

LAUDEMUS! POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Updated following recommendations to the Trustees in
September/October 2024

Contents

Page

2	Glossary
3	The Role of Trustees
4	Risk Management
6	Volunteers
7	Conflict of Interest
8	Complaints
9	Safeguarding (including Child Protection)
13	Finance and Resources
Appendix A	Copy of Trustee declaration document

The Trustees will review these policies annually and develop them in accordance with the needs of the Charity, good practice, and any legal or regulatory requirements.

Policies revised October 2024; adopted 31 January 2025

M.E. Mortimer, Chair

Date

Glossary

Administrator

The person appointed by the Trustees to carry out the day to day running of the charity, including booking participants and accommodation, purchasing music, keeping appropriate records, and ensuring everything runs smoothly on the course itself. The Administrator is paid a fee by the charity.

The Charity

Laudemus! is registered with the Charity Commission (no 1111081) as a charity, that is, it exists to apply its resources to its charitable purposes of advancing the Christian religion by providing music in churches and advancing the education of the public in music. It pursues these objectives principally by running an annual course, including the singing of several services of Choral Evensong, and providing financial support for some participants.

Musical Director

The person appointed by the Trustees to direct the course, including selecting music for services, rehearsing, coaching and conducting the singers. The Musical Director is paid a fee by the charity.

Officers

Currently the Chair, the Secretary, and the Health & Safety Officer.

Policy

A summary of the organisation's thinking on a particular issue, which provides a framework for approaching it in practice.

Procedure

A detailed framework governing routine activities or those which require consistent and/or transparent handling when they arise.

Professional Team

Currently the Musical Director, Administrator and Organist.

Trustees

Members of the committee legally responsible for protecting the charity's resources and applying them effectively to its charitable purposes. The Trustees cannot be paid for their work, although they are permitted to claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses.

Volunteers

People who do work for a charity without obligation, or payment other than expenses.

The Role of Trustees

- 1) Laudemus! is governed by its Trustees who are chosen informally by other Trustees as being well qualified to devise and develop policies and protocols to benefit the charity. They are required to manage the charity's resources for the benefit of the charity; they must ensure that the charity operates in accordance with its governing document; and they must at all times act in the charity's best interests. They are responsible to the public for the affairs of the charity and are required to confirm that they are suitable for the role.
- 2) We therefore require all Trustees to sign a declaration of suitability, broadly in line with the recommendations of the Charity Commission and covering such matters as child protection, conflict of interest, financial probity, etc. A copy of the current document forms Appendix A of these policies.
- 3) Expenses relating to legitimate trustee activities may be reclaimed, provided they are agreed in advance and are not excessive. Such items may include, but are not limited to, costs in connection with attendance at meetings, stationery, mileage, training for trustees. All expense payments must be supported by proof that the expense has been incurred.

Risk Management Policy

- 4) The Trustees aim
 - a) to be aware of risk while not allowing the fear of it to unnecessarily restrict the work of the charity, and
 - b) to manage risk by appropriate and proportionate planning, procedures, scrutiny, and, where relevant, insurance.
- 5) The Trustees appreciate that risk management informs policy on reserves, investment and pricing.
- 6) The Trustees aim to develop their detailed assessment and management of risk, and this will be an agenda item for at least one Trustees' meeting each year.
- 7) Our broad approach to particular areas of risk is as follows:
 - a) *Administrative risk* Laudemus! is a very small charity, and relies heavily on a freelance and part-time professional team to organise and deliver its annual course. There are unavoidable risks associated with this model, such as the possibility of the unplanned unavailability of one of the team or inability to recruit suitable participants. Laudemus aims to have adequate procedures and crisis plans in place to ensure that the course is able to go ahead should the unexpected happen.
 - b) *Financial Risk* Laudemus! is fortunate in that it is normally able to collect course fees from participants in advance of paying the bills. The charity also holds reserves, largely, but not exclusively, designated to provide bursaries for course participants who would otherwise be unable to attend. Bursaries are an important part of our public benefit, so these funds should only be invested after a careful and realistic assessment of the risk to their capital compared with likely total returns. Where it is legally required or reasonable and affordable to do so, we should insure the charity against unexpected costs and liabilities. We should also ensure that we have procedures which minimise the risk to funds of poor budgeting and record-keeping, or fraud, including an independent examination of our accounts.
 - c) *Reputational Risk* Most Laudemus! participants are adults (aged eighteen or above), but we occasionally offer places on the course to those aged sixteen or seventeen. This poses a low-likelihood but very high-impact reputational risk. The charity accepts this risk as part of our music education mission and seeks to minimise it by an appropriate safeguarding policy. (See page 9)

