

RSCM Oxford Area

Syllabus for the Bishop of Oxford's Bronze and Silver Awards for singers of all ages

Approved by the local area committee and validated by the RSCM

GENERAL

The scheme is designed to encourage singers to achieve a high standard of vocal technique and musicianship, and is intended for use with the RSCM *Voice for Life* scheme, which enables singers to develop their musical skills and understanding in the context of their choir or singing group. The area awards scheme provides opportunities for that development to be affirmed beyond the singer's own church, through the RSCM's regional network. Successful candidates are entitled to wear the prestigious medal, cast in bronze or silver according to the standard achieved. The Bronze medal is worn with green ribbon, the Silver medal with purple ribbon. The awards are open to singers of all ages and denominations, and the syllabus has been compiled with this in mind.

EXAMINATIONS are held twice a year, in June and September. Successful candidates receive their certificates at Choral Evensong in Christ Church Cathedral on a Saturday in late October/early November.

CLOSING DATES for examinations are posted on the website.

ENQUIRIES/ENTRIES should be addressed to Mrs Janet Low, 3 Sheepway Court, Iffley, Oxford OX4 4JL, 01865 777257, awards@rscm-oxford.org.uk. The entry form can be downloaded from the Oxford Area Awards web page (<http://www.rscm-oxford.org.uk/areaawards.htm>).

MUSIC can be bought from RSCM Music Direct, 0845 021 7726, musicdirect@rscm.com, <http://www.rscm.com/shop>

STRUCTURE AND DISTRIBUTION OF MARKS reflect that of the *Voice for Life* scheme. There are five sections, only four of which are examined. (Section D is satisfied with an appropriate testimonial submitted with the candidate's application.) Marks are distributed as follows:

- A Using the voice well 50%
- B Musical skills and understanding 20%
- C Repertoire 10%
- D Belonging to the choir [testimonial]
- E Choir in context 20%

The pass mark is 60%. To pass, candidates must show consistency throughout the examination, though a pass mark in every section is not required. Successful candidates are classified as follows:

- 85% Distinction
- 75% Merit
- 60% Pass

SYLLABUS FOR THE BISHOP OF OXFORD'S BRONZE CHORISTER AWARD

EXAMINATION CONDITIONS

1. There is no age limit for the award.
2. The examiner will be RSCM-validated. For moderation purposes, the examination may be recorded.
3. The Bronze Award examination takes 25 minutes.
4. An accompanist is normally provided by the candidate. (The examiner will not act as accompanist.) After Section A of the examination is completed, the accompanist leaves the examination room.
5. Candidates have an area to warm up before the examination.
6. Copies of all prepared pieces and any other relevant materials must be provided for the examiner's use.
7. Using illegal photocopies automatically disqualifies a candidate.
8. If a candidate cannot attend an examination, through illness or emergency, a letter of explanation must be sent immediately to the organiser, Mrs Janet Low, 3 Sheepway Court, Iffley Village, Oxford OX4 4JL, email: janetcllow@gmail.com. A refund, or credit slip for future entry, of up to 50% of the examination fee, may be issued at the discretion of the RSCM.
9. The RSCM may refuse an examination entry without stating a reason. In such cases, the examination fee is refunded in full.
10. If a candidate cannot attend an examination, through illness or emergency, a letter of explanation must be sent immediately to the organiser, Mrs Janet Low, 3 Sheepway Court, Iffley Village, Oxford OX4 4JL, email: graham@glowpigs.freeserve.co.uk. A refund, or credit slip for future entry, of up to 50% of the examination fee, may be issued at the discretion of the RSCM.

11. On signing the entry form, candidates (and their representatives and trainers) are deemed to be accepting the entry conditions, and the examiner's musical judgements.
12. Results are sent to the candidate (or representative) by post, usually within two weeks of the examination. Examiners do not divulge results at the time of the examination.
13. Appeals: there is an appeals procedure, which may be downloaded from the Oxford Area Awards web page (<http://www.rscm-oxford.org.uk/areaawards.htm>). This must be followed in the event of a complaint or appeal.

