

USE OF GUILDHALL SCHOOL INSTRUMENTS A SUMMARY GUIDE

This policy is of relevance to students / staff

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USING THIS GUIDE

This guide is a brief summary of the instruments currently owned or on loan to the Guildhall School.

Basic user information is included for everyday teaching, practise, rehearsal and for events that are listed in the Events Guide and approved through the Performance Committee.

Basic budget holder information is provided. It should be stressed that at all times it is important to establish whether there is a budget available before committing to any performance requiring additional instruments, tunings or instrument moves, for example harpsichords, fortepianos & chamber organs.

In all cases music programme planning should be presented, via the Head of Music Administration, to the Performance Committee before committing to performances. No entry will be included in the Events Guide or Website which has not been approved by the Performance Committee.

Any instrumental cost - other than basic piano provision - occurring due to research projects or performances which are the culmination of research projects - will be paid for by Research. There is a section on the Research application form to cover instrument costs. This section should be completed and approval of the costs received from Research before commitment is made to the project/performance.

Any maintenance requirements should be reported to the staff member responsible for the instrument/equipment as soon as this need is noticed. Administration staff cannot be held responsible for instruments needing to be taken out of service if a fault is not reported.

Any missing instruments/equipment parts should be reported to the staff member responsible for the instrument/equipment as soon as this is noticed.

It is the responsibility of each Department to ensure that their students are fully aware of the requirements for the care and use of any instrument they may be required to play - especially where the instrument is not taught as that student's Principal Study.

All Departments operate a sign out system for instruments/equipment. School Instruments for loan must always be signed out by the student themselves. Whilst the instrument is out on loan it must not be passed on to any other students. School instruments are for use within the Campus Area only. Permission must be given for any School instrument to be used in rehearsals, performances or outside engagements not directly organised by the School.

NO ITEM OF FOOD OR DRINK IS TO BE PLACED ON ANY INSTRUMENTS OR ITEM OF

EQUIPMENT!

INSTRUMENT GROUP:	PERMISSION FROM:	BUDGET HOLDER:
Pianos	Piano Technicians	Piano Technicians
Historical Performance	Historical Performance Manager	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager
Wind and Brass	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager
Percussion	Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument Manager	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager
Strings	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager	Ensembles, Programming & Instrument Manager
Jazz	Jazz Programming & Ensemble Manager	Jazz Programming & Ensemble Manager

CLEANING OF SHARED INSTRUMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

In order to ensure high standards of hygiene and minimise the risk of germs being passed from one user to the next, it is very important that students take responsibility for cleaning any School instrument they play on both before AND after use. Here is some more information on cleaning specific to different categories of instrument:

PIANOS & KEYBOARD INSTRUMENTS (INCLUDING HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE)

- It is required that all students and professors using shared keyboard instruments, including acoustic upright and grand pianos, historical keyboards and electric/digital keyboards thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water and/or use hand sanitiser immediately prior to playing.
- Individually wrapped, purpose-designed keyboard cleaning wipes are available from the School facilities team and should be used on all acoustic and digital piano keyboards, as well as Historical Performance keyboards, at the beginning and end of every practice session. Separate wipes are needed for the beginning and end of session cleaning.
- Gently wipe the keys from back to front (as opposed to side-to-side) over a suitable cluster of notes, ensuring that all keys are cleaned and not just the range you are playing within.
- Dispose of each wipe immediately after use in the nearest waste bin. The wipes may be used on high gloss piano case parts such as a grand piano music desk if required.

WOODWIND INSTRUMENTS

Shared use Woodwind instruments must be thoroughly cleaned by each user as instructed below, both before first use and after the last use within a loan period, even if that period is only 1-hour. To prevent denying access to other students it is very important to return a borrowed instrument to the EPI Manager as quickly as possible after the user has finished playing and then cleaned it. Some doubling instruments may be allocated by WBP Heads to individuals or limited-size groups that need to use them regularly within a specified period, in order to allow the user the opportunity to play on the same instrument for the duration of a project or series of lessons/classes, rather than using a different instrument each time.

