

BASCA Commission Fee Survey 2011: The Results



1. Overview	1
2. Management Summary	2
3. Detailed Analysis	5
4. Further Sub-Category Analysis	11

1. Overview

BASCA commissioned a survey into the fees charged by composers, publishers and commissioners for musical compositions across a multiple range of instrumentations and genres, both inside and outside UK.

This survey was undertaken between 8th December 2010 and 9th March 2011, and covered a time period for commissions carried out between January 2005 and December 2009 (five years). The survey data was broken down by the involvement of the interested party (composer, publisher or commissioner).

In total, 522 responses were received. Five responses have been excluded from costs analysis due to zero values, resulting in 517 actual responses that form the basis of the whole data analysis. This is further explained later in this document.

This document describes the results of the findings from the survey, and identifies salient points relating to the data received.

The overall breakdown of respondents by involvement was as follows:

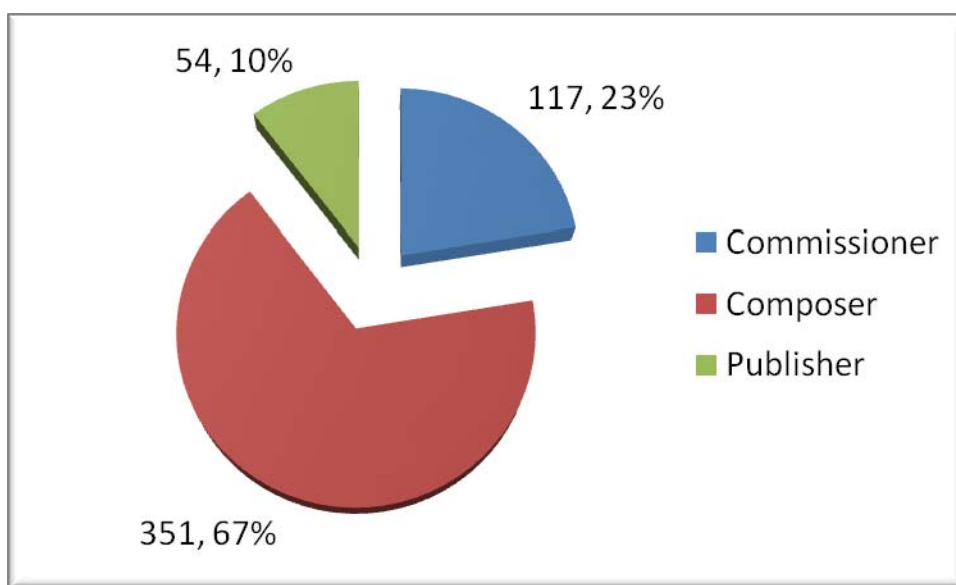


Figure 1 - Summary by Involvement

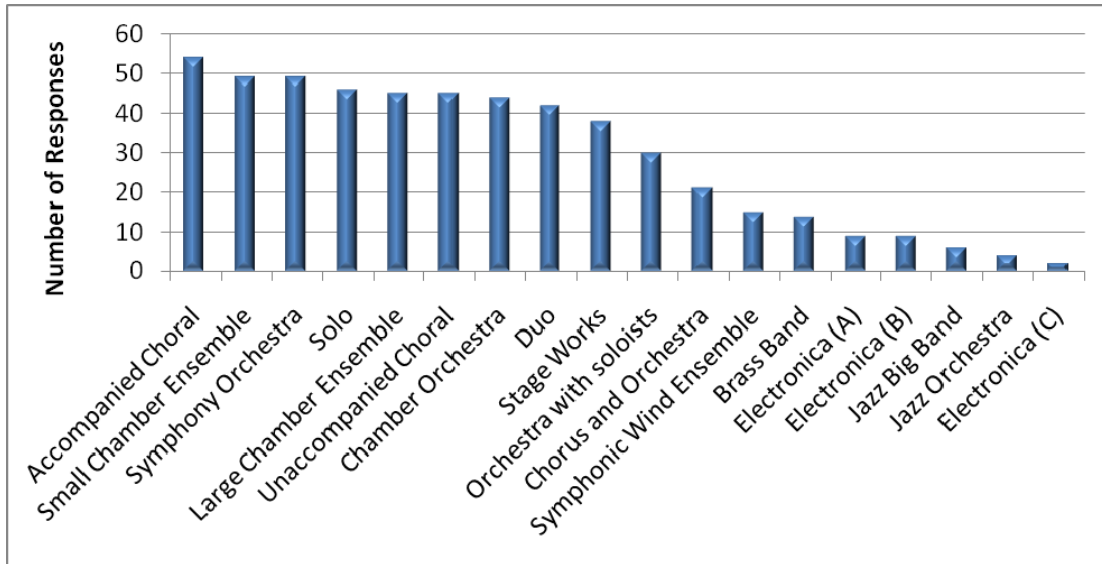


2. Management Summary

This section describes the summarised findings of the survey results. Detailed analysis follows in [Section 3 – Detailed Analysis](#).

Breakdown by Instrumentation and Genre – Number of Responses

The chart below indicates the number of responses from each respondent relating to instrumentations and genre, sorted in descending order of number of responses.



The average number of responses per category was 29, with a total sample of 522 responses, with five excluded (zero values).

The category “Accompanied Choral” received the most responses at 54.

The category with the fewest responses was “Electronica (C)” with 2 responses.

Breakdown of Category – Total Value

The chart below indicates the total value of commissions, by Category, in descending order of value.

