



Conductor Training Programme Essentials Course

This course is for conductors and vocal leaders of all levels of experience who are new to SfP's training programme, as well as those who are new to conducting. The course is designed to introduce the fundamental principles and techniques of the SfP methodology - exploring aspects of both gesture and teaching.

To provide structure and clarity, our curriculum is organised into four core aspects of choral conducting practice:

Preparation and Planning – understanding the work that is done before a rehearsal

Teaching – running rehearsals; teaching the music and structuring the session

Gesture – conducting the music both in rehearsals and performance

Leadership – building qualities of a musical leader to get the most from singers

These aspects then run through each level, building upon one another to provide a progressive and holistic training programme for our conductors.

What skills and experience will I gain?

Participants will gain conducting skills and musical understanding across the four key aspects of choral leadership mentioned above. They will also explore our unique ethos and methodology, gaining insight into the principles that guide our approach. There will be opportunities for all participants to reflect on their current practice, enabling them to identify strengths and areas for growth and to support their ongoing development.

Upon completion, they will be equipped with the following skills in order to conduct with increased confidence, and to progress to higher levels within our conductor training programme:

- how to plan and prepare simple repertoire to teach by rote
- use efficient teaching strategies for pacy rehearsals
- confident use of clear and economical conducting gestures to lead and direct music
- explore the role of the conductor as a musical leader

Course Delivery

Essentials courses take place on Weekends, 4-Day courses and at Summer School. The course consists of technique sessions and workshops, much like other Sing for Pleasure events. On a Summer School, the Essentials course is split into two halves. The first part of the week (Saturday–Tuesday) works in a similar format to the weekend. For the second half of the week, participants will work at a level suited to their experience and skills, usually Level One or Two.

Repertoire

To keep the course bespoke and flexible, participants are not required to prepare any pieces beforehand. Each course begins with learning and teaching a round introduced by the tutor during Technique sessions. Afterwards, participants choose a second piece from the *Essentials Course Repertoire Booklet*, with tutor guidance, to focus on for the remainder of the course. These pieces range from simple rounds to lower Level 2 repertoire, accommodating diverse skill levels. For longer courses, such as 4-Day sessions and at Summer School, a third piece will be assigned by the tutor.

What's next?

After completing the Essentials course, participants can, in consultation with their tutor, move to the level that best suits their learning needs and experience. While progression through each level is encouraged, flexibility is offered to accommodate individual goals. It is important to recognise that each level has its own intrinsic value and is not merely a stepping stone to the next.