Players should provide their own reeds without exception and use their own mouthpieces wherever possible when borrowing a shared instrument. Students are encouraged to purchase their own sterisol cleaning spray – commonly branded as Steri-Spray – for the purposes of cleaning any shared instruments they need to borrow. It is available from multiple online retailers at a cost of approximately £5 per 100ml.

Flute and Piccolo headjoints:

- Clean the embouchure hole, lip plate and surrounding area using Steri-Spray or a cloth soaked in denatured, isopropyl alcohol;
- Using a soft, lint-free silk cloth inserted into a cleaning rod, clean the inside of the headjoint;
- To avoid damaging the cork do not submerge or place the headjoint under running water.

Contrabassoon and Cor Anglais crooks/bocals:

- Contrabassoon crooks/bocals should be cleaned with a brush, mild soap solution and running water;
- Cor Anglais crooks/bocals can be cleaned with a pipe cleaner, mild soap solution and running water. Be careful not to scratch the inside with the exposed wire ends of the pipe cleaner.

Clarinet and Saxophone mouthpieces made of hard rubber (in cases where a student doesn't have their own):

- Place the mouthpiece tip down in a small, narrow container. Fill the container up to where the ligature would begin with a solution of half water and half white vinegar, or 50% water and 50% hydrogen peroxide. Be sure to keep any cork free from moisture;
- After a few minutes use a mouthpiece brush to remove any calcium deposits or other residue from inside and outside surfaces. This step may need to be repeated if the mouthpiece is excessively dirty;
- Rinse the mouthpiece thoroughly and then apply Steri-Spray. Place on paper towel for one minute then wipe dry with the paper towel;
- For any saxophone mouthpieces made with metal these can be cleaned with hot water, mild dish soap and a mouthpiece brush. Steri-Spray is also safe to use on metal mouthpieces.

Saxophone crooks/necks:

- Use a flexible bottlebrush and/or toothbrush to clean crooks/neck, using soapy water to clean the inside;
- Rinse thoroughly under running water and place on a paper towel for one minute before drying with the paper towel.

BRASS INSTRUMENTS

Shared use Brass instruments must be thoroughly cleaned by each user both before first use and after the last use within a loan period, even if that period is only 1-hour. To prevent denying access to other students it is very important to return a borrowed instrument to the EPI Manager as quickly as possible after the user has finished playing and then cleaned it. Some doubling instruments may be allocated by WBP Heads to individuals or limited-size groups that need to use them regularly within a specified period, in order to allow the user the opportunity to play on the same instrument for the duration of a project or series of lessons/classes, rather than using a different instrument each time.

Students are encouraged to purchase their own sterilis cleaning spray – commonly branded as Steri-Spray – for the purposes of cleaning any shared instruments they need to borrow. It is available from multiple online retailers at a cost of approximately £5 per 100ml. Anti-bacterial wipes for cleaning valves/slides can be obtained from Silk Street Reception.

In all playing situations within Guildhall School, Brass players must take responsibility for wiping up their spit and water deposits from the floor. Each Brass student therefore needs to carry with them a towel inside a drawstring gymbag, to be used on the floor around their seat before leaving any room they have been playing in. The towel should be removed from the bag for as short a time as possible and is to be washed at home as often as possible.

Brass mouthpieces:

- Using a cloth soaked in warm, soapy water, clean the outside of the mouthpiece;
- Use a mouthpiece brush and warm, soapy water to clean the inside;
- Rinse the mouthpiece and dry thoroughly;
- After rinsing and drying, Steri-Spray should be applied to the mouthpiece;

- Place on a paper towel for one minute before wiping dry with the paper towel.

Rest of instrument:

- Ensure instrument is completely emptied of water after each use, collecting discarded water from the floor with a paper towel and disposing of towel in a bin immediately;
- Wipe down all parts that have been touched including valves/slides with an anti-bacterial wipe before the instrument is returned to the case.