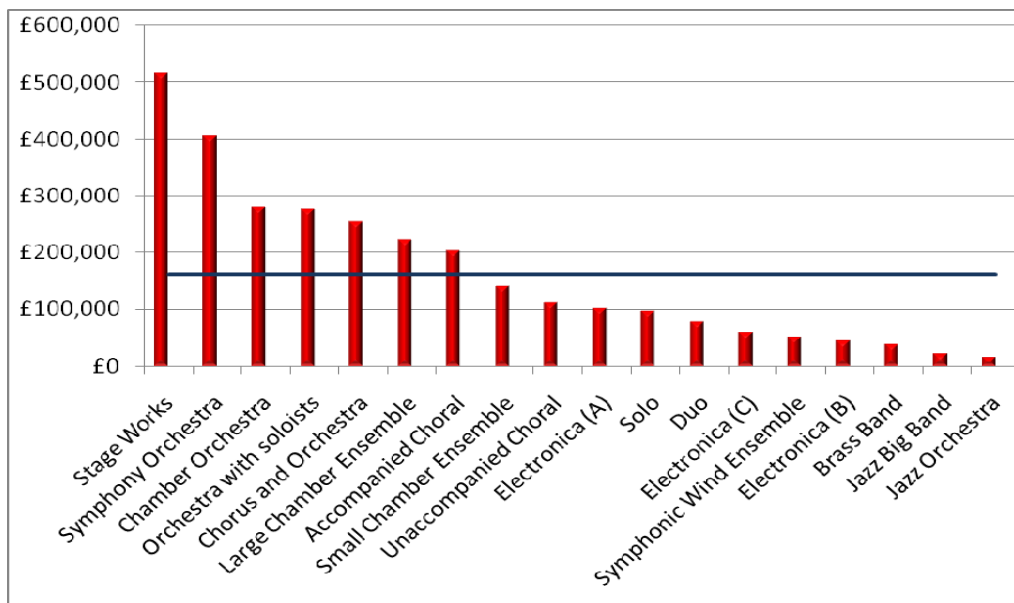


Figure 2 - Breakdown of Total Value by Category

The total value of all commissions in the survey time period was £2.9million (excluding VAT). The total average per category was £162,308. This is not a statistical “weighted” average (i.e. no allowance has been made for the number of commissions per category, only the total of commission fees for each category has been analysed for this section).

The total fee per category is shown in more detail in the table below:

Category	Total Fee (ex VAT)	%
Stage Works	£514,879	17.63%
Symphony Orchestra	£405,976	13.90%
Chamber Orchestra	£279,500	9.57%
Orchestra with soloists	£276,450	9.47%
Chorus and Orchestra	£254,500	8.72%
Large Chamber Ensemble	£223,850	7.67%
Accompanied Choral	£202,685	6.94%
Small Chamber Ensemble	£141,390	4.84%
Unaccompanied Choral	£111,300	3.81%
Electronica (A)	£101,206	3.47%
Solo	£94,590	3.24%
Duo	£78,710	2.70%
Electronica (C)	£61,000	2.09%
Symphonic Wind Ensemble	£51,600	1.77%
Electronica (B)	£45,559	1.56%
Brass Band	£39,343	1.35%
Jazz Big Band	£22,000	0.75%
Jazz Orchestra	£15,500	0.53%
Grand Total	£2,920,038	100.00%

Location of Commission

The pie chart below shows the proportion of works commissioned within the UK, compared with those commissioned outside the UK.

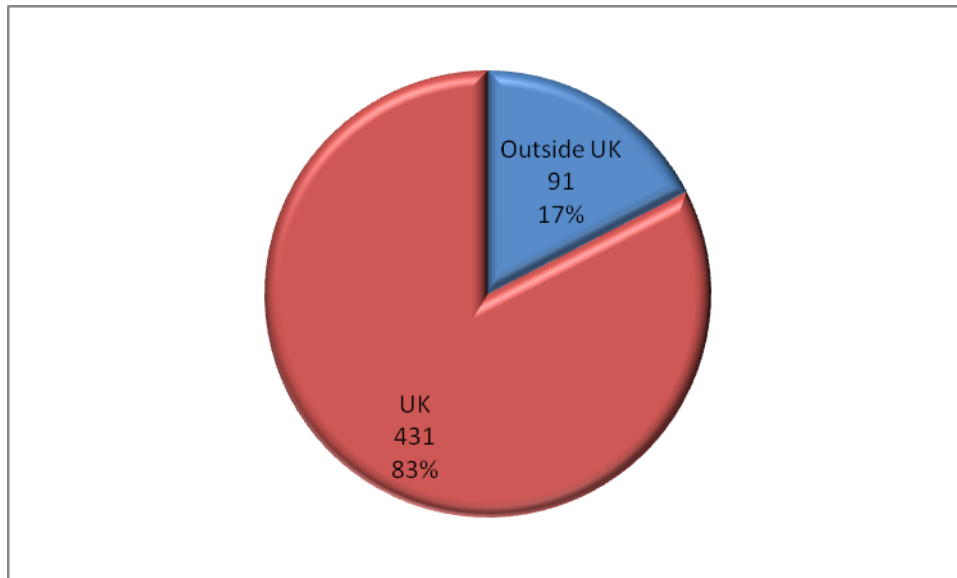


Figure 3 - Location of Commissions

The majority of commissions (83% - 431) were for UK, with 17% (91) commissioned outside of the UK. This chart shows ALL responses, including zeroes.

