

BISHOPS' SENIOR AWARD

ADMINISTRATION

1. The award is open to choristers in church or school choirs within the area covered by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Brentwood and the Anglican Diocese of Chelmsford. This award is also open to choristers of other denominations in this area. Choristers should have served as members of their choir for not less than one year.
2. Choristers must be 16 years of age or over.
3. The examination is held twice a year in May and November in Brentwood and/or Chelmsford.
4. The application for entry is to be made by the candidate who should obtain the appropriate reference from their parish priest/minister and choir-trainer to indicate the candidate's standing in their own choir.
5. The cost of entry for each candidate is £20 and should be enclosed with the application form. Cheques should be made payable to "Bishops' Chorister Award".
6. It is now a requirement that candidates should provide their own accompanist. If there is a problem with this, the Awards Administrator should be informed as soon as possible.
7. The closing dates for entry for the examination in each year are-
31 March for the May session
30 September for the November session
Late entries will not be accepted.
8. An examiner's report will be prepared for each candidate, for which an envelope (16cm x 23cm) stamped and addressed to the choir-trainer must be supplied. Examination results cannot be given over the telephone.
9. Successful candidates will be presented with their Award Certificate at the annual presentation service in either Brentwood Cathedral or Chelmsford Cathedral on a date to be notified to the candidates. Their names will be recorded in a special book. They will be entitled to wear the Bishops' Chorister medallion which can be purchased at the price indicated in the results letter.

EXAMINATION REGULATIONS

The examination is in three parts-

- i) Music - Practical
- ii) Music - Sight-singing and ear tests.
- iii) Religious Knowledge.

1. The maximum marks for each test are shown, followed in brackets by the number of marks required to pass.
2. To qualify for the award each candidate must pass in all of the three parts. Should a candidate fail in just one part, that part may be re-taken at not more than two subsequent examinations upon written application to the Awards Administrator. A small fee will be payable for a re-sit and this is indicated in the results letter.
3. Candidates must bring to the examination one extra copy of all the prepared work, the hymn book, psalter, chant book, anthem, and Bible for use by the examiners, and the attendance notice to be given to the Administrator.
4. If the prospective candidate suffers from dyslexia, the choir-trainer should make this known, in writing, at the time of application. Dyslexic candidates should provide documentation from an authoritative body: i.e. Educational Psychologist, or teacher with RSA(SpLD) Diploma.

If the choir-trainer is made aware after the application has been submitted that a candidate is dyslexic, s/he should contact the Administrator in sufficient time prior to the closing date for the chosen session of the examination.

The related areas of disability may then be discussed and any appropriate allowances made for the individual concerned.

Specific arrangements available for dyslexic candidates are detailed in the Award's Policy and Guidelines for Examining Dyslexic Candidates, available from the Administrator on request.

Any special provision made for individual candidates will not jeopardise the integrity of the examination and, once made, the candidate will be assessed as found on the day of the examination.

SYLLABUS

MUSIC

Practical

A. HYMN

- i. Prepare three verses of a six-line hymn from a hymn book of the candidate's own choice. From this hymn the candidate is expected to sing
 - a. First verse. The melody with accompaniment.
 - b. Second verse. In the candidate's own voice part, with accompaniment. Sopranos should choose a hymn with a descant to sing for this verse.
 - c. Third verse. Unaccompanied, in the candidate's own voice part.

12 (6)

- ii. For the unprepared hymn, the examiner will select a hymn and tune and ask the candidate to sing their vocal part. After a full playover of the hymn, the examiner will give the key-chord and then the starting note.

This test will be accompanied.

12 (6)

B. PSALM

The singing of an unprepared portion of a psalm (maximum twelve verses) from the candidate's own psalter as selected by the examiner to a chant or tone previously chosen by the candidate: a separate copy of this chant must be available for the examiner. Should the candidate produce a book of responsorial psalms, the candidate will be asked to sing the Antiphon and up to four verses of a responsorial psalm of the examiner's choice to the tone/chant selected by the examiner.

16 (8)

C. ANTHEM, MOTET, CANTICLE, OR SERVICE SETTING

The candidate is to perform the whole of their voice part of an anthem, motet, canticle, or service setting specified in the music list for this award 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.