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

It is essential to maintain good hand hygiene by washing your hands with soap both before and after setting-up instruments. Anti-bacterial wipes can be obtained from Silk Street Reception.

Drumheads:

Wipe down drumheads, such as timpani and bass drum, with care after use, using an anti-bacterial wipe. Remember that too much application of wipes to calf drumheads risks damaging them, so do exercise common sense in handling the instruments.

Mallet instruments:

Completely avoid resting your hands on mallet instruments. Remember that too much application of wipes to wooden keys risks damaging them, so do exercise common sense in handling the instruments.

Tambourines:

Do not share tambourines at any time – use your own instead. If you can use beeswax or very fine sandpaper to facilitate thumb-rolls instead of using a wet thumb, that is better practice still.

Sticks:

Do not share sticks at any time – use your own instead.

JAZZ INSTRUMENTS & EQUIPMENT

Pianos:

Please see separate guidance from Piano Technicians.

Keyboards:

The Jazz Department have a selection of electronic keyboards and Rhodes piano for student use for rehearsals and Guildhall organised performances.

Guitar, Bass & Vocal Amps:

The Jazz Department maintain a stock of guitar, bass and AER vocal amps in practice rooms in Silk Street, John Hosier Annexe and Sundial Court for student use in addition to performance quality

amplifiers across the School's performance venues. There are additional roaming amplifiers available on request from Annexe reception and from the Jazz Department in Silk Street. These amplifiers must not be removed from practice rooms or moved between rooms without the permission of the Jazz Department.

Drum Kits:

The Jazz Department maintain a stock of drum kits in practice rooms in Silk Street, John Hosier Annexe and Sundial Court for student use in addition to performance quality drum kits across the School's performance venues. There are additional roaming drum kits available on request from the Jazz Department in Silk Street. Drum kits (including any elements of the drum kits) must not be removed from practice rooms or moved between rooms without the permission of the Jazz Department.

Mixing Consoles:

Digital mixing consoles are provided in many of the Jazz practice rooms across Silk Street, The Annexe and Sundial Court. These consoles are maintained by the AV Department.

Microphones:

Singers should carry their own microphone and a cable to all classes and rehearsals. Microphones, cables and mic stands are also available to sign out from the AV Office in the Silk Street building.

PIANOS

The School maintains a fleet of pianos of various makes and models. All teaching rooms have a least one piano.

The major performance spaces (MILTON COURT, MUSIC HALL & LRR) have 2 Steinway Grands (Model Din MC and MH and B in LRR). There is also a Steinway Model B for use in Milton Court. Placement of this model B must be discussed in advance with the Head of Music Administration and the Piano Technicians

Please note that Milton Court pianos are stored in the piano store under the stage and can only be moved onto the stage by use of the piano lift operated by a member of the Performance Venues Staff.

Every day tuning and maintenance of the pianos is organised by the Piano Technicians who also control the budget for this work.

Pianos are tuned automatically for major assessments and for events which feature in the School Events Guide. It is assumed that Piano Masterclasses held in Milton Court, Music Hall or LRR will require 2 pianos and a unison tuning will be arranged. Other than for Piano Masterclasses, it is the responsibility of the organiser of an event to inform the Piano Technicians if 2 pianos and unison tunings are required.

The Piano Budget will cover the cost of these works if the event is organised by the School.

Any projects, rehearsals or events requiring 2 pianos and/or unison tuning (other than School organised piano masterclasses) must give a minimum of 2 weeks' notice.

In most cases the Piano Budget will also cover the hire of pianos required for high profile external School events. It is important to establish that there is a budget available for external hire before committing to external performances. NOTE: At least 1 months' notice is required to process moves and hire of additional pianos.

Any performance requiring the use of Prepared Piano must be discussed in advance with the Piano Technicians. No piano can be used for Prepared Piano work without arrangement with the Piano Technician and in most cases an external instrument will have to be hired in for rehearsal/performance. Again, in most cases the Piano Budget will cover the cost of this additional hire - however it is important to establish that there is a budget available before committing to repertoire.

PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE USE OF EXTENDED TECHNIQUES and PREPARED PIANO

The Piano Budget also covers the costs of tuning and piano provision for the Drama Department. The Drama Department have 4 main performance pianos (2 x Grand and 3 x Upright) located in the Silk Street Theatre and Milton Court Main and Studio Theatre. These instruments are moved between these two locations by Performance Venue Staff. When either of these instruments is used for a School

production, the Piano Technicians will organise the required tuning and the cost of this will be covered by the Piano Budget. Where a production calls for a specific instrument not compatible with either of these two pianos, the hire of the additional instrument will be covered by the Production Budget.

Any members of staff or students who need to report maintenance work to be carried out on any of the School's pianos (tuning, replacing broken strings, removing/retrieving lost items, etc.) can either email the Piano Technicians or enter their request in the piano workbook which is located on the door of the piano workshop LG8.

MILTON COURT CONCERT HALL ORGAN

Milton Court has a 3 manual sampled sound concert Viscount organ. Any use of the organ should be cleared with either the Head of Music Administration or the EPI Manager. Please ask the EPI Manager for the organ's registration.

HISTORICAL PERFORMANCE

The School has the following instruments for use in Historical Performances.

Harpsichords:

6 - various locations in Silk Street Building, MCCCH and Annexe

Fortepianos:

2 located in 209 and G36

Chamber Organ:

2 located in 209, 148 and 1 portable located in the Milton Court Instrument Store

Movement of the chamber organs is under the control of the EPI Manager

Electronic Harpsichords:

3 located in 209, LG4 and LRR

The following Historical performance instruments are available from the Historical Performance Manager:

Theorbo: 2

Lute: 2

Renaissance Guitar: 1

Dulcian: 1

Requinto Guitar: 1

Baroque Violin: 3

Baroque Viola: 2

Baroque Cello: 3

Baroque Bass: 1

Classical and Baroque Bows

Lirone: 1
Bandora: 1
Baroque Flute: 2
Baroque Oboe: 2
Classical Clarinet: 1
Baroque Bassoon: 2
Cornetts
Sackbuts: 8 (2 alto, 4 tenor and 2 bass)

Harpsichords, the Fortepianos and the Chamber Organs are tuned and maintained by Oliver Sandig. Oliver will also move and tune harpsichords where they are required for listed Events – the cost of this is covered by the Instrument Budget held and controlled by the EPI Manager. Any member of staff or students requiring an Historical Performance Keyboard for a project or event within the School should complete a Keyboard Request Form (available from the Historical Performance Manager – please see appendix 3) at least 1 month in advance of the rehearsal/performance.

Please see the current Historical Performance Handbook for a detailed specification of each Harpsichord.

The use of harpsichords or fortepianos for Opera productions is discussed between the Head of Opera and the EPI Manager, and the Opera Production Budget covers the cost of hire, moving and tuning as required.

The Fortepiano in G36 is currently on loan to the School. The tuning and maintenance of this instrument is again carried out by School's Historical Keyboard Technician but is currently outside the present maintenance agreement. There is considerable additional cost, not only in the tuning but in the moving of the instrument for use within the School. At the moment the tuning, maintenance and moving of this instrument is being covered by the EPI Manager. However, it is important to establish that a budget is available for moving the instrument to another location before committing to its use in public performance.

NB both Fortepianos are tuned to A=430

Special note: The Fortepiano in 209 is suitable for rehearsal and practise but is not used for public concerts.

Strings for Baroque Violins and Cello are supplied by the EPI Manager only for instruments on short term loan to students to be used in School projects. Replacement strings are not supplied for instruments on long term loan. Strings may have to be ordered.

NOTE: In all cases at least 4 weeks' notice is required to process movement of any early music keyboard around the building.

The remaining (non-keyboard) instruments are maintained by various specialists and the cost is covered by the EPI Manager. All these instruments should be signed out with the Historical Performance

Manager by the students requiring them. It is up to the student to ensure that they are well prepared and sign out the required instrument in good time.