However, although the majority of commissions occurred within the UK, the value of the commissions by location indicates that overseas commissions have a far greater value. The table below details the value data that supports this:

Location of Commission	Total Value (ex VAT)	%
Outside UK	£949,302	33%
UK	£1,970,736	67%
Grand Total	£2,920,038	100%

The number of overseas commissions amount to 17% of the total (91 responses from 522), but the value for overseas is 32% of the total declared values (£949,302 from £2.9million).

The average UK commission (weighted; i.e. the number of commissions per category is taken into account) was £4,579 per commission.

The average Non-UK commission (weighted; i.e. the number of commissions per category is taken into account) was £10,431 per commission.

Overseas commissions are therefore recorded as being over 2.25 times more valuable than UK commissions. This information is broken down in more detail in Section 3.

3. Detailed Analysis

This section provides further analysis into the data received for all commissions and, where appropriate, displays the long tail data for specific categories.

Total Fees versus Commission Costs per Minute

The commissions ranged in duration from 30 seconds to 624 minutes (10:24).

If all commissions were of equal length, then comparisons between each can be made based solely upon total value, but the wide variety of durations may serve to skew the total values per commission, so analysis has been performed on a “cost per minute” basis in this section.

The table below details the average cost per minute of each commission, by category, and identifies the highest and lowest costs per minute of each.

Category	Average Cost per Minute	Minimum Cost per Minute	Maximum Cost per Minute
Accompanied Choral	£245.03	£0.50	£666.67
Brass Band	£223.28	£10.00	£656.25
Chamber Orchestra	£370.08	£48.00	£1,333.33
Chorus and Orchestra	£442.67	£33.33	£1,500.00
Duo	£187.33	£30.00	£500.00
Electronica (A)	£260.26	£64.56	£833.33
Electronica (B)	£255.12	£66.67	£500.00
Electronica (C)	£742.05	£109.09	£1,375.00
Jazz Big Band	£135.49	£33.33	£181.82
Jazz Orchestra	£279.17	£66.67	£500.00
Large Chamber Ensemble	£262.77	£13.33	£1,000.00
Orchestra with soloists	£468.37	£66.67	£1,400.00
Small Chamber Ensemble	£205.05	£16.67	£533.33
Solo	£157.46	£14.08	£444.44
Stage Works	£245.56	£23.33	£1,000.00
Symphonic Wind Ensemble	£282.69	£8.33	£1,291.67
Symphony Orchestra	£542.36	£17.50	£2,021.30
Unaccompanied Choral	£374.34	£4.00	£1,000.00
All Categories	£303.26	£0.50	£2021.30

It can be seen that the highest value category in terms of average cost per minute is “Electronica (C)” at £742.05 per minute, and the least is “Jazz Big Band” at £135.49 per minute.

The category that produces the highest cost per minute overall is “Symphony Orchestra” at £2021.30 per minute. The genre with the lowest cost per minute overall is “Accompanied Choral” at £0.50

There were 5 commissions reported as having a fee of £0.00, but these have been omitted from the survey results as these can be considered “gifts” as opposed to formal commissions, and the zero values would only serve to distort the average data unnecessarily.

Of the zero values, two were from “Solo”, two from “Duo”, and one from “Symphony Orchestra”.

The table below shows the same breakdown of data as shown in the previous table, but this time it focuses on duration, as opposed to average cost per minute.

Category	Average Duration of Commissioned Work (Minutes):	Minimum Duration (Minutes)	Maximum Duration (Minutes)
Accompanied Choral	15.4	3.0	89.0
Brass Band	13.1	3.0	30.0
Chamber Orchestra	16.8	4.0	50.0
Chorus and Orchestra	32.0	8.0	90.0
Duo	10.7	2.0	30.0
Electronica (A)	85.4	2.0	624.0
Electronica (B)	17.0	3.0	45.0
Electronica (C)	47.5	40.0	55.0
Jazz Big Band	25.2	5.0	55.0
Jazz Orchestra	19.0	5.0	45.0
Large Chamber Ensemble	23.0	6.0	75.0
Orchestra with soloists	18.4	3.5	30.0
Small Chamber Ensemble	14.9	3.0	60.0
Solo	13.6	0.5	71.0
Stage Works	56.5	15.0	140.0
Symphonic Wind Ensemble	13.9	3.0	23.0
Symphony Orchestra	15.1	5.0	27.0
Unaccompanied Choral	8.2	2.0	36.0
All Genres	20.2	0.5	624.0

The category with the longest duration on average is “Electronica (A)” at 85.4 minutes. The category with the lowest average duration is “Unaccompanied Choral” at 8.2 minutes.

Of the overall total, the category “Electronica (A)” had the longest maximum duration at 624 minutes, and the category “Solo” had the shortest recorded duration of 30 seconds.

Breakdown of Total and Average Fees by Location of Commission

The table below indicates the weighted average (total divided by number of respondents per genre) for each commission taken within UK or outside of UK.