There is also a low-likelihood risk of inappropriate behaviour by course participants causing offence to members of the public; we hope to minimise this by promoting a pleasant and respectful atmosphere and ethos on the course, and would seek to limit any impact by promptly and sincerely apologising to anyone affected.

Should any trustee or member of the professional team observe, suspect or be told about inappropriate behaviour by any participant, they should alert the Administrator and the Trustees so that any appropriate action can be discussed and taken.

Where necessary, those involved in such discussions should remember that Laudemus! has no authority in criminal matters, and that Paragraph 5 of the Complaints Policy (page 8) may be relevant even if no complaint has been made. If it could be said that there is a victim in the case, that person should not be made to feel under any pressure to resolve the matter privately.

Opinions expressed by third parties on social media accounts could result in reputational damage to Laudemus! Social media accounts bearing the name of the charity should either be under the direct control of the administrator or of a trustee. The names of any support/chat groups set up by participants must not give the impression of being endorsed by, or representing the views of, the Trustees.

- d) *Risk assessment* A risk assessment is undertaken each year, and covers such things as personal property, personal insurance, medical emergencies, accident reporting and damage sustained to school property.

Volunteer Policy

Laudemus! greatly benefits from the contribution of volunteers. Their activities fall into two categories.

- 1) Tasks and roles which are essential to the good running of the course. These currently include:
 - a) identifying suitable churches. This is most easily done by people in the Dorset area, and we have two people who do this for us, both in the course of their other activities.
 - b) designated fire officer to oversee fire procedures for our residential accommodation
 - c) health and safety officer to check each church we visit for hazards and take any necessary action
 - d) independent examiner of our accounts (Although our income and assets are not large enough for this to be a legal requirement, it is good practice, and helpful to the Administrator.)
 - e) safeguarding, for which a Designated Safeguarding Lead is appointed from among the trustees. (See page 10)

For these tasks and roles, Laudemus! will:

- i) check at least annually that the people carrying them out are willing to continue, and make alternative arrangements if not
 - ii) ensure that they are appropriately briefed and/or qualified to undertake them
 - iii) pay their reasonable expenses.
- 2) Non-essential contributions which ease the burden on the professional team and/or add to everyone's enjoyment of the week.

These include:

- a) moving furniture,
- b) arranging refreshments during breaks
- c) washing up after tea,
- d) organising parties and meals out
- e) other ad hoc activities

Laudemus! does not want to discourage informal contributions from singers and non-singing visitors by creating a bureaucracy around them, but the Trustees and professional team will be alert to anyone who might be taking on more than they safely can, or feeling their contribution is taken for granted.

Conflict of Interest

Background

A conflict of interest arises when a Trustee of a charity has interests or loyalties which might interfere – or give the appearance of interfering – with their duty as a Trustee to act in the best interests of the charity. This does not in itself reflect on the integrity of the Trustee involved, but such situations need to be identified and managed so as to ensure that due procedures are followed, decisions are properly taken and valid, and that the charity suffers no damage to its reputation.

Legally, the idea of ‘interest’ has a wide scope. It includes not only the Trustee’s personal ownership of, or influence in, a business, but that of their close family – their spouse or partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren. Trustees who serve on the governing body of another charity may also find themselves with a conflict of loyalty between that organisation and Laudemus!

Policy

- 1) The governing document of Laudemus! requires any Trustee with a conflict of interest in a decision to withdraw from the discussion of that decision (Clause 19).
- 2) To ensure that any significant conflicts are identified, the Trustees should disclose at each meeting whether they have any interest or influence in the following organisations, with which Laudemus! deals each year, or with any of their subsidiary or associated companies.
 - Bryanston School
 - The Royal School of Church Music
 - The Michael James Music Trust
 - Wimborne Minster
 - Wimborne Minster Musical Heritage Trust
- 3) This list is not exhaustive and should be reviewed and updated annually. If a change of accommodation or the recruitment of another Trustee or member of the professional team becomes necessary, then the names of all the organisations or people under serious consideration should be circulated to the Trustees so that any potential conflict of interest can be disclosed.
- 4) The Trustees delegate much of the running of the charity to the Director and the Administrator, including the final selection of venues and the allocation of bursary funds. Should these people be aware of any personal conflict of interest, they should seek the approval of the Trustees for that decision, in order to protect the reputation of the charity.

Complaints Policy

The Director, Administrator and Trustees of Laudemus! hope everyone who participates will have a rewarding and enjoyable week, but we acknowledge there will sometimes be problems or things we should do differently for future courses, and we very much welcome feedback. Usually, this will be informal, but we appreciate that a complaint might arise which is more appropriately dealt with by a formal procedure.

General Principles

- 1) Any participant with concerns about their own particular needs should discuss these with the Administrator well before the course. If we are unaware of particular needs then we cannot consider how we might accommodate them: forewarned is forearmed.
- 2) During the course, day-to-day practical problems should be raised with the Administrator, who is best placed to sort them out or refer them to the appropriate third party; obviously, if a church lacks all the facilities we might wish for, there will be nothing very much to be done about it on the day.
- 3) During the course, the Musical Director's decision in any matter of music and/or performance will be final.
- 4) Complaints, .
- 5) be handled with respect and confidentiality.
- 6) Laudemus! does not have the authority to investigate criminal matters. Any complaint involving, for example, theft, assault, or the welfare of a child or other vulnerable person will be notified to the police, and also social services if appropriate.

Procedure

Stage 1 Any formal complaint should be made by email to the Administrator on laudemus@aol.com. The Administrator will take all reasonable steps to resolve the matter, and let the complainant know how long that is likely to take.

Stage 2 If the matter cannot be resolved with the Administrator, or the complaint concerns the Administrator, or the complainant believes the matter should be drawn to the attention of the Trustees, the email should have "For the Trustees" in the subject line. Alternatively the complainant may write to Laudemus! at Upper Mill House, Chalford, Stroud, GL6 8FY, marking the letter FAO The Chairman of Trustees, and it will be forwarded. A representative of the Trustees will be in contact as soon as possible, and the Trustees will endeavour to resolve the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned.

Stage 3 If the complainant is dissatisfied with the Trustees' response, Laudemus! will endeavour to respond to additional information related to the complaint, which should be

submitted as for Stage 2. The Trustees will respond within six weeks, indicating a timescale for decision, which will be final.

Safeguarding

- 1) Laudemus! does not set out to work with vulnerable adults or children under 18, and its activities do not constitute 'regulated activity' under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The charity's general policy is not to accept applications from people under the age of 18. However, the Trustees recognise that an application might be received from an exceptional student aged 16-18, and discussions between Bryanston School (hereinafter called the School), the parent(s) or guardian(s), the Musical Director and the Administrator should begin as early as possible to establish if the student can be accommodated safely while still deriving maximum benefit from the course (see also clause 3c). Adults with special needs – or, if appropriate, those caring for them – will also be asked to discuss their particular circumstances with the Administrator as early as possible. This may show that only minimal awareness or adjustments are necessary, or that the participant would need to be accompanied by a carer or chaperone.
- 2) Arranging for a carer or chaperone must be the responsibility of the participant or his/her representative. Laudemus! cannot be responsible for providing or arranging such care but will arrange the necessary accommodation on payment of the usual charges.

3) Under 18s (Child Protection)

Laudemus! is primarily an adult choir, but from time to time we are requested to consider participation by young people aged 16 to 18 for whom this training is seen as beneficial for their university application. Participation by under-18s is subject to prior consultation with Bryanston School.

See Clause 1. The Trustees recognise that Laudemus! has particular responsibilities towards this group.

- a) We undertake to exercise proper care in the selection, appointment and support of those working with young people, and require evidence of a DBS check from staff and trustees wherever appropriate (Laudemus! does not itself meet the criteria for requesting DBS checks). We also undertake to do everything possible to ensure the welfare of all 16-18 year-olds during their time with the group, and will liaise with the School from the outset to ensure that their criteria can be met before awarding a place to a 16–18 year-old. We will ensure suitable breaks, mealtimes and supervision for all such young people.
- b) Should any young person between the ages of 16 and 18 request to join the group, we also undertake to enter into full discussion in advance with the parents or guardians of the young persons concerned, so that they are fully apprised of our policies and working practices and can thereby make an informed judgement as to the suitability of our course for their child.

- c) Any young person under the age of 18 at the beginning of the course must be resident in discrete accommodation, i.e. with a secure door which is capable of being locked. This is unlikely to be possible in one of the school boarding houses, but the administrator will discuss the matter with Richard Ball (currently Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead for the School) in case suitable accommodation can be found which is appropriate for the young person in question. The parent(s)/guardian(s) of the young person will also be consulted.
 - d) At the beginning of the course, any young person under the age of 18 is to be introduced personally to the Administrator, the Chair of Trustees and to our own Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL, see Clause 4, below) and encouraged to bring any concerns to them at any time. It is important for young people to be able to talk to either a male or a female confidant(e): should the three officers named above all be of the same sex, an alternative person will be designated.
 - e) The course is not deemed to be suitable for young people under the age of 16, and applications will not be accepted from students who will not have reached their 16th birthday by the start of the course.
 - f) We accept and endorse the principles of the Children Act (1989) and of the Keeping Children Safe in Education Act (2021).
- 4) Laudemus! will appoint a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). This named individual should have the appropriate level of safeguarding training, which should be refreshed every two years or when the laws governing safeguarding are amended (whichever is the sooner).

The name, photograph and contact number of the DSL is to be clearly displayed in a document posted on the notice board of the boarding house, and a copy of this document given to anyone under the age of 18 or any vulnerable adult.

The DSL will be given a copy of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures adopted by the School and be required to be familiar with any content relevant to the particular circumstances of Laudemus!

- 5) The Trustees recognise that there are many forms of abuse, including, but not limited to, the following:
- a) *Physical abuse*
 - b) *Emotional abuse (including radicalisation)*
 - c) *Domestic abuse (including coercive and controlling behaviour)*
 - d) *Sexual abuse*
 - e) *Neglect*

f) Exploitation (criminal or sexual)

Trustees are required to be alert to the signs of possible abuse in any of the above categories.

6) Procedures for dealing with concerns and incidents of abuse (adults or children)

The Trustees will first make a decision based on the immediacy of the concern and the following factors:

- g) *If the vulnerable person is in immediate danger or needs emergency medical attention* – Trustees should dial 999 and ask for the police and/or ambulance service.
- h) *If there is no immediate danger, and the alleged abuser remains present* – Trustees will immediately consult the DSL and arrange to move the alleged abuser, in a sensitive manner, from direct contact with the vulnerable person and follow the procedures below.
- Make a note of the concerns reported to them. (**Note:** *at no time should the person hearing allegations of abuse promise to the vulnerable person that they will keep the matter confidential.*)
 - Speak with the DSL and fellow Trustees to decide how to handle the reported abuse, excluding any Trustee(s) involved in the incident.
 - Escalate the report by:
 - raising concerns with the police (in the case of serious or suspected criminal offences);
 - initiating an internal investigation for less serious incidents where the Trustees feel internal mediation will achieve the desired outcome.
 - notifying the School's DSL or DDSL of the Trustees' concerns.
 - Where cases are escalated, the Trustees will co-operate with the School's DSL or DDSL, police or local authority in dealing with the reported incident. (**Note:** *where there is physical evidence of a crime, the police and the local authority safeguarding officer MUST be informed.*)
 - Where an internal investigation takes place, the Trustees will:
 - inform all parties involved of the reported abuse as soon as possible;
 - inform the family/guardians of the person reported as being abused of the incident;
 - arrange separate meetings with both parties (a joint meeting may be arranged, if appropriate);
 - offer both parties the chance to bring a friend or representative to the meeting;
 - ensure all meetings are attended by the DSL and at least one other Trustee;

- invite all parties to submit a written statement in advance of the meeting;
- decide, following the necessary meetings, on next steps, and communicate them to all parties in writing within five days. Trustees will either:
 - escalate the incident to the relevant authority; OR
 - further investigate, with established procedures and time-lines, towards a decision or resolution; OR
 - agree on a decision or resolution.

7) Resolution and disciplinary action (in the case of non-criminal activity)

If abuse is found to have taken place, any final resolution or decision will be taken in the best interest of the person who has suffered abuse and the best interests of Laudemus!

Any disciplinary action will be taken in line with the Laudemus! constitution

The Trustees of Laudemus! discussed changes to this Safeguarding Policy at their meeting held on 25 October 2023 following consultation with Bryanston School in August 2023. The revised policy, as set out above, was adopted at the meeting on 25 October 2023.

The Trustees shall review this policy annually.

Safeguarding incidents while at Bryanston School should be reported in the first instance to Richard Ball, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Finance and Resources

1) Reserves

a) Unrestricted Funds (The General Fund)

Background

The charity should be able to withstand any losses from the course having to be cancelled at short notice. These might include music already purchased, liability to the accommodation venue, amounts reasonably claimed by professional staff under the *quantum meruit* principle, and the refund of fees already paid by participants. However, the Trustees believe the risk of total cancellation becoming necessary is minimal; if one of the professional team were to drop out, we would almost certainly be able to find a satisfactory replacement, though they might be more expensive. If the course venue were to be unexpectedly unavailable, the charity would not be liable for accommodation fees, which are about two thirds of the total cost.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020–2021 presented a third risk – cancellation due to an infectious disease with restrictions imposed by Government. The intervention of Government effectively cancelled our liability to the accommodation (Bryanston School), although the professional staff were reimbursed as outlined above.

Policy

As at December 2018, the Trustees believe the charity should hold between £2,000 and £5,000 of unrestricted funds available to cover unexpected changes to the course. These funds may be needed at short notice, and should therefore be kept in the current and instant access deposit accounts.

b) Designated Funds (The Course Support Fund)

Background

All the charity's designated funds are expendable, arising from donations given primarily, but not exclusively, to fund bursaries. The charity has benefited from regular donations targeted at young people but these may not be available indefinitely. It also holds accumulated donations which could be used to support the course or benefit young people in other ways, including making the course more affordable to older individuals or encouraging young composers of choral music. Bursaries are an important part of the public benefit provided by the charity, and the Trustees aim to secure our existing level of provision, while retaining sufficient funds to be flexible in meeting other needs.

The Trustees note that the currently annual donations from the Michael James Music Trust and the Wimborne Minster Musical Heritage Trust are restricted, and can only be used to fund scholarships for 18–25 year-olds. These donations are always fully applied

to their stated purpose in the year they are received. The Trustees acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that any restricted donations are only used in accordance with the donor's instructions, and to disclose any unused restricted donations as restricted funds in the statutory accounts.

Policy

The Trustees will continue to invite donations, primarily but not exclusively to reduce the cost of attending the course where a need is identified, and will also invest part of the fund to generate increased income and capital growth.

Investment decisions are governed by the Investment Policy set out in part 3 of this section.

2) Pricing Policy

The Trustees will agree a budget for each course, and a price which, if paid by all participants, would cover all the costs of the course plus a small contingency, which, if unused, will be added to general funds or to a higher-interest/restricted access option if the sum held in the general fund exceeds the maximum referred to above. The Course Support Fund may be used to make the course more accessible as required.

3) Investment Policy

a) Objectives and Risk

The Trustees' objective is to provide the Bursary Fund with the possibility of enhanced income and capital growth in real terms. They appreciate that such enhancement is unlikely to occur without some degree of risk to the capital, but the Bursary Fund is a vital part of the charity's ability to provide public benefit. The charity can therefore accept only a low to medium risk of capital losses. This policy sets out some principles for the management and mitigation of this risk.

b) Diversification

i) The total fund should be divided into:

- Instant access / short-term deposits as required for regular bursaries each summer
- Longer-term deposits at better rates of interest. To enable the charity to be reasonably agile in responding to participants' needs for financial support, deposit terms should not normally exceed one year.
- Cash deposits will be kept in the UK in order to benefit from the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

- No more than 60% of the fund should be placed in market-based investments offering enhanced income and growth opportunities, but also carrying a risk of capital loss.
- ii) Diversification is also important within the market-based portion of the portfolio; if one investment does unexpectedly badly, it should be offset by others which are doing well. The relatively small sum currently available would limit the Trustees' ability to diversify within a portfolio of individual stocks, and increase transaction costs. The simplest way to achieve diversification would be to invest in a larger, ready-diversified fund of the unit trust type.
- iii) The Trustees are also mindful that diversification is strengthened by taking a long-term approach, and will normally expect to leave investments in place for five to ten years.

c) Professional management of market-based investments

The Trustees recognise that they may not always have the time and expertise to choose investments and monitor them in detail, or to respond swiftly to market movements. They will therefore invest in professionally managed funds, with a preference for those with experience of investing for charities.

They will also ensure that they get regular reports from their fund manager(s) against reasonable benchmarks.

d) Ethical considerations

Laudemus! would be ill-advised to manage its own portfolio, and is not in a position to dictate a detailed ethical approach to a fund manager. The Trustees will take account of a fund manager's declared policy with regard to individual investments, and their general approach to issues such as sustainability, involvement of all stakeholders and honest and transparent dealing.

e) Laudemus! procedures

The Finance Sub-Committee (FSC) will research possible investments and make recommendations to the Trustees, who will then authorise the necessary actions as appropriate. The FSC may monitor the portfolio in more detail, but the Trustees shall review performance and this policy at least annually.

At the August 2022 Trustee meeting, the following was agreed: 'That in view of the radically changing financial situation, the Trustees authorise the FSC to close and open accounts with selected counterparties so as to achieve favourable terms for the charity's deposits, providing that the entire balances are transferred expeditiously. Where applicable, counterparties must offer the FSCS guarantee. This switch is expected to happen before the end of 2022, after which a full report will be made to the Trustees.'

Appendix A

Trustee Declaration of Eligibility

To comply with the recommendations of the Charity Commission, trustees are required to confirm that they meet the eligibility criteria for acting as a trustee to a UK-based charity.

Please supply the information requested below, and return the signed document to the Administrator at the above address. It may not be possible to ratify your appointment as a trustee until this declaration has been received.

Title	First name(s)	Last name
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Date of birth

Are you normally resident in the United Kingdom?	YES / NO
Please give your UK permanent address	
	Postcode

Please give the date your appointment is due to take effect	
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By signing this document you confirm that you:

- are willing to act as a trustee of Laudemus!
- have received and read the charity’s governing document, and understand the purposes (objects) and rules pertaining to Laudemus!, as set out in the document
- will always act reasonable and responsibly, and in the best interest of the charity, regardless of your own personal views or interests
- will only use the charity’s income for the purpose set out in the governing document
- will make decisions with your fellow trustees in line with accepted good practice
- read and understood the Charity Commission’s safeguarding guidance in respect of vulnerable people

Please also confirm that you are not and have never been:

- an undischarged bankrupt
- disqualified by the Charity Commission from being a trustee for any reason
- a disqualified company director
- convicted of terrorism offences or violent crime, or been required to sign the sex offenders register

(Please note that persons with a spent conviction for any of the following are still eligible to act as trustees: aiding/abetting an offender; bribery; contempt of court; dishonesty/deception; misconduct in public office; money laundering; perjury; perverting the course of justice.)

.....
Signature

.....
Date