For Final Recitals (all Principal Studies) the School will provide and cover the cost of (via The EPI Manager) 1 x Harpsichord, 1 x Chamber Organ or Fortepiano, when requested by the student in writing by the date stated in the Handbook.

For Health and Safety reasons and for instrument protection, the use of the following instruments in the LRR is highly restricted and therefore should be avoided:
double manual harpsichord/fortepiano/chamber organ

Projects taking place in the LRR and requiring the above instruments will need special approval from the EPI Manager and additional measures to move and maintain the instruments will be required.

NOTE: Harpsichords are extremely delicate; their transposing mechanisms must only be used by a trained player. Using the transposing mechanism incorrectly will jam the action and render the instrument unplayable.

WIND, BRASS & PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS

The School has the following instruments for use in the Wind, Brass and Percussion Department and are all available from the EPI Manager

Piccolo: 3
Alto Flute: 2
Bass Flute: 1
Contra Bass Flute: 1
Cor Anglais: 3
Oboe D'amore: 2
E $\flat$ Clarinet: 4
Bassett Clarinet : 1
Bassett Horn: 4
Bass Clarinet: 5
Contra Bassoon: 3
Wagner Tuba: 2 x 2 B/ 2 x F & 4 x double
Hand Horn: 4
Piccolo Trumpet: 1
Flugal Horn: 2
E $\flat$ Soprano Cornet: 1
Natural Trumpet: 3
Rotary Valve Trumpet: 3
Bass Trumpet: 3
Euphonium: 2
Baritone: 2

Alto Trombone: 1
Bass Trombone: 1
Contrabass Trombone: 1
Ctuba: 2
Cimbasso: 1
F Tuba: 1
Sopranino Sax: 1
Soprano Sax: 2
Tenor Sax: 1
Baritone Sax: 2
Bass Sax: 1

These instruments are primarily for the use of First Study students in the related Principal Study. Students may borrow instruments not relating to their principal study on a case-by-case basis for short periods (eg. 1 to 3 hours / half day) so they don't block principal study students from accessing the instrument for an extended period. Unlike principal study students that borrow doubling instruments a few times a week, other students need to request loans in advance by emailing [the](#) EPI manager.

All of the above instruments should be signed out for lessons and projects by the students requiring them and returned the same day – even if the project is continuing for several more days. The EPI Manager oversees all instrument usage to ensure that instruments are available when required for specific projects. The everyday maintenance of these instruments is carried out by various specialists and the cost is covered by the EPI Manager. The EPI Manager will organise, where required, the hire of additional instruments when needed for specific repertoire – again it is important to establish that a budget is available for the hire of such instruments before committing to any repertoire.

NOTE: Where additional instruments are required to be hired and repertoire has been approved by the Performance Committee, the EPI Manager requires at least 4 weeks' notice prior to the first rehearsal to process the hire.

PERCUSSION

The School has an extensive range of percussion instruments which are under the everyday control of the Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument Manager. Whilst the majority are reserved for the use of principal and second study students there is a large selection that is available to the wider student population. Requests for such instrument will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument Manager organises a sign-out system for students who require various instruments for use within the Campus area (Main Building, Milton Court, Annexe, Sundial Court, St Luke's and Barbican Centre).

In all areas of percussion use, it is the responsibility of the student to collect (signing out as required), set up and return all percussion instruments. It is NOT the responsibility of the Music Stage Supervisor Team or Performance Venues Staff. The Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument

Manager will organise, where required, the hire of additional percussion instruments when needed for specific concert repertoire – again it is important to establish that a budget is available for the hire of such instruments before committing to any repertoire.

NOTE: Where additional instruments are required to be hired and repertoire has been approved by the Performance Committee, the Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument Manager requires at least 4 weeks' notice prior to the first rehearsal to process the hire.

For Percussion Final Recitals the School will, within reason and subject to negotiation with the EPI Manager, provide and cover the cost of additional percussion instruments not currently in the School's inventory when requested by the student in writing by the date stated in the Handbook.

