

SYLLABUS

Part One - Music

Performance

A. HYMN

Candidates should sing three verses (of their own choice and in their own voice part) from a prepared hymn - the verses having more than four lines. The third verse to be sung unaccompanied.

B. PSALM

- i. Prepare eight verses of a psalm to be sung to an Anglican double chant from a psalter of the candidate's choice, or
four verses with Antiphon of a responsorial psalm, or
up to eight verses and Gloria of a psalm to a plainsong tone.
- ii. Then to the same chant or tone sing four verses of a different psalm chosen by the examiner from the candidate's book.

C. ANTHEM, MOTET, CANTICLE, OR SERVICE SETTING

Candidates are to prepare the whole, of their own voice part, of one anthem, motet, canticle, or service setting specified in the music list for the respective year. Please note that a new list is produced at the beginning of every calendar year, and is therefore only effective for the two examinations of the year in which it is produced. The examiner will ask the candidate to sing all or part of the piece and will accompany the candidate. Marks awarded will take account of the level of difficulty of the music, but more weight will be given to interpretation and musicality.

NB: COPIES OF ALL MUSIC MUST BE PROVIDED FOR THE EXAMINER. IN THE EVENT OF COPIES NOT BEING PROVIDED THE CANDIDATE MAY LOSE MARKS.

Throughout the above tests, the examiner will be looking for:

- a. an unforced quality of tone with consistent control
- b. good posture
- c. good breath control with the ability to sustain to the end of a phrase
- d. clear diction including good open vowel sounds
- e. accurate intonation
- f. rhythmic accuracy
- g. good expressive and dynamic contrasts
- h. evidence of comprehension of the text and mood of the piece

All of the above should produce a sensitive and musical performance, and evidence of a maturity of tone appropriate to the candidate's age and experience.

Musical Skills and Understanding

D. SIGHT-SINGING

The candidate will be asked to sing unaccompanied tests to a vowel sound. Before each test the examiner will play the key chord and first note, wait while the candidate looks through the music and then play once more the key chord and first note. The candidate will then be expected to sing continuously. More marks will be gained, the less assistance needed from the piano.

The tests will be, in their own voice part -

- i. a double chant in a major or minor key.
- ii. four bars of a hymn tune in a major key.
- iii. four bars of the lower part of a two part tune provided by the examiner, with accompaniment, within the candidate's vocal range. The examiner will first play the four bars of the tune to the candidate while the candidate follows the lower line, then give the starting note.

E. EAR TESTS

- i. clap the rhythmic pattern of a short melody; the examiner will play the passage twice.
- ii. sing a short melody; the key chord and passage will be played twice by the examiner.
- iii. sing an interval of a major or minor 3rd or 6th; perfect 4th or 5th or octave, above a given key note.
- iv. sing as requested by the examiner the lower, middle, or upper note of a triad, in root or first inversion, and then identify the triad as major or minor.

F. VIVA VOCE

The examiner will show the candidate a piece of music and ask questions which will test the candidate's understanding of some or all of the following:

major and minor key signatures up to five accidentals, note values; time signatures, simple and compound; some common Italian terms; letter names of treble and bass clef notes; musical signs.

The candidate will then be asked simple questions on repertoire, i.e. the candidate's chosen test piece. The questions will include:-

- a little knowledge about the composer
- the style of the period
- the meaning of the text
- an appropriate time for its use in Church.
- another piece by the composer
- another piece in the same style

Candidates for this Award (validated to RSCM Silver Standard) and their choir trainers are advised to refer to the section on repertoire knowledge, page 192- 214, in the Voice for Life Choir Trainers book (published 2004), including some sample answers at RED level on pp 204 - 206. This material will be the point of reference for examiners.

TOTAL MARKS FOR PART ONE: 100 (60)

Part Two - Religious Knowledge

The candidate's denomination and tradition will be taken into account in every part of this section.

A. BIBLE

The candidate should choose, and prepare to read aloud, a section from the Bible selected from the list of passages for this Award. The examiner will ask about the meaning of the text. The candidate will also be expected to have basic knowledge of the Bible, its content and order. Any translation normally used in the candidate's church is acceptable.

B. PROJECT

The attention of the Parish Priest/Minister endorsing the application is drawn to Paragraph 5 (ii) of section on Administration. The prime purpose of the Project is to show that the candidate understands the choral service which he or she most regularly attends.

In the Project the candidate should include:-

- something personal about what it means to him/her to be in the choir and a member of the Church family. (e.g. a sense of service to the community in worship ;satisfaction and fulfilment in working with others; a feeling of belonging).
- an explanation of the shape of the service and show that he/she understands the meaning of its different

parts. (e.g. at Eucharist/Mass/Communion, Evensong, Evening prayer, Matins - the main choral and spoken elements, their essential meanings, the order in which they come.)

- his/her understanding of how the local Church family is organised and how it relates to the wider Christian Church. (e.g. the various ordained and lay ministers in their parish, and their roles and responsibilities).
- how the Church building and furnishings relate to the liturgy . The style and layout of the building and positioning of its furnishings

To enable this to be assessed the examiner will question the candidate accordingly. The project submitted will be of the standard required of the candidate's year in school or age .The examiner will be aware of the candidate's age.

The Project may be either handwritten or word-processed. It should contain a minimum of 12 pages of text, and be illustrated with drawings or photographs.

C. LITURGY

- i. The candidate will be required to show some knowledge of the Christian year and the meaning of some of the most important days in the Church's calendar. e.g. Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, Epiphany, Ascension
- ii. The candidate will be asked to identify and explain the meaning of certain words commonly used in their own church, e.g. pulpit, altar, minister, priest, deacon, diocese, nave, lectern, ambo, Mass, Eucharist, Communion, etc.
- iii. The candidate will be asked questions about the purpose of music in worship and how the choir, organist and other musicians contribute to the worship of the community
- iv. Candidates will be asked to explain the origins in the Bible of two of the following liturgical texts, chosen by the examiner:

Our Father; Holy, Holy, Holy; Glory to God; Lamb of God; Magnificat; Nunc Dimittis.

- v. Candidates should choose beforehand one hymn, anthem or worship song suitable for one season (e.g. Advent) or Festival (e.g. Christ the King) celebrated in their Church. Candidates will be asked to explain the significance of their choice and of the Festival or Season chosen. (Candidates should bring two copies of their chosen piece).

TOTAL MARKS FOR PART TWO: 50 (30)