



An information sheet produced by the Incorporated Society of Musicians

Fees Survey 2006

This fee information is based on a survey of fees charged by members of the ISM's Performers & Composers Section engaged to play or sing at wedding receptions, corporate dinners, banquets, parties, and residencies in hotels and restaurants between September 2005 and September 2006. The survey was carried out by the Statistical Services Centre at Reading University.

How to use the Survey

The fees are presented as averages at the 20%, 50% and 80% points in the data. In the adapted staff used to display the results, the first line corresponds to 20 per cent of the responses, the middle to 50 per cent and the top line to 80 per cent. Figure 1, for example, shows that 20 per cent of performers were charging a fee of £100 or less (the bottom line of the staff) for a three-hour session and 50 per cent charged £150 or less. Another 50 per cent charged £150 or more, while at the top of the staff, 80 per cent of the fees charged were £250 or less. Above the staff represents another 20 per cent of performers who charged £250 or more.

Where a range is given, this shows the highest and lowest fee that respondents actually charged.

Functions (one-off engagements)

Respondents who had undertaken freelance work as performers at wedding receptions, corporate dinners, banquets, parties etc. were asked to state the typical fee charged. These ranged from £85 to £500 for a 3-hour session. The average fees are illustrated in Figure 1.

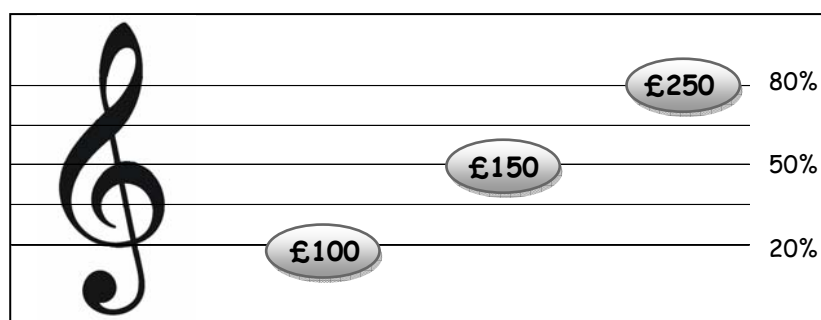


Figure 1 – Percentiles of typical fee per musician per 3-hr session at a function

Respondents were asked if their fees had varied according to the number of performers in the group.

When performing as a soloist, the fees ranged from £100 to £400. The average fees are illustrated in Figure 2.

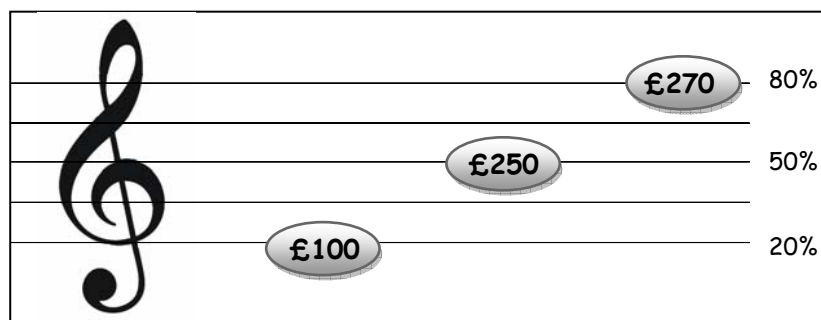


Figure 2 – Percentiles of typical fee per 3-hr session when performing as a soloist at a function

When performing in an ensemble of up to three musicians, the fees ranged from £60 to £300. The average fees are illustrated in Figure 3.

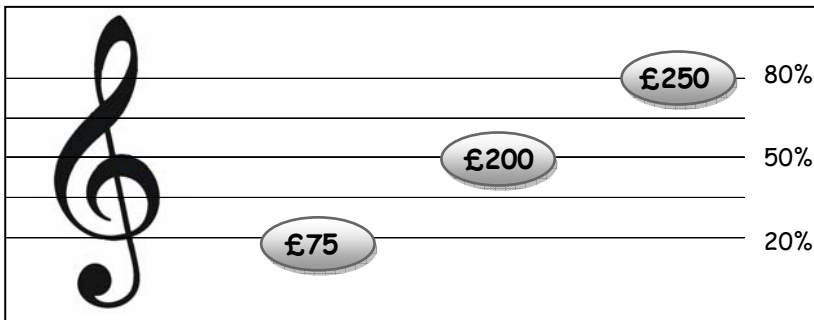


Figure 3 – Percentiles of typical fee per 3-hr session in an ensemble of up to 3 musicians

When performing in an ensemble of four or more musicians, the fees ranged from £50 to £250. The averages are illustrated in Figure 4.