Commission	Category	Sum of Total Fee	Count	Average of Total Fee
Outside UK	Accompanied Choral	£56,900	5	£11,380
	Brass Band	£2,543	2	£1,272
	Chamber Orchestra	£113,900	10	£11,390
	Chorus and Orchestra	£64,000	3	£21,333
	Duo	£6,500	2	£3,250
	Electronica (A)	£87,506	5	£17,501
	Electronica (B)	£38,809	5	£7,762
	Electronica (C)	£55,000	1	£55,000
	Jazz Big Band	£21,400	5	£4,280
	Large Chamber Ensemble	£55,300	14	£3,950
	Orchestra with soloists	£81,500	6	£13,583
	Small Chamber Ensemble	£21,300	3	£7,100
	Solo	£6,840	3	£2,280
	Stage Works	£200,804	8	£25,101
	Symphonic Wind Ensemble	£13,050	3	£4,350
	Symphony Orchestra	£114,000	10	£11,400
	Unaccompanied Choral	£9,950	5	£1,990
Outside UK Total		£949,302	90	£10,548
UK	Accompanied Choral	£145,785	49	£2,975
	Brass Band	£36,800	12	£3,067
	Chamber Orchestra	£165,600	34	£4,871
	Chorus and Orchestra	£190,500	18	£10,583
	Duo	£72,210	38	£1,900
	Electronica (A)	£13,700	4	£3,425
	Electronica (B)	£6,750	4	£1,688
	Electronica (C)	£6,000	1	£6,000
	Jazz Big Band	£600	1	£600
	Jazz Orchestra	£15,500	4	£3,875
	Large Chamber Ensemble	£168,550	31	£5,437
	Orchestra with soloists	£194,950	24	£8,123
	Small Chamber Ensemble	£120,090	46	£2,611
	Solo	£87,750	40	£2,194
	Stage Works	£314,075	30	£10,469
	Symphonic Wind Ensemble	£38,550	12	£3,213
	Symphony Orchestra	£291,976	38	£7,684
Unaccompanied Choral	£101,350	40	£2,534	
UK Total		£1,970,736	426	£4,626
Grand Total		£2,920,038	516	£5,659

The main area of note is that overseas commissions are, on average, at least twice as valuable as UK commissions - £10,548 average for Non-UK compared with £4,626 average for UK. This report does not investigate why this may be the case.



Long Tail Analysis – Total Fees

This section examines the distribution of the total fees across all categories against a statistically perfect “model” distribution. It breaks down each fee into a logarithmic “bin”, resulting in something called a Log Normal Distribution.

All data, irrespective of the source or nature, will generally follow a “Gaussian Distribution”, or bell-curve, shown below:

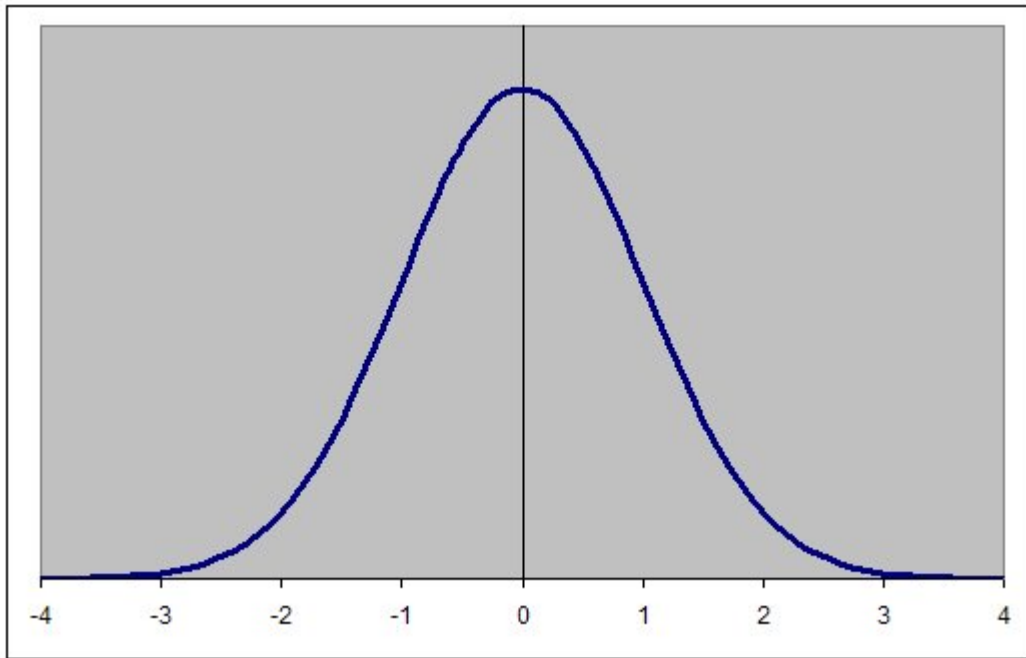


Figure 4 - Typical Bell Curve or “Gaussian” Distribution

The above example shows how a normal distribution occurs. This states that for many occurrences of data (e.g. IQ or Height), the results tend to be centred on the average, and for the extremes, the data sharply falls. This model applies to most data structures. For the survey results, the resultant data was modelled in accordance with a “Normal” distribution. If the curve from the survey fee analysis matches that above, then we can state that the data is fairly and uniformly distributed. If it veers to the left, then it indicates a tendency toward low monetary values per commission (when compared to the “norm”), and if it veers to the right, then it indicates higher values compared to the “norm”. For this analysis, the profile of the resulting curve was examined in detail and all supporting data is shown below.

Fee Commission Survey Long Tail

The chart below shows the “long tail” for each logarithmic group of fees charged.

