



VOICE *for* LIFE

Singing Awards

Singing Certificate, Bronze, Silver and Gold Levels

Revised Syllabus

Valid from January 2027 until further notice

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Introduction – Changes and updates

The new 'entry level' RSCM Singing Certificate is intended as a 'first step' for choristers in their RSCM awards journey. Features of the certificate are:

- 'Low stakes' assessment: choristers will receive a certificate and comments on their performance.
- Importantly this is **not** a 'pass/fail' exam. It is an opportunity for choristers to sing to an external assessor, to get used to the idea of singing exams, and for their achievement to be affirmed. All those who 'enter' for the singing certificate will receive a certificate.
- The design of the certificate's content includes elements which are likely to be 'normal' choir practice things for new singers, namely, warm-ups, a hymn or worship song and an anthem. There are some very simple listening exercises too, helping choristers to begin to develop their ear skills.
- Although RSCM suggests repertoire for the Singing Certificate, **own choice** is not only permitted, but encouraged. Choristers will be able to sing music which they know well, from their own choir experience.

Although the RSCM Singing Certificate is envisaged as being of most likely appeal to younger choristers, the design allows for singers of any age to enter and receive the comment form and certificate. An adult chorister would be equally welcome to enter for a Singing Certificate, choosing repertoire with which they are familiar and receiving encouragement and affirmation in their singing journey.

Beyond the introduction of a new 'entry level', there are changes made to Bronze, Silver and Gold awards. The overall shape of each exam remains unchanged. There are, however, some changes to the content and examination of certain areas, with the intent to ensure that the exam maintains standards whilst offering additional flexibility and accessibility.

Summary of changes from the previous (2021) syllabus

- **ANTHEM CHOICE.** The option to submit, for approval, 'own choice' repertoire at all levels for Anthems will, it is hoped, be a welcome change, allowing choirs to reflect what is in their own music library. A supplementary 'approved own choice repertoire list' will be maintained on the RSCM website, offering continuous updates as music is approved via the 'own choice' route.
- **HYMN CHOICE.** Although the intent remains to ensure progression of 'demand' from Bronze to Gold, rubrics around numbers of syllables per line and the repetition of text have been removed or simplified.
- **SIGHT-READING.** This has been updated as a test of sight-reading ability in a 'choral' context, and to provide a consistent approach at all three levels. At Bronze and Silver levels, the preparatory exercises of clapping rhythms/singing pitches/speaking words in rhythm are removed. At all levels 'second attempts' are also removed. Instead, at Bronze and Silver, the examiner will play through the entire test, including the candidate's vocal line as 'preparation'. At Gold Level they will play the opening section of the test only. The candidate may, if they wish, sing or hum their line as this happens, and this will not be marked. When the candidate has their attempt, the examiner's accompaniment will provide greater support of their line, particularly at Bronze Level. The examiner will mark this attempt only.
- **TECHNICAL QUESTIONS.** In the exam, the examiner will ask a shorter selection of questions, sampling across the syllabus. Marking of this has been simplified; questions will have right/wrong answers, and the mark scheme now reflects the number of correct responses. Mark form comments will no longer be written in this section of the exam. Questions will now be drawn from examples in the sight-reading test at Bronze and Silver Levels, as well as at Gold.
- **CHOIR IN CONTEXT** has been streamlined with a reduction in the quantity of material within this section of the exam, and a pivot to focus assessment on understanding rather than recall. Notably the recall and recitation, from memory, of prayers, collects and readings is no longer required, nor is reading aloud at sight.
- **AT GOLD LEVEL** the marking of sight-reading and technical questions has been separated, although the technical questions will continue to be drawn out of the sight-reading test. Technical questions will now also include some aural elements.

Own Choice repertoire

At all levels, in the anthem section(s), a candidate may opt to perform music of their own choice. Except for the singing certificate, this music must be submitted by the representative for approval to the RSCM UK Chief Examiner via the UK exams desk before an entry is made. Requests made after an entry has been made will not be considered.

Such approval will consider the suitability of the anthem, including its standard for the award level and duration. A list of previously approved 'own choice repertoire' will be maintained and updated on the RSCM website, and any repertoire listed there does not need to be approved again and can be selected without reference to the RSCM.

Candidates should provide a copy of any own choice repertoire, including that on the website list, for the examiner's use during the exam. Full details of how to request approval for own choice repertoire are at regulation 14.

Resources

All RSCM members can access a whole suite of support materials. Links and downloads are available on the RSCM website.

In addition, the RSCM offers a range of courses, both face-to-face and online, to help you develop your skills.

Keep an eye on www.rscm.org.uk/start-learning for up-to-date information.

Links and contact information

- RSCM website www.rscm.org.uk
- RSCM Shop www.rscmshop.com
- RSCM Exams desk email examsdesk@rscm.com

Singing Certificate Syllabus

Using the Voice Well

Item	Detail
1. Vocal warm-ups	• Sing three vocal warm-ups. • These are set by RSCM. The music is available as a free download from the RSCM website.
2. Hymn or Worship Song	ONE VERSE only (or one verse and chorus) • Either chosen from the following list Amazing Grace Away in a Manger Be still for the presence of the Lord Give me oil in my lamp Morning has broken This little light of mine • Or own choice*
3. Anthem or Song	• Either chosen from the following list Bread of the world – Alan Bullard (OUP) (<i>First verse only</i>) Hand me down my silver trumpet – Joy Webb (Salvationist Publishing) (<i>First verse only</i>) Lead me, Lord – SS Wesley (<i>solo sections only</i>) Rejoice in the Lord always - Evelyn Turner arr Esther Jones^{\$} Don't build your house on the sandy land - Karen Lafferty arr Esther Jones^{\$} The Lord is my Shepherd – Sarah Moore (Flammer inc.) • Or own choice*

*For the Singing Certificate, 'own choice' repertoire does **not** need to be submitted to the RSCM for approval

^{\$} In the RSCM Voice for Life Song Book, volume 1

Practical Skills – Listening and Responding

Candidates will

1. Clap in time with the pulse of a short piece of music
 - The examiner will play a short piece in 2, 3 or 4 time. Candidates should join in clapping as soon as they are able.
2. Clap back, as echoes, the rhythm of two short phrases played on the piano.
 - The phrases will be in 2 or 3 time, and will last two bars each.
3. Sing back three notes
 - The notes will be played twice, in free time.

General notes for the Singing Certificate

- Accompaniment (for all sung elements: warm-ups, hymn/worship song and anthem/song) should be provided by the representative/choir director. Examiners will not provide accompaniment. Accompaniments may be pre-recorded (although live accompaniment is preferred), but there must be someone present to operate the play-back. This should not be done by the candidate.
- Any edition of the chosen music is acceptable, in any suitable key/transposition.
- Candidates may, if they wish, sing a lower voice part (A/T/B) in the hymn/worship song and/or anthem/song.
- Warm-ups may be transposed/started on any suitable pitch to suit the candidate's range/register.

Bronze Award Syllabus

Using the Voice Well

Candidates will be required to sing:

Item	Detail	Marks (pass)
1. HYMN	- The hymn should have 4 lines per verse - Three verses are to be sung - The middle verse is to be sung unaccompanied - Candidates may sing any suitable voice part - Hymn choices should avoid significant and/or frequent repetition of text	24 (16)
2. UNACCOMPANIED ITEM	One item, chosen from the following list. - These are available as free downloads here: www.rscm.org.uk B201 – Kyrie – Missa de angelis – Plainsong B202 – Steal away – Spiritual B203 – Jesus walked this lonesome valley – Spiritual	12