PREREQUISITES

Candidates should *normally*:

1. Have been regular members of the choir of an RSCM-affiliated church for at least 2 years (transfer is acceptable if clearly documented). If RSCM affiliation is not currently maintained, the candidate must instead be an RSCM individual member.
2. Have satisfactorily completed all the targets in their *Voice for Life* Dark Blue Training book.
3. Submit, with their application, a written testimonial from their choir trainer, counter-signed by the vicar/minister/head teacher/director of music, confirming their commitment to the choir and general musical competence. (This satisfies the requirements of Section D mentioned above,) and giving details of RSCM singing courses or training events they have attended.

A. Using the voice well (50%)

Candidates may sing each of the items in this Section using *either* the melody line *or* their own voice part (if different). Altos and basses singing the melody line in any item may do so at a lower pitch than that printed, if this is more convenient.

1. Hymn singing: Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should sing 3 verses of their chosen, prepared hymn (of 4-line verses). The second verse should be sung unaccompanied.

2. Psalm singing: Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should prepare and sing

- either* a) chanted psalmody (melody or their own voice part), to music of their own choice. This should be *either* 8 consecutive verses and the Gloria, to Anglican chant or to a plainsong tone, *or* the whole of a responsorial psalm
- or* b) the whole of one of the following Psalm Songs, from *Music for Common Worship 1*:
- *O God, you search me and you know me* (Farrell) pp. 396-7
 - *O Lord, be my help* (Ogden) pp. 398-9
 - *Sing to God with joy and gladness* (Bell) pp. 400-1

Marks will be given for accuracy, but equal weight will be given to interpretation and musicality.

3. Prepared item: Maximum 20 marks (12 to pass)

Candidates should select the whole of any one item from the *RSCM Bronze Collection* (order ref D0091) (listed below). (Other editions may be used.) They may sing either the melody or their own voice part. (If they sing the melody, altos and basses may use a suitably transposed edition.) Examiners will take account of the level of difficulty of the music, but will attach more weight to interpretation and musicality.

Page	Title	Composer
1	A Gaelic Blessing	Rutter
4	A Prayer of St Richard of Chichester	White
8	And didst thou travel light	Shephard
11	Ave Maria	Lindley
15	Ave verum corpus	Elgar
20	Away with gloom, away with doubt	Ferguson
23	Child in the manger	Sanger
26	Day by day	How
29	Fairest Lord Jesus	How
32	From the rising of the sun	Ouseley
38	Glory, love, and praise and honour	Eberlin arr. Harris
45	Hide not thou thy face	Farrant
48	How beautiful upon the mountains	Stainer
54	I am the bread of life	Lole
58	I give you a new commandment	Aston
62	In the heart where love is abiding	Plainsong arr. Barnard
67	Let all the world in every corner sing	Halsey
72	Listen	Nazareth
74	Love one another	S. S. Wesley
78	Loving God	Aston
81	May the peace of God the Father	Jewish melody arr Harper
84	O for a closer walk with God	Stanford
88	O mysterium ineffabile	Lallouette
90	O Holy Spirit, Lord of grace	Tye
93	Praise, O praise our God and King	How

98	Sent by the Lord am I	Trad. arr. Weaver
102	Steal away	Trad. arr. Weaver
104	The Easter Song of Praise (Exultet)	Shephard
108	The fruits of the land	Ogden
111	The Lord's my shepherd	Trad. arr. Archer
116	This is the day (Haec dies)	Morley arr. Greening
123	Thou visitest the earth	Greene
129	Turn thy face from my sins	Attwood
132	We cannot measure how you heal	Scottish trad. arr. Archer

In the above tests, examiners will look for

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

All the above should produce a *sensitive* and *musical* performance.

B. Musical skills and understanding (20%)

1. Sight reading: Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked:

- To clap (or sing on one note) from sight, and unaccompanied, a simple rhythm in simple time, which may include dotted notes. A second attempt may be allowed if necessary.
- To sing at sight and accompanied by the examiner, a short melody (of about 10 notes), in a key of up to three sharps or flats, to a vowel or to solfa (at the candidate's choice). The key chord and first note will be given. A second attempt will be allowed.

2. & 3. Aural tests & Further questions: Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked to:

- Clap the rhythm pattern of a 2-bar phrase played twice, the pulse first being indicated.
- Sing (as an echo and in strict time) three simple 2-bar phrases, each played only once. The key chord and tonic are sounded, and the pulse indicated, before the test begins.
- Identify the following intervals, each played not more than twice (both notes played simultaneously): major and minor 3rd, perfect 4th, perfect 5th. The candidate will be asked to sing the lower note, then the higher note, and then to name the interval. Two or three examples will be given, within the candidate's vocal range.

