to all ensemble members. It is your responsibility to ensure that your email address is up to date, and to let us know of any changes through the website.

Social Media:

Last minute information will be released on Facebook and Twitter; follow us and turn on notifications to stay up to date.

Go to the website for information about:

Events:

Each event throughout the year is listed, with the ability to search by key words and dates, download directly into your calendar, and display as a list or in calendar format.

Blog:

Follow our blog for behind the scenes peek at Music at Reading. Throughout the year we'll have guest blogs from our members and Musical Leaders, plus tips and advice to combat auditions, performance anxiety, and so much more.

Gallery:

Find professional photographs from our recent events.

Member Zone:

All information specific to membership of Music at Reading ensembles will be uploaded to the Member Zone of our website, found by hovering over the Home button in the menu: <http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/music/member-zone/>

Please use the online links in the member zone to report absences, update your contact information, check *Notices*, and download information, including performer briefings for specific events, rehearsal schedules, and ensemble handbooks.

See the *How To* guides if you are unsure how to use any aspect of the website.

PRACTICE ROOM ACCESS

Music practice rooms are available for all members of the local area, including students, staff, and community members, in Building L29, London Road campus.

- Eight general purpose practice rooms; suitable for up to 5 people; no booking required.
- All practice rooms have upright pianos, music stands, and mirrors
- Two studios for ensemble rehearsal; only bookable by staff and students of the University.
- Both studios have a grand piano (or two), music stands, and a drum kit.

The facility may be used for individual music practice and ensemble rehearsals, but is not available for private tuition or commercial activity.

Opening Hours:

Monday-Friday, 08.30-21.30

Weekends, 08.00-20.00.

University Closure Dates: Closed.

Access and Fees:

Practice Room Access is not included in Music at Reading membership. Access fees can be paid through our online store; these fees subsidise the cost of instrument repair, and upkeep, cleaning, and security of the building. Entry to Building L29 is controlled through your University of Reading campus card, or a guest access card.

SCHEDULE:

Rehearsals are usually:

Autumn Term: weekly rehearsals from Monday 30th September; final rehearsal on Monday 2 December.

Spring Term: weekly rehearsals from Monday 13th January; final rehearsal on Monday 23 March.

Summer Term: weekly rehearsals from Monday 20 April; final rehearsal on Monday 1 June

Performances:

Sparkle and Shine – Mojo's Bar, RUSU – Friday 29 November

A Hollywood Christmas – Reading Minster – Friday 6 December

Vintage Valentines – Mojo's Bar, RUSU – Friday 14 February

Big Band Big Lunch – London Road Campus – Saturday, early June 2020

All dates are available to download directly into your calendar from the Member Zone.