A complete inventory of instruments available to percussion students can be obtained from the Music Stage Supervisor Team.

For Health and Safety reasons and for instrument protection, the use of the following instruments in the LRR is highly restricted:

any 5 octave marimba
set of tubular bells
pedal timpani

Projects taking place in the LRR and requiring the above instruments will need special approval from the Music Stage, Logistics and Instrument Manager, and additional measures to move and maintain the instruments will be required. Wherever possible projects requiring the use of these instruments should take place in the Music Hall.

STRING INSTRUMENTS

The School has the following instruments for use in the Strings Department. These instruments are available from the EPI Manager.

Violins: 3 for long term use by stipulated students as recommended by the Head of Strings

Violas: 8

Cello: 4 for long term use by stipulated students as recommended by the Head of Strings

Double Bass: 5

Jazz use of double basses: The Jazz Department has its own dedicated double bass (see Jazz Ensemble Manager)

All of the above should be signed out for lessons and project use by the students requiring them. The EPI Manager oversees the usage of all these instruments to ensure that violas, double basses and harps are

available when required for specific projects. The everyday maintenance of these instruments is carried out by various specialists for which payment is arranged by the EPI Manager.

Strings for the School harps are available from the EPI Manager.

Strings for other School instruments are supplied by the EPI Manager only for instruments on short term loan to students to be used in School projects. Replacement strings are not supplied for instruments on long term loan. Strings may have to be ordered.

JAZZ

Jazz instruments and equipment in allocated rooms must not be removed from the allocated room under any circumstances.

The School has the following instruments for use in the Jazz Department. These instruments are organised and managed by the Jazz Ensembles Manager.

Drum Kits: 5

roaming kits are available for use on arrangement with the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Guitar Amps: 2

guitar amps are available to sign out from the John Hosier Annexe reception.

5 additional roaming guitar amps are available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager.

Bass Amps: 2 available from John Hosier Annexe reception

3 available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Keyboard Amps: 1 available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Keyboards

1 x Nord Electro 5D-73 Semi Weighted Keyboard available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

1 x Korg Kronos 2 88 Key Workstation available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Vocal Amps: 3 available from John Hosier Annexe reception

3 available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Bass Trombone: 1 Rath Bass Trombone available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager

Double Bass: 1 Double Bass (Dankworth Bass) available to sign out from the Jazz Ensemble Manager.

A full list of Jazz Instruments and Equipment for use by Jazz Students and Staff is available from the Jazz Ensemble Manager. In addition to this an Alto Flute, Bass Clarinet & Saxophones as listed in the Wind, Brass and Percussion Section above are available for Jazz use. Additional percussion instruments are available for Jazz use by special arrangement with the Music Stage Manager and the Jazz Ensemble Manager. Jazz students and staff are required to sign these instruments out with the EPI Manager/Jazz Ensemble Manager/Music Stage Manager as appropriate. Jazz Students and Staff should ensure that instruments can be made available well in advance of when they require them and ensure that they are proficient in the assembly of each instrument and correct operation of any equipment before use.

It is the responsibility of the performer to ensure that they have the correct instrument and additional equipment for rehearsals and performances, this includes set up of Drum Kits and equipment and ensuring that the correct amp is available and in working order. Students are expected to pack up instruments/equipment after a rehearsal or performance and return them to the Jazz Ensemble Manager. Students and Staff should report any defective or damaged equipment to the Jazz Ensemble Manager.

Jazz vocalists are expected to provide their own mic and lead and to carry these with them to all classes and rehearsals. Jazz vocalists are encouraged to consult with Staff members in the Jazz vocal faculty and Audio Visual Department to find a microphone that they are most comfortable using and that they feel most benefits their voice type and performance style. If mics and leads are needed, singers are required to organise the loan of equipment in person with the Audio Visual Department.

All instruments and equipment should be returned to their correct location in the room after teaching, rehearsal or performance. Please consult the Jazz Ensemble Manager if in doubt about the correct location of instruments or equipment in the room.