Using the prepared item as a starting point, questions will then be asked about:

- notes of *either* the treble *or* bass stave, at the candidate's choice
- time values of notes
- time signatures (simple time)
- key signatures (of major keys up to 3 sharps and 3 flats)
- simple Italian musical terms

C. Repertoire (10%): Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked two straightforward questions about their prepared item. Answers may be expressed in language appropriate to their age or experience. Topics to be covered will be selected from:

- Text and music (origin, style, meaning, and how the music, including the accompaniment, reflects the text);
- Context (historical, musical, liturgical and seasonal, other music written in this genre or period).

Typical questions on repertoire at Bronze standard are:

- 'Describe the mood of this piece, and say generally how the text is reflected in the music.'
- 'When was the text (*or*, the music) written, and by whom?'
- 'In what season of the Church's year might this piece suitably be sung?'
- 'In which part of your Sunday morning service might this piece be sung?'
- 'Name another piece, or a hymn or song, that your choir might sing at the same season or occasion.'

All singers on the Voice for Life scheme are expected to develop their knowledge and understanding of the repertoire. The Voice for Life Choir Trainer's Book (order ref F0100) provides helpful material for this part of the examination.

D. Belonging to the Choir

There is no formal examination for this section, and no marks are allocated. However, it is a vital part of the Bronze Award. With their application, candidates must send a written testimonial from their choir trainer, countersigned by the vicar/minister/chaplain/head teacher/director of music, confirming their commitment to the choir.

E. Choir in context (20%): Maximum 20 marks (12 to pass)

1. Bible: Referring to their prepared psalm, candidates will be asked to describe what kind of prayer it is (joyful, sorrowful, praise, thanksgiving, etc.) and why.

2. Liturgy

- a) Candidates will be asked to describe the sung parts of the form of Sunday service (morning or evening, at their choice) with which they are familiar. They may bring, and refer to, a service book or card.
- b) Candidates should choose one major festival of the Church's year (e.g., Christmas, Passiontide, Easter, Pentecost). They will be asked:
- to show knowledge of the Bible story which the festival celebrates;
 - to name a psalm, hymn or worship song which explains the significance of the festival, and to say why it does so;
 - and
 - to name, and show knowledge of, a suitable anthem or song for the festival.

(Candidates should bring two copies of their chosen pieces. NB They are not expected to perform any examples in Section E. Their understanding of issues raised in this Section will depend on their age and experience, and answers may be expressed in simple language. Examiners will bear in mind that this is a first award.)

3. *Ministr*: Candidates will be asked to describe what motivates and inspires them as singers in a Church choir. They should show some awareness of their own responsibilities as choir members in the services they sing.

SYLLABUS FOR THE BISHOP OF OXFORD'S SILVER CHORISTER AWARD

EXAMINATION CONDITIONS

These are the same as for the Bronze award, except that the examination takes 30 minutes, and the entry fee is as stipulated on the website.

PREREQUISITES

Candidates should *normally*:

1. Have been regular members of the choir of an RSCM-affiliated church for at least 3 years (transfer will be acceptable if clearly documented).
2. Have satisfactorily completed all the targets in their *Voice for Life* Red Training book.
3. Have been awarded the Bishop of Oxford's Bronze Award or RSCM equivalent (i.e., any RSCM Bronze standard singing award) or other equivalent award.
4. Submit, with their application, a written testimonial from their choir trainer, counter-signed by the vicar/minister/head teacher/director of music, confirming their commitment to the choir and general musical competence. (This satisfies the requirements of Section D mentioned above,) and giving details of RSCM singing courses or training events they have attended.

A. Using the voice well (50%)

Candidates must sing each item in this Section using their own voice part at the published pitch.

1. Hymn singing: Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should sing 3 verses of their chosen, prepared hymn having verses of more than 4 lines long. The second verse should be sung unaccompanied. They may choose to sing some or all of their verses in harmony or in unison, having first informed the examiner.

2. Psalm singing: Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should sing psalmody (where relevant, in their own voice part) to music of their own choice. This must be *either* 8 – 10 consecutive verses, and the Gloria to an Anglican double chant or to a plainsong tone, *or* the whole of a responsorial psalm.