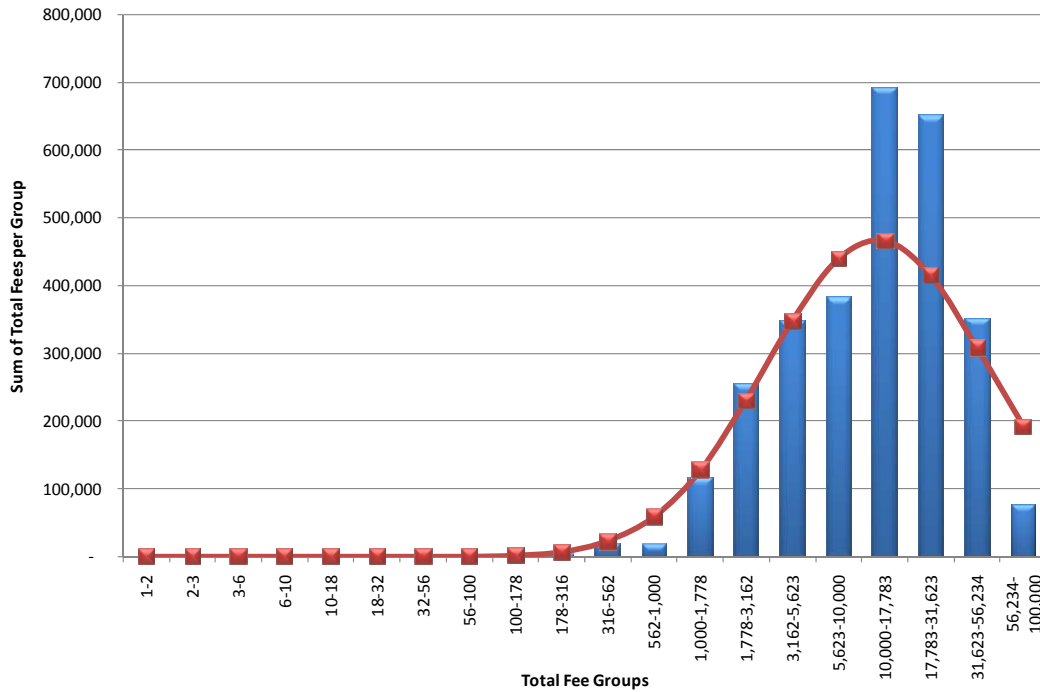


Figure 5 - All Categories Long Tail

The above chart was derived from the following data:

Group Reference	Fee Lower Range	Fee Upper Range	Total Fees per Group	Total Count per Group
0	£0	£0	£0	0
1	£1	£2	£0	0
2	£2	£3	£0	0
3	£3	£6	£0	0
4	£6	£10	£0	0
5	£10	£18	£10	1
6	£18	£32	£0	0
7	£32	£56	£100	2
8	£56	£100	£0	0
9	£100	£178	£930	7
10	£178	£316	£4,600	18
11	£316	£562	£20,205	45
12	£562	£1,000	£19,056	26
13	£1,000	£1,778	£115,155	93
14	£1,778	£3,162	£255,177	102
15	£3,162	£5,623	£349,225	79
16	£5,623	£10,000	£381,850	51
17	£10,000	£17,783	£691,500	55
18	£17,783	£31,623	£651,304	29
19	£31,623	£56,234	£352,926	8
20	£56,234	£100,000	£78,000	1
Total			£2,920,038	517



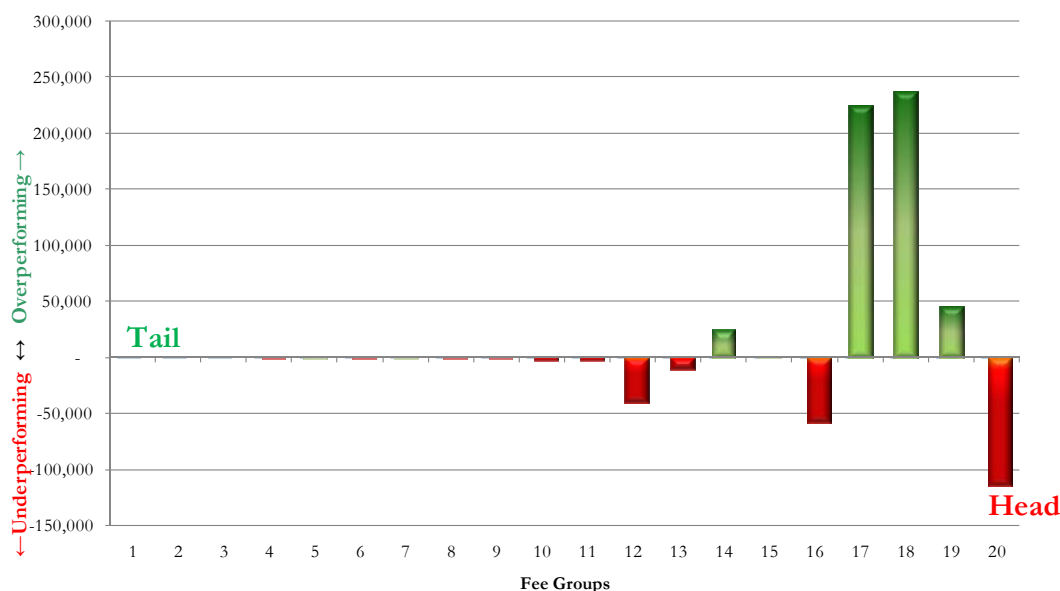
Explanation for Data

Total Commission Fees with a value of between £0 and £1.00 will be counted and placed within Group 1, those with ranges of £2.00-£3.00 will be in Group 2, up to Group 19 which counts fees in the range £31,623 and £56,234, and Group 20 which counts fees in ranges £56,234 to £100,000. In Group 20, one commission had a value of £78,000. In Group 12, 26 commissions between values of £562 and £1000 in total amounted to a total value for that group of £19,056.