30 (15)

In addition to the marks awarded to A, B, and C, the examiner will assess the general standard of performance and award further marks under the following heads:

Vocal quality

Breath control and phrasing

Precision of rhythm and intonation

Sensitivity to interpretation

30 (15)

TOTAL PRACTICAL 100 (50)

Sight-singing and Ear Tests

D. SIGHT-SINGING

Time will be allowed for a brief perusal of the music before the start of this test, the key chord having been given. A passage of some twenty-four bars from an anthem chosen by the examiner will be attempted twice in the candidate's own voice-part. The first attempt will be to LAH with piano accompaniment, the second to the words, the piano playing only the other parts or, if independent, the organ part.

60 (30)

E. EAR TESTS

Candidates will be required to:

- i. Sing from memory the lower part of an easy two-part phrase played twice by the examiner, the key-chord having been sounded.
- ii. Sing a specified note from some played major/minor triads and to describe the triad as major or minor.
- iii. Sing any note of a major/harmonic minor scale, the key chord and the key note having been sounded. The examiner will ask for the interval by number and name, eg "Sing the 4th note, FAH".
- iv. Clap the rhythmic pattern of a melody played twice by the examiner and to say whether the time is duple, triple, or quadruple.

40 (20)

TOTAL SIGHT-SINGING AND EAR TESTS 100 (50)

RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE

The aim of this section is to try and help the candidate to relate to their experience of prayer, bible-reading, and worship, and structures in their local church to the church at large. The questions will emphasise the need for choristers to integrate these various elements, and to see their musical contribution in worship as an expression of their faith. The candidate's denomination and churchmanship will be taken into account. The examiner will not award marks for the individual sections, but will award an overall pass or fail.

The standard required for religious knowledge should be equivalent to adult membership of the candidate's own church.

Candidates must satisfy the examiner in the following three parts-

A. THE PRINCIPAL SERVICE

Candidates should be prepared to discuss and explain the shape and structure of liturgy practised in their own church. The discussion will centre on-

- i. Brief historic details about the liturgy.
- ii. The architectural and liturgical design of the church building.
- iii. The role of the person presiding at the liturgy.
- iv. The role of the organist, choir director, or cantor in the liturgy.
- v. The particular role of the choir or music group including the origin of musical items which have a regular place in the liturgy.
- vi. The role of the congregation/assembly.
- vii. The format of the liturgy, including some knowledge of seasonal variations, and suitable hymns/songs.
- viii. The robes/vestments of the clergy and choir - their origin and purpose.

B. BIBLE

The candidate's knowledge of the Bible will be tested verbally by the examiner. The candidate should have some knowledge of the following areas-

- i. Division of the Bible into the Old and New Testaments, and an understanding of their general structure.
- ii. The existence of the Apocrypha.
- iii. The Psalms - their use and significance in Christian worship.

Candidates should prepare a reading (any authorised translation) selected from the list of passages for this award, and having read it aloud to the examiner, be prepared to answer questions about its meaning.

C. THE CHURCH AND THE SACRAMENTS

The candidate will be asked questions about prayer and the sacraments (sensitivity will be shown with regard to the candidate's denomination and churchmanship). The candidate will be asked about the Christian way of life and will be expected to demonstrate a knowledge of the structures of the Christian Church.

Bishops' Senior Award

Requirements for 2012:

MUSIC

Candidates are only required to prepare the whole of their voice part of one of the following options:

1. Give Us The Wings of Faith - Bullock (*Pub. OUP*)
2. Nunc Dimittis in C - C V Stanford (*Pub. Novello / Stainer & Bell Services*)
3. Lift Up Your Heads - Mathias (*Pub. OUP*)
4. Locus Iste - A Bruckner (*Pub. Edition Peters [Three graduals for the Church's year for mixed voices]*)

BIBLE READING

One of the following passages is to be chosen and prepared in accordance with the Syllabus for the Bible reading:

1. I Samuel 3.1-9
2. Jeremiah 1.4-10
3. Mark 1.1-11
4. Romans 12.1-8 (9-13 optional)

*Church Music Awards for Choristers
under the patronage of the Bishops of Brentwood and Chelmsford*

To: Mr Bill Brooks, Administrator
12 Walden Way, Hornchurch, Essex, RM11 2LB

Bishops' SENIOR Award

I (name of candidate) (BLOCK CAPITALS)

Address

.....

Telephone number

Name of Choir

wish to enter for the examination on Saturday *(please enter selected date)*
in accordance with the regulations and requirements.

Date of birth:

Voice:

Title and composer of anthem, motet, canticle or service setting

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Choice of Responsorial Psalm (if chosen)

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Signature of candidate

Reference from Parish Priest

.....

.....

signed

Reference from Choir Trainer

.....

.....

signed

Date of application