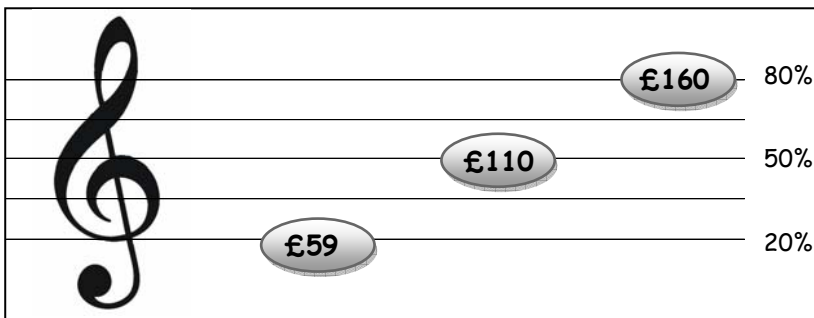


Figure 4 – Percentiles of typical fee per 3-hr session in an ensemble of 4 or more musicians

Range of Fees Charged

Respondents were asked whether the fees they charged varied for reasons other than the number of performers in the group. If so, they were asked to quote their highest and lowest fees and to say if they had been soloists, part of an ensemble of up to three musicians or part of a larger ensemble.

Highest Fees

The highest fees quoted ranged from £50 to £550 per 3-hr session.

The average fees for each of the three groups are illustrated in Figure 5.

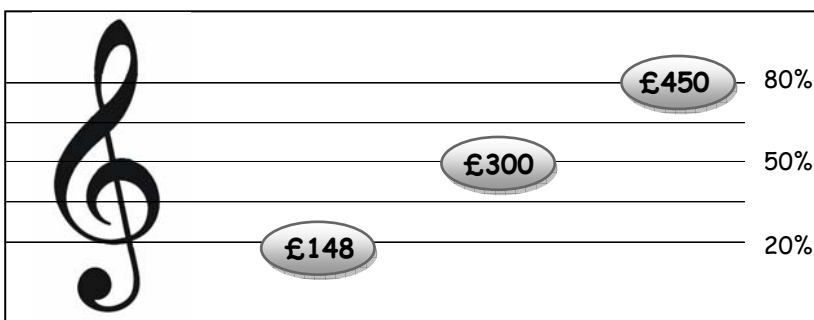


Figure 5a – Percentiles of highest fee (soloists) per 3-hr session

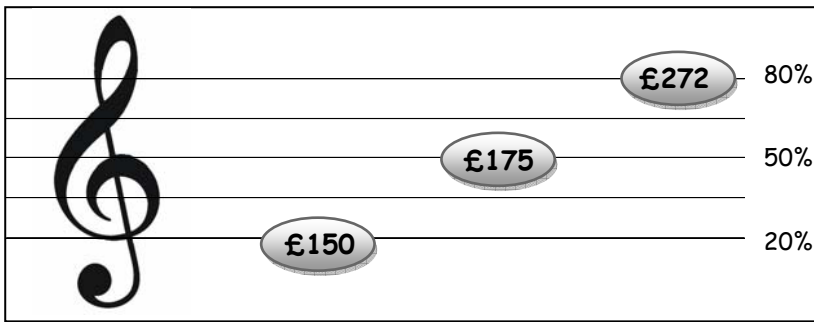


Figure 5b – Percentiles of highest fee (ensemble of up to 3 musicians) per 3-hr session

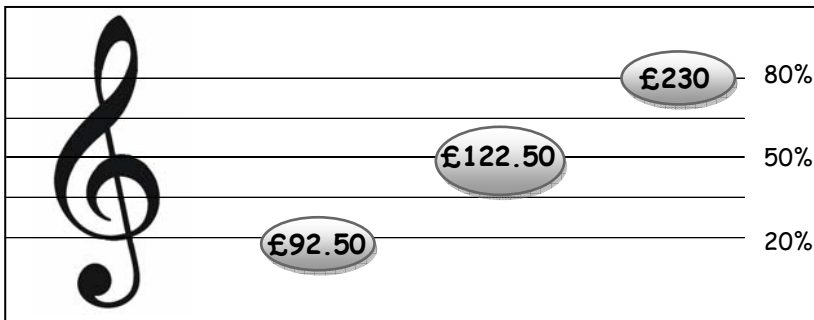


Figure 5c – Percentiles of highest fee (ensemble of 4 or more musicians) per 3-hr session

Because of the varying numbers of musicians in each sub-sample, statistical tests were run to check the significance of the differences in fees quoted. There was found to be no significant difference between the highest fees, except when all the fees for the ensemble players were combined and compared against the soloists. Thus it can be concluded that fees per musician when performing as a soloist are significantly higher than when performing in any size of ensemble.