Any performance requiring the use of Prepared Piano must be discussed in advance with the Piano Technicians. No piano can be used for Prepared Piano work without arrangement with the Piano Technician and in most cases an external instrument will have to be hired in for rehearsal/performance. Again, in most cases the Piano Budget will cover the cost of this additional hire - however it is important to establish that there is a budget available before committing to repertoire.

PLEASE SEE APPENDIX 1 FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE USE OF EXTENDED TECHNIQUES and PREPARED PIANO

MUSIC THERAPY

Music Therapy has a selection of instruments for the sole use of Music Therapy students in their Class work and for Clinical work. These are for Music Therapy use only and are maintained and monitored by the Music Therapy Department.

APPENDIX 1

EXTENDED TECHNIQUES ON PRACTICE AND PERFORMANCE PIANOS

This policy document is to allow for a better communication and understanding between composers, performers and instrument technicians; recognising that extended techniques are a legitimate part of musical performance, but that they also have the potential to cause significant damage to any instrument.

All pianos in Guildhall School are considered to be a shared resource and so the policy detailed here is to apply to all students, professors and visiting performers from all faculties. There is no distinction between or within any form of classical, jazz or theatre use of Guildhall School pianos. Failure to comply with this policy may lead to disciplinary proceedings.

School pianos represent a significant investment in both money and continual maintenance on the part of the piano technician. In particular, all concert instruments in both their appearance and high-level function have considerable importance to the institution and to all who use them. Even the slightest mechanical defect can make a piano unusable for performance until the defect has been remedied.

Extended technique methods in both marking and execution may seem innocuous to the user, but can leave permanent damage to the playability, sound and aesthetics of any piano.

Most damage to pianos can easily be avoided by using good judgment and having a suitable knowledge of how the piano works. Always consult with the school piano technician before using extended techniques. If you are composing a piece using extended techniques, consult with the school piano technician to ascertain what is considered safe. Alternatives to potentially destructive methods can often be found to satisfy both the performer and this policy.

With the prior knowledge and agreement of the school piano technician, a piano in very good working order will most often be provided for extended techniques performances. It may be a piano routinely used for concert use, but depending on the extent of the techniques employed and solely at the school piano technician's discretion a substitute piano may have to be hired in. A member of the Performance Venues Team has the authority to forbid extended techniques on all performance pianos unless directly informed by a school piano technician that the performer has the authority to do so.

Additionally, in all cases a Guildhall School piano technician must have prior knowledge of and approve all structural changes to any piano. This includes removing the lid or other case parts and attaching anything to strings, soundboard or other part of the piano to record or modify its sound.

UNDERSTANDING TERMINOLOGY

The term 'extended techniques' requires the performer to produce sound by means other than, or in addition to, playing the keys with their fingers. Techniques typically employed include strumming, bowing, striking and plucking the strings directly; using other objects or parts of the body to strike the

keyboard other than the fingers; and striking wooden parts of the piano case either together or with hand held objects.

The term 'prepared piano' requires adding objects to the pianos strings, bridges, soundboard and/or hammers and to any other part of the piano. This term includes the use of Blue-tac, screws, nails, chains, stones and any other foreign object to any part of the piano to affect the natural resonant sound made.

Both extended and prepared techniques often require marking mechanical parts and/or strings to orientate the performer. In many cases the marking of the piano can cause more harm to a piano's future suitability than the actual extended technique employed.

With all this in mind the following procedures and limitations are suggested to help guide extended uses of Guildhall School pianos.

Extended techniques should only be performed on a designated piano after consultation with a Guildhall School piano technician and must follow these guidelines:

Touching the strings

If the strings are to be touched by fingers or hands (harmonics, plucking, rubbing), hands must be washed first as oil and sweat corrodes all strings and miscolours copper-wound bass strings. Thin gloves should be worn for extensive contact with the copper-wound bass strings and always for rehearsals. For occasional to moderate use of these techniques in performance, a moderate amount of powdered talc may be applied to clean hands to help prevent the transfer of oil from skin to the strings.