Long Tail Analysis

The long tail for Total Fees shows a skew to the right. This means that of the responses received, it is more heavily clustered around higher value commissions. This is to be expected for a survey that has a population solely of professional composers, publishers and commissioners. If the whole UK was taken for example, it is possible we would see a far greater proportion of lower value or free commissions. This shows that the results are skewed overall to high value responses.

Variance per Group



The above chart shows by how much each group deviates from the “model” (i.e. best fit). This example from the survey indicates that for the upper-mid range values (groups 17 to 19), there are too many occurrences. For the highest group (20), the chart shows that there are too few occurrences. One would expect to see higher value commissions in the range £56K to £100K. This indicates that the premium value commissions are not charging as much money as they could (or should), and it indicates a “squeeze” toward the middle, i.e. commissions are being de-valued in the market.



4. Further Sub-Category Analysis

This section focuses upon the top six categories, ranked by number of responses, and charts the Log Normal data profiles for these specific categories of commission. Due to the number of responses per category being much less than the total (around 10% for each of the top 6), the profiles tend to “fragment” when compared to profiles using large data sets (500 +). Nevertheless, certain data characteristics can still be ascertained from each profile.

Categories Ranked by Response

The table below identifies the responses per category, and highlights the top 6 that have log normal profiles charted on the following pages.

Category	Total Responses	Rank
Accompanied Choral	54	1
Small Chamber Ensemble	49	2
Symphony Orchestra	48	3
Solo	44	4
Large Chamber Ensemble	45	5
Unaccompanied Choral	45	5
Chamber Orchestra	44	7
Duo	40	8
Stage Works	38	9
Orchestra with soloists	30	10
Chorus and Orchestra	21	11
Symphonic Wind Ensemble	15	12
Brass Band	14	13
Electronica (A)	9	14
Electronica (B)	9	14
Jazz Big Band	6	16
Jazz Orchestra	4	17
Electronica (C)	2	18
Total	517	

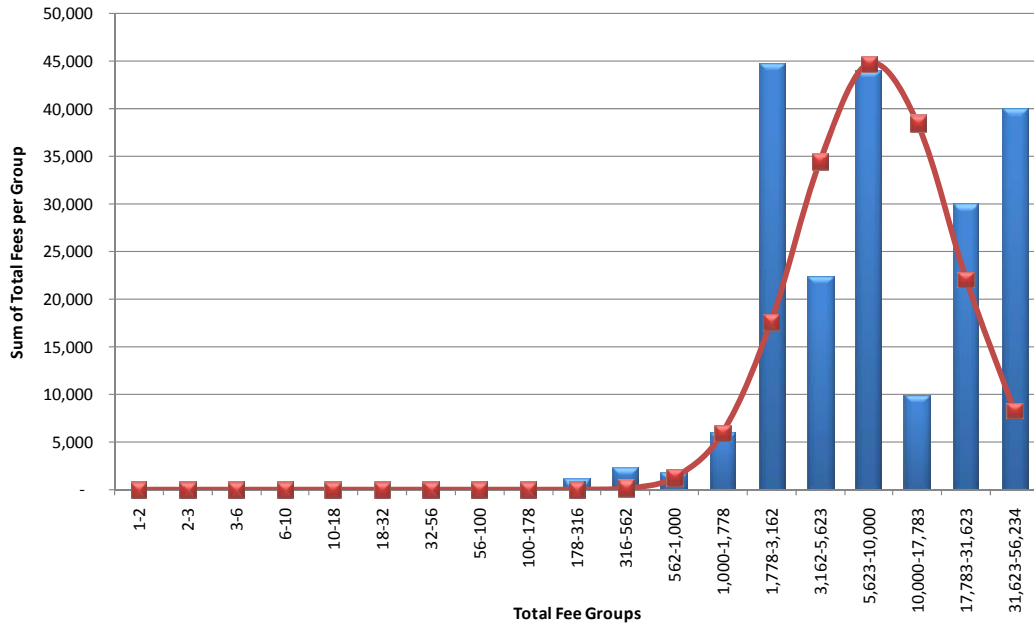
Summary

In all charts, the skew is heavily toward the right, indicating that the responses have been drawn from the higher fee earners from the entire sample. This is expected as the sample focussed on professional parties only.

The two categories of Large Chamber Ensemble and Small Chamber Ensemble display the “feature” that has been seen in all categories, inasmuch as the expected top group of fees are underperforming, and we can see that these fees have been pushed into lower categories – noted by the two spikes in these charts.

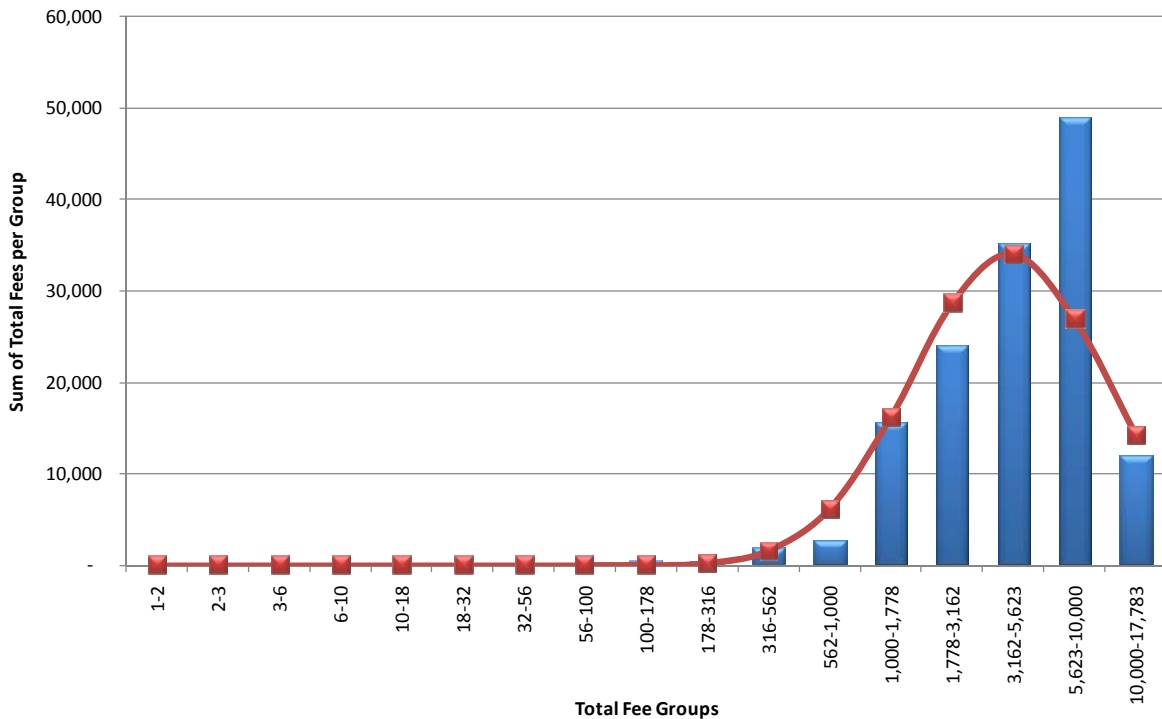
Accompanied Choral

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Accompanied Choral
Log Normal Distribution



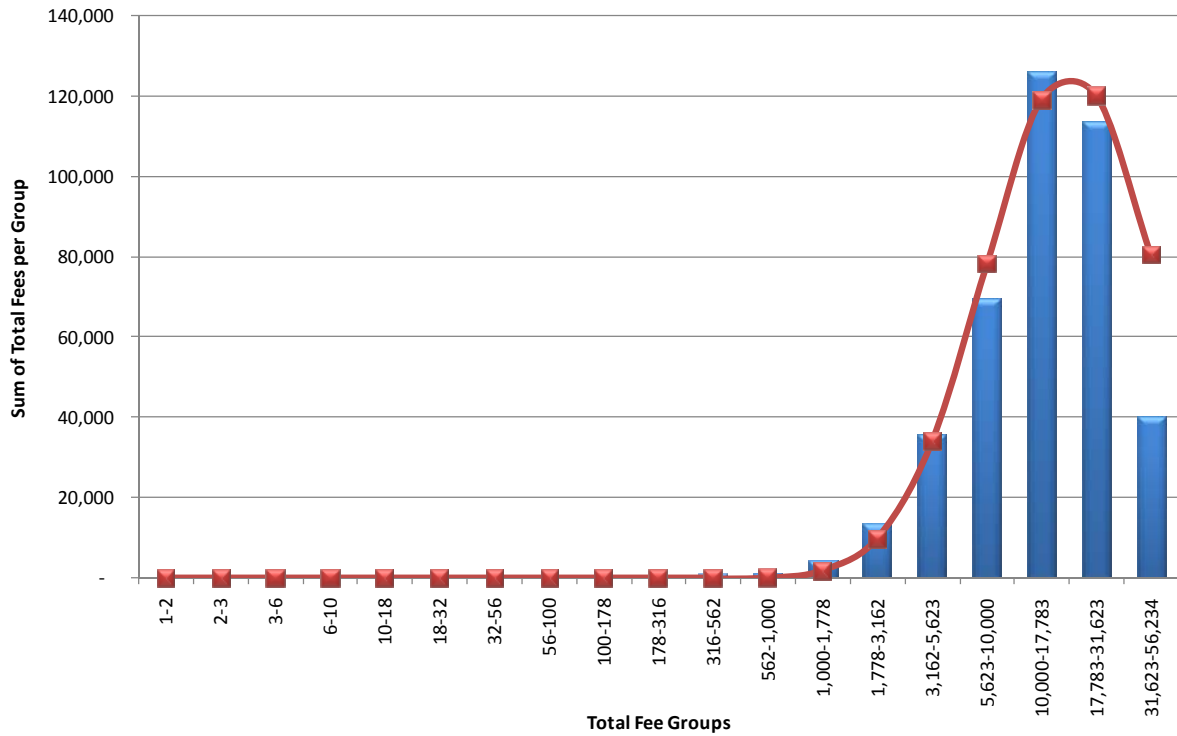
Small Chamber Ensemble

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Small Chamber Ensemble
Log Normal Distribution



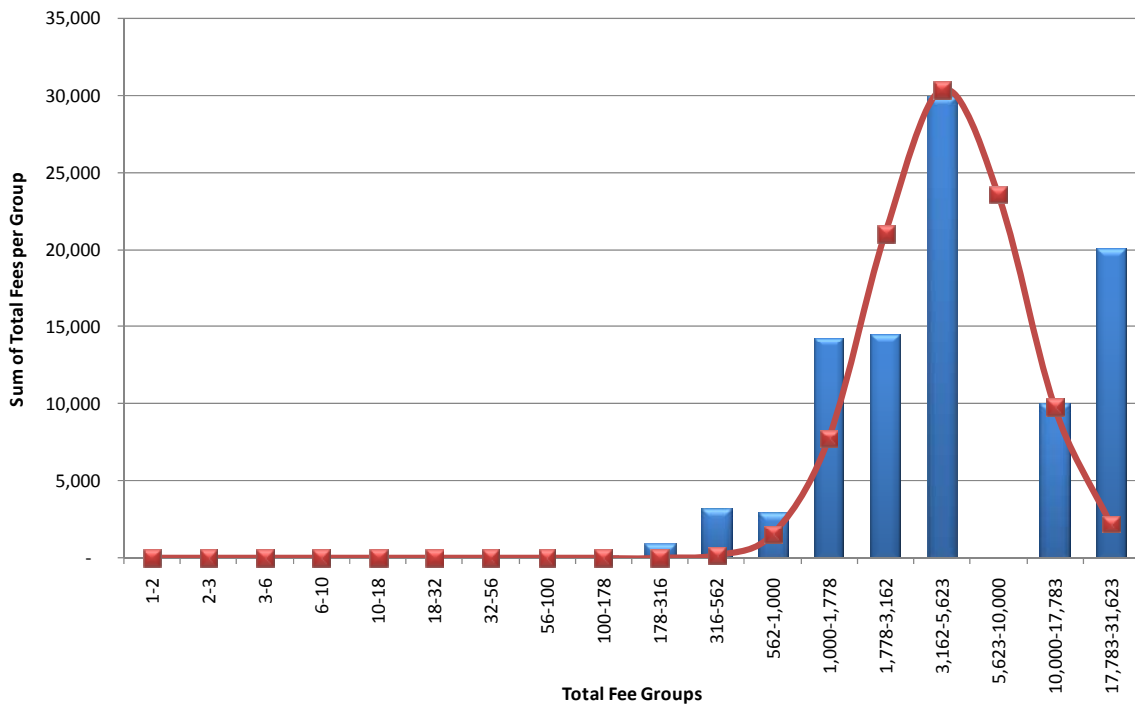
Symphony Orchestra

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Symphony Orchestra
Log Normal Distribution



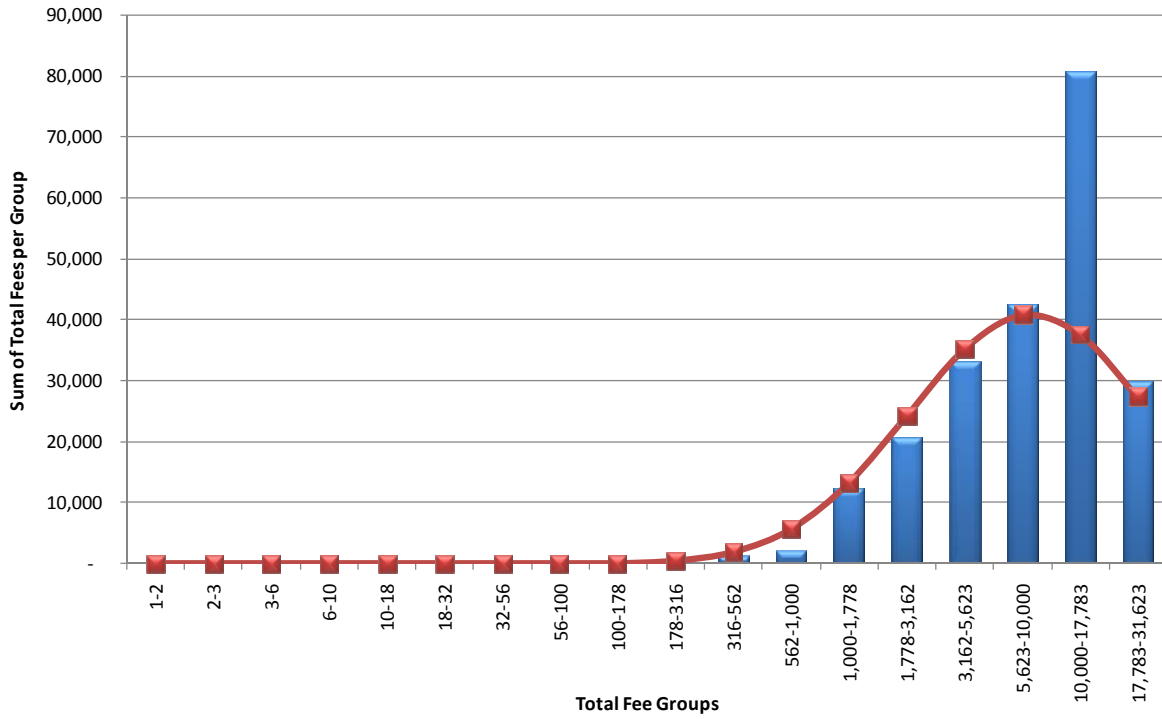
Solo

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Solo
Log Normal Distribution



Large Chamber Ensemble

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Large Chamber Ensemble
Log Normal Distribution



Unaccompanied Choral

BASCA Commission Fee Survey - Unaccompanied Choral
Log Normal Distribution