Lowest Fees

The lowest fees quoted ranged from £40 to £500. The average fees for the three groups are illustrated in Figure 6.

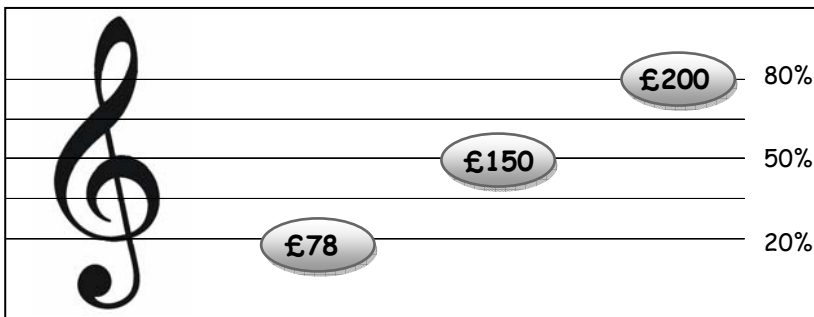


Figure 6a – Percentiles of lowest fee (soloists) per 3-hr session

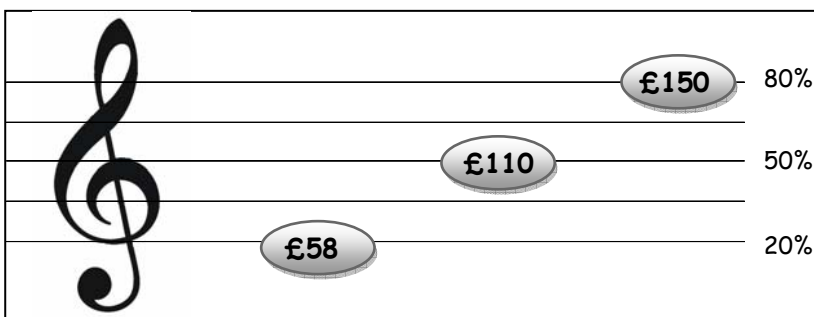


Figure 6b – Percentiles of lowest fee (ensemble of up to 3 musicians) per 3-hr session

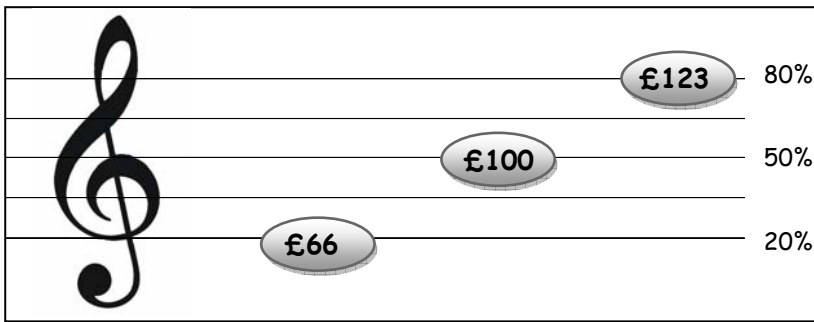


Figure 6c – Percentiles of lowest fee (ensemble of 4 or more musicians) per 3-hr session

As with the highest fees, statistical tests revealed that the only significant variation in the fees per musician was between those performing as soloists and those in any size of ensemble.

Residencies (regular bookings for a period of at least one week)

Only eight respondents said they had undertaken freelance work as performers at residencies in 2005-06. The fees quoted ranged from £75 to £175 for a 3-hour session, but due to the small sample size, statistical averages could not be calculated.

For comparison, the 2004-05 Fees Survey showed that an average of half of respondents were charging £90 or more per session and the other half were charging £90 or more. 20 per cent were charging £60 or less, while 20 per cent were charging £109 or more per session.

Notes

Fees are a matter of negotiation and will relate to the specific requirements of the engagement.

Each 3-hour session would normally include breaks of 15 minutes per hour after the first hour.

Many respondents said that travel expenses or allowances were paid in addition. This often depended on the distance of the venue from their home base, but typically, travel was charged at cost outside a 20-mile radius. For travel by car, HM Revenue & Customs' authorised mileage rate is 40p per mile. Porterage for harpists is normally paid as extra.

Fees negotiated for future engagements may incorporate annual inflationary increases. The latest available rate of inflation – the Retail Price Index (RPI) – at the time this information sheet was published (August 2007) was 4.4%. Inflation rates are published monthly by the Office for National Statistics at www.statistics.gov.uk.