Candidates should select a portion of the psalm (at least 2 verses) to sing unaccompanied. Marks will be given for accuracy, but equal weight will be given to interpretation and musicality.

3. Prepared item: Maximum 20 marks (12 to pass)

Candidates should select the whole of any one item from the *RSCM Silver Collection* (order ref B0111) which they have already sung or might sing in their own choir. (Other editions are acceptable.) Marks will take account of the level of difficulty of the music, but more weight will be given to interpretation and musicality.

Page	Title	Composer
1	Angel voices	Shephard
9	As water to the thirsty	Coleman arr. Barnard
14	At the river	Copland
21	Blessed be the God and Father	S. S. Wesley
34	Cantate Domino	Pitoni
36	For the gifts of life and love	Nardone
42	Fountain of Sweets	Aston
46	Glorious and powerful God	Wood
54	How beauteous are their feet	Stanford
63	I will sing of the Lord's great love	McKinley
76	It is a thing most wonderful	Moore
84	Jubilate!	Ogden

98	King of Glory	Walford Davies
100	Listen sweet Dove	Ives
105	My Soul, there is a Country	Parry
113	Now go in peace	Mair arr. Jeffcoat
117	O God, thou art my God	Purcell
129	O Lord, make thy servant	Byrd
137	O magnum mysterium	Archer
144	O salutaris hostia	Rossini
151	O thou the central orb	Wood
159	O vos omnes	Daley
164	Rejoice, the Lord is King	Weaver
173	Salvator mundi	Tallis
180	Shepherd of souls	Barnard
184	Solus ad victimam	Leighton
189	The Beatitudes	Watson Henderson
200	This lovely lady	Kelly
207	Ubi caritas	Ives
211	Wash me throughly	S. S. Wesley

4. Prepared setting or song

Candidates should choose and prepare:

- either* (a) any through-composed (not chanted or metrical) setting of the Magnificat *or* of the Holy Communion (*Gloria & Agnus Dei* only), from which the examiner will choose excerpts to be performed. Where relevant, candidates should sing their own voice part;
- or* (b) the complete melody line of a song suitable for performance in worship. This song should

- have a melodic range of at least an octave
- display rhythmic interest and subtlety, including dotted rhythms and/or syncopation
- have 2 or more stanzas or sections, each at least 16 bars long.

Suitable choices might be *Panis angelicus* (Franck), *The Woodcutter's Song* (Vaughan Williams), *Here is bread* (Kendrick), *I am the Bread of Life* (Toolan). The examiner will choose two stanzas, or an excerpt of around 32 bars, to be sung.

In the above tests, examiners will look for

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

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

B. Musical skills and understanding (20%)

1. Sight reading: Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked to sing at sight, accompanied by the examiner, part of a simple anthem or song, choosing a suitable tempo and giving careful attention to dynamics, phrasing and articulation. The piece may be in any key up to five sharps or flats, with any simple or compound time signature, and may include ties and dotted notes. The key chord and starting note will be given. Two attempts are allowed. Candidates may study the music for up to half a minute before their first attempt.

2. & 3. Aural tests & Further questions: Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked to:

- Clap the rhythm of a 2-bar phrase played twice, the pulse first being indicated.
- Sing back as an echo a short phrase, in the candidate's vocal range, which the examiner has played twice. The key chord and tonic will be sounded, and the pulse indicated, before the excerpt begins.
- Sing, as requested, the middle or lowest note of a triad, which will be played twice, and identify the triad as major or minor. The triad will be in closed position in any inversion.
- Sing the following intervals above a given key note: major or minor 3rd, major or minor 6th, perfect 4th or 5th. Two or three examples will be required, within the candidate's vocal range.

Using one of the prepared pieces from Section A as a starting point, questions will then be asked about

- notes of the treble and bass staves, including leger lines
- time values of notes and rests including tied and dotted notes
- time signatures (simple and compound time)

- d) key signatures (of major and minor keys up to 5 sharps and 5 flats)
- e) commonly-used Italian terms and musical symbols

C. Repertoire (10%): *Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)*

1. Understanding of prepared anthem

Candidates will be asked **two** questions about their prepared anthem. Topics will be selected from:

- a) Text and music (origin, style, meaning, and how the music reflects the text),
- b) Context (historical, musical, liturgical where relevant, other music written in this genre or period).

