

Conference Unlocked

Revised for the omicron variant

V2.0 29th November 2021



The Music Mark team is excited to welcome our members back to a live conference in Brighton on 2nd and 3rd December 2021. We understand that some colleagues may be anxious about so many people from all over the UK (and maybe beyond) coming together, so this is to reassure everyone about the measures we are taking to manage the risks.

We cannot mitigate away the risk of transmission completely and the emergence of the omicron variant may pose additional risk in terms of transmissibility, albeit there is optimism among researchers that vaccines will continue to provide protection from serious illness. We are liaising daily with the venue to identify emerging hazards and to control for these practicably and proportionately.

The Hilton Metropole, Brighton is one of the largest conference facilities in the UK. We have discussed permissible numbers with them and have limited tickets for our conference to avoid crowding the space and to ensure sufficient ventilation.

We have considered hazards of airborne, surface contact and person-to-person transmission in each area of the conference. The controls that we have identified depend for their efficacy on **everyone** present (Music Mark staff, delegates and exhibitors) respecting them and acting responsibly.

We are not providing bags or a printed conference pack this year and we are encouraging exhibitors to limit their printed matter.

We are monitoring advice and guidance closely and will modify our mitigations as necessary. If the venue or the government force us to, we can move the entire conference online but only as a last resort. We all feel the need for a face-to-face conference this year!

About this document

We hope the information and instructions in this document help delegates to feel safe at our conference. Music Mark members are welcome to adapt this format for their own events.

Before you arrive

Please take a lateral flow test **no earlier than Wednesday 1st December** (unless you have had a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the last 90 days). If you are a close contact of someone with a confirmed case of Covid-19, please do not attend the conference, even if current regulations do not require you to self-isolate. If this is the case, or if you test positive, you may transfer your ticket to a colleague.

Travelling to the conference

Anyone travelling by public transport or sharing a car is at increased risk of infection. From Tuesday 30th November, face coverings are mandatory on public transport for anyone who is not exempt.

Local restrictions

Music Mark continues to monitor the situation and to liaise with the venue. If any local restrictions are imposed before or during our conference, full details and advice will be available at the conference Welcome desk and announced in the main space.

Presenters, speakers and breakout session leaders

Presenters will be asked to e-mail presentations in advance to be loaded onto a hotel computer. If you have to use your own computer (for accessibility reasons or to run proprietary software), we will need to agree this ahead of the conference. Minimise touching of equipment A/V equipment on stage. All equipment will be sanitised between sessions but please be aware when adjusting microphones, that it is very difficult to sanitise the mesh fully.

Conference main space

Body of the hall

Seating may be spaced further apart than usual: please do not move seats closer together. If you turn seats around for smaller group discussions, please maintain your distance from other delegates and ensure seats remain spaced when you turn back to the front.

The Stage

Observe any flow controls and avoid passing close to other speakers on the steps to/from the stage. Panel discussions and Q&As will be set up to maintain distance between speakers: do not move chairs, as they will have been placed deliberately for this purpose.

Breakout rooms

Rooms will be laid out with seats for the maximum safe number of delegates for that space. If you cannot find a seat already laid out, you will not be able to participate in that session. Keep seats spaced and avoid moving closer to other delegates during discussions.

Do not adjust ventilation system controls, as these will have been set to ensure room occupants' safety.

Exhibition space

Stands are spaced more widely than usual. Please maintain distancing as best you can while browsing and speaking to exhibitors. If you are handling samples – and we advise against doing so generally – sanitise your hands immediately before and after.

If you pick up any literature, please take it away with you when you leave the conference: do not leave it elsewhere in the conference space as it is potentially a transmission hazard.

Exhibitors must have suitable procedures to sanitise samples which may be viewed, handled or played by delegates. Advice on sharing equipment in *Music Unlocked* may be followed.

Dining and coffee breaks

Please comply with flow controls and maintain distancing in queues. Sanitise hands at the start of breaks. Refreshments and lunches are self-service, with Hilton Metropole staff available to assist if required. Please do not crowd around buffets or tea/coffee tables and try to pass through once only.

Common areas

Avoid congregating in spaces like corridors. During breaks, small (socially distanced) groups can form in the restaurant area, exhibition space and main hall. There is a large space available to you above the exhibition hall with seating.

Do not crowd around the Welcome desk and maintain distancing while you are waiting.

Please observe any flow controls and do not exceed permitted numbers in toilets. During breaks, it will be necessary to operate a one-in, one-out system. This will not be monitored, so please respect it for everyone's safety.

We highly recommend wearing a mask during the conference and changing it regularly.

Accommodation

Hotels and other accommodation providers follow government and industry guidance to manage infections. Please read any information they provide on their websites and refer any questions to your hotel.

Risk Assessment

The full Covid risk assessment for this conference is available on request and may be adopted as a template by members for their own events.



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