Marking the strings

Post-It strips/flags labels are the preferred material to use for marking the brass agraffes or strings. The damper head should be considered the last resort for a marking as it is the most sensitive to pressure and so has a separate protocol below. In all cases leave a part of the tab unstuck for easy removal.

To mark a string node, a thin (3mm) strip of the adhesive part of a sticky note or a mailing label can be worked around the string and stuck to itself. Chalk may be used on the plain steel wire but never on the wound bass strings as it clogs the windings leaving the string sounding short. Never use masking tape or any other adhesive that may leave a residue. Other than small stickies and chalk, nothing should be applied directly to any of the strings. This includes whiteout, tape, crayon, stickers, nail polish, etc.

The performer is responsible for removing any stickers from strings immediately after any performance unless requested not to do so by the piano technician.

Marking the Damper heads

Care must always be used when touching damper heads as they are easily damaged or displaced, leaving the accuracy and length of the dampening decay of the string vibration different to other notes. Post-It strips/flags are the only material to use for marking dampers and in all cases leave a part of the tab unstuck for easy removal. Never use chalk or other markers. The performer should not remove the markers from the damper heads after any performance unless requested to do so by the piano technician.

It is often in the removal of the markers that incur damage to the dampers.

Malleable substances on strings

Bostik White-Tac is the only malleable substance acceptable for direct application to the strings. A school piano technician must be given samples to approve all other products.

Striking, scraping and plucking strings

Strings may be plucked with the finger nails or a guitar pick. Other objects must always be of a material that will not mark or scratch strings. The general rule is that the material should not be harder than the strings. On steel (treble) strings only materials that are softer than the steel string, such as brass or aluminium, may be used. Copper-wound bass strings should not be scraped but can be struck or plucked with a material softer than copper (copper is a much softer metal than steel and the tightness of the windings are critical to their sound). Acceptable materials might include wood, plastic, rubber and felt mallets.

Never use a steel chisel or screwdriver to scrape, pluck or strike any piano strings (a substitute may be made from brass stock). With advance notification the piano technician will help a performer in selecting materials that will not damage the piano.

Other string vibrators such as violin bow-hair, EBows and clean/dry electric toothbrushes may be used on piano strings after instruction how to do so safely by a school piano technician.

Clean up

The pianist should clean up after performance (except damper heads) and leave the piano in the same condition it was found. Nothing should be left in the piano. Do not, however, risk damaging the piano for the sake of clean up. If you need assistance removing something please contact the school piano technician.

Screws and bolts

In some cases, literature calls for the insertion of screws or other items between piano strings. In all such cases a hire piano will need to be sought for performance and practice room use is restricted to one designated piano. Proper protocol must still be followed when inserting screws. Only use brand new screws and/or bolts, or those in like-new condition, in any piano. Screws and bolts showing signs of use, rust or corrosion should never be inserted between piano strings. Screws should be carefully selected to fit into the gap between the strings with minimum spreading. Always depress the sustaining pedal while inserting anything between the strings to avoid pinching the damper felt. Go slowly, taking great care not to let the screw come in contact with the soundboard. Only plastic screws/bolts or similar materials softer than copper metal should be used when inserting between wound bass strings.

Appendix 2

Special / Historical Performance Keyboard Provision Request Form

THERE IS AN ONLINE VERSION OF THIS FORM ON MyGuildhall : [link here](#)

Please give your contact details (name, mobile and email address):

Please provide the name and/or a description of your event:

What date would you like to request a keyboard instrument for?

What time will you need to set up?

What are the start and end times of the rehearsal?

What are the start and end times of the performance?

Please detail your instrument requirements:

Please indicate tuning requirements (pitch and temperament):

Do you have any additional comments/requirements for your event?

Request submitted on:

Payment authorised by the EPI Manager: Yes/No

Reservation made by:

This is a request form only. Requests are not guaranteed and can only be assured once the Ensembles, Programming & Instrument (EPI) Manager has confirmed the budget provision. If you are responsible for the event, please ensure that it is signed off at all stages.