In addition to the typical questions given above at Bronze standard, questions at Silver standard might be:

- 'Give an example where the music of your piece varies to reflect the meaning of the text.'
- 'In which musical period did this composer live?'
- 'Name a piece written around the same time, by a different composer, and say whether it is similar.'

2. Understanding of a contrasting anthem

Candidates should give the examiner a short spoken account of a chosen, contrasting, piece selected from those in the RSCM Silver Collection, following the outline given in their red *Voice for Life* book. (They may bring, and refer to, notes on this.) The examiner will then ask **one** straightforward question about the music or its background.

All singers on the Voice for Life scheme are expected to develop their knowledge and understanding of the repertoire. The Voice for Life Choir Trainer's Book (order ref F0100) provides helpful training material for this section of the examination.

D. Belonging to the Choir

There is no formal examination for this section, and no marks are allocated. However, it is a vital part of the Silver Award. With their application, candidates must present a written testimonial from their choir trainer, counter-signed by the vicar/minister/head teacher/director of music, confirming their commitment to the choir.

E. Choir in context (20%): *Maximum 20 marks (12 to pass)*

1. Bible

Candidates should show their knowledge, and be prepared to discuss the biblical origins, of any two of the following liturgical texts as chosen by the examiner: *Our Father, Holy holy holy, Glory to God, Lamb of God, Magnificat, Nunc dimittis*.

2. Liturgy

- a) Candidates will be asked to describe the structure, and main sung parts, of the form of eucharist, or communion service, with which they are familiar. They may bring, and refer to, a service book or card.
- b) Candidates should choose one anthem, and a psalm, hymn or worship song, both suitable for one season (e.g., Advent) or festival (e.g., Christ the King) celebrated in their church. They should be able to explain the significance of their choices, and to relate them to a suitable Bible reading for the festival or season chosen. (*They should bring two copies of their chosen pieces*).
- c) The examiner will ask straightforward questions on the meaning and significance of two further seasons or festivals from the list given below, and will ask the candidate for a choice of a suitable piece of music which might be sung (by choir or congregation) during each season or festival.

3. Ministry

Candidates will be asked to explain, with reference to a different chosen piece of music, how music helps people to pray. They should prepare comments on both the music and the words, and show awareness of the choir's contribution to the worship of their church. (*They should bring two copies of their chosen piece*).

NB: Candidates are not expected to perform any examples in Section E, but they may refer to their copies of the chosen music. Their answers may vary according to their age and experience, and be expressed in straightforward language.

OTHER INFORMATION: Copies of *Voice for Life* books and all the music required may be bought from RSCM Music Direct, tel 0845 021 7726, fax 0845 021 8826, musicdirect@rscm.com, <http://www.rscm.com/shop>. The RSCM Gold Award syllabus, for candidates obtaining a Distinction or Merit at Silver standard, may be obtained from RSCM Education, 19 The Close, Salisbury SP1 2EB or downloaded from www.rscm.com. Other items in this syllabus obtainable from RSCM Music Direct are

<i>Music for Common Worship</i>	RSCM	order ref RCW101
<i>Here is bread</i> (Kendrick)	<i>Worship in Song</i> (RSCM)	order ref D0062
<i>Panis angelicus</i> (Franck) & <i>The Woodcutter's Song</i> (Vaughan Williams)	<i>Sing Solo Sacred ed</i> Jenkins (OUP)	order ref B0146 (high), B0291 (low)
Dark Blue Singer's Workbook	<i>RSCM Voice for Life</i>	order ref F0102
Red Singer's Workbook	<i>RSCM Voice for Life</i>	order ref F0103

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES AND THEIR TRAINERS AT BRONZE STANDARD (DEAN'S AWARD)

SECTION A

Each piece will be assessed as follows:

1. Posture and presentation

Good candidates will:

- Stand and hold their music well

Poor candidates may:

- Bury their head in their music and sing into

throughout the examination.

2. *Vocal technique: breath management, tone, diction, range*

Good candidates will:

- Breathe in appropriate places.
- Sustain the sound to the end of a line or phrase.
- Produce good, full tone, even at the extremes of their range.
- Project the voice well.
- Produce good vowel sounds.
- Articulate consonants clearly.

3. *General musicianship: accuracy, expression, sensitivity*

Good candidates will:

- Sing notes and rhythms accurately and with good intonation.
- Be able to keep a steady pulse.
- Demonstrate a good dynamic range and an understanding of phrasing and articulation.
- Show an appreciation of musical style appropriate to the piece being sung.
- Be able to convey the mood of the music and reflect the meaning of the text.
- Sing confidently and with great sensitivity.

SECTION B

1. *Musical skills*

Good candidates will:

- Sight-read fluently with a high proportion of the notes correct and sung in tune.
- Maintain the tempo and rhythm even when mistakes are made.
- Show an awareness of dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- Sound confident and sing with conviction even when wrong.
- Maintain good tone.
- Breathe in appropriate places.
- Be accurate in aural tests, with all sung responses in tune and clapped responses rhythmic and steady.

2. *Musical understanding (Assessed not only through the 'further questions'(above), but throughout each candidate's performance.)*

Good candidates will:

- Demonstrate their knowledge of notation and theory by singing their repertoire and performing sight-reading and aural tests with a high degree of accuracy.
- Observe common Italian terms, musical symbols and dynamic markings and be able to explain what they mean if asked.
- Demonstrate their understanding of intervals in the aural tests and be able to identify them when asked.

SECTION C

Good candidates will:

- Be able to talk knowledgeably about the music they sing with regard to the period in which it was written, the features of the musical style, and the origins and the meaning of the text.

SECTION E

Good candidates will:

- Give thoughtful answers to questions on their role and that of the choir or singing group.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the significance of musical ministry within their church or community.
- Be able to give examples of music suitable for specific occasions or seasons.

their copy.

- Slouch, tap their feet or fidget as they sing.

Poor candidates may:

- Produce uneven breathy tone.
- Be unable to sustain to the end of a phrase.
- Strain for high or low notes.
- Have weak or unprojected tone.
- Have poor diction.

Poor candidates may:

- Sing frequently out of tune.
- Make a large number of errors of pitch and rhythm.
- Have a tendency either to rush or to slow down without good musical reason.
- Reveal little awareness of dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- Sing with little regard for the mood or musical style of the piece.
- Falter and appear to lack confidence.

Poor candidates may:

- Make a large number of rhythmic and pitching errors in sight-reading tests.
- Falter and stumble, disregarding the tempo and rhythm.
- Show little awareness of dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- Stop when a mistake is made.
- Sing with poor tone and breathe inappropriately.
- Be highly inaccurate in aural tests with responses faltering, out of tune or rhythmically weak.

Poor candidates may:

- Demonstrate a poor understanding of notation and theory by making a large number of errors when singing their repertoire or performing sight-reading and aural tests.
- Fail to observe Italian terms, musical symbols and dynamic markings and be unable to explain them if asked.
- Make mistakes in pitching intervals and be unable to identify intervals in aural tests.

Poor candidates may:

- Be unable to demonstrate their knowledge of the music they sing beyond what is on the page.

Poor candidates may:

- Appear not to have considered their role in the choir or singing group.
- Demonstrate only a poor awareness of the significance of musical ministry within a church or community.
- Be unable to make suitable repertoire suggestions for their chosen occasions or seasons.

- Have some knowledge of the major seasons in the Church's year (e.g., Advent, Eastertide) and understand the pattern and format of services in their church.

- Be unable to answer simple questions on the Church's year or the format of services.

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES AND THEIR TRAINERS AT SILVER STANDARD (BISHOP'S AWARD)

SECTION A

Each piece will be assessed as follows:

1. *Posture & presentation*

Good candidates will:

- Stand and hold their music well throughout the examination.

Poor candidates may:

- Bury their heads in their music and sing into their copies.
- Slouch, tap their feet or fidget as they sing.

2. *Vocal technique: breath management, tone, diction, range*

Good candidates will:

- Breathe in appropriate places.
- Sustain the sound to the end of a line or phrase.
- Produce good, full tone, even at the extremes of their range.
- Project the voice well.
- Produce good vowel sounds.
- Articulate consonants clearly.
- Be able to sing a legato line without aspirating
- Be able to sing wide leaps without breaking the flow of the phrase.
- Move with ease and control throughout the range.
- Sustain crescendos and diminuendos without forcing the sound or losing tone quality.
- Use vibrato appropriately to colour the sound

Poor candidates may:

- Produce uneven breathy tone.
- Be unable to sustain to the end of a phrase.
- Strain for high or low notes.
- Have weak or unprojected tone.
- Have poor diction.
- Be unable to sing a legato line without aspirating each note.
- Be unable to sing wide leaps without stopping the voice.
- Show lack of control over, or use **indiscriminately**, vibrato.
- Overuse the glottal stop to attack notes.

3. *General musicianship: accuracy, expression, sensitivity*

Good candidates will:

- Sing notes and rhythms accurately and with secure intonation.
- Be able to keep a steady pulse.
- Demonstrate a good dynamic range and an understanding of phrasing and articulation.
- Show an appreciation of musical style appropriate to the piece being performed.
- Be able to convey the mood of the music and reflect the meaning of the text.
- Sing confidently and with great sensitivity.
- Place consonants carefully at the ends of notes.

Poor candidates may:

- Sing frequently out of tune.
- Make errors of pitch and rhythm.
- Have a tendency either to rush or to slow down without good musical reason.
- Reveal little awareness of dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- Sing with little regard for the mood or musical style of the repertoire.
- Falter and appear to lack confidence.
- Be careless with the placing of consonants and the change of vowel in diphthongs.

SECTION B

1. *Musical skills*

Good candidates will:

- Sight-read fluently with a high proportion of the notes correct and sung in tune.
- Maintain the tempo and rhythm even if a mistake is made.
- Show an awareness of dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- Sound confident and sing with conviction and continuity even when wrong.
- Maintain good tone.
- Breathe in appropriate places.
- Sing words correctly.
- Be accurate in aural tests, with all sung responses in tune and clapped responses rhythmic and steady.

Poor candidates may:

- Falter and stop when they are unsure or make mistakes.
- Lack confidence, sing with poor tone and out of tune.
- Ignore dynamic markings, phrasing and articulation.
- Breathe in inappropriate places.
- Make frequent errors of pitch and rhythm.
- Fail to sing words correctly.
- Be inaccurate in aural tests, with responses faltering, out of tune or rhythmically weak.

2. *Musical understanding* (Assessed not only through the 'further questions' (above), but throughout each candidate's performance.)

Good candidates will:

Poor candidates may:

- Show their knowledge of notation and theory by singing their repertoire and performing sight-reading and aural tests with a high degree of accuracy.
- Observe common Italian terms, musical symbols and dynamic markings and be able to explain what they mean if asked.
- Show their understanding of intervals and triads, and be able to pitch and identify them, and their tonality, in the aural tests.

SECTION C

Good candidates will:

- Be able to talk knowledgeably about the music they sing with regard to the period in which it was written, the features of the musical style, and the origins and the meaning of the text.
- Be able to compare and contrast any piece they sing with another setting of a similar text, or with a piece by another composer of the same period.

SECTION E

Good candidates will:

- Give thoughtful answers to questions on their role and that of the choir or singing group.
- Demonstrate an acute awareness of the significance of musical ministry within their church or community.
- Be able to give examples of music suitable for specific occasions or seasons.
- Show understanding of a Bible passage chosen in relation to a specific season or festival.
- Have a comprehensive knowledge of the seasons (e.g., Lent) and major festivals (e.g., Ascension) in the Church's year and understand the pattern and format of services in their church.

- Show a poor understanding of notation and theory by making errors when singing their repertoire or performing sight-reading and aural tests.
- Fail to observe Italian terms, musical symbols and dynamic markings and be unable to explain them if asked.
- Make mistakes in pitching intervals and be unable to identify intervals or triads or tonality in aural tests.

Poor candidates may:

- Only be able to offer simple observations on the repertoire and show little background knowledge about the text, composer or musical style.
- Be unable to make meaningful comparisons with other pieces.

Poor candidates may:

- Appear not to have considered their role in the choir or singing group.
- Demonstrate a poor awareness of musical ministry within a church or the importance of music in the community.
- Be unable to make suitable repertoire suggestions for specific occasions or seasons.
- Be unable to relate music for their chosen season to any suitable Bible text.
- Be unable to answer questions on the Church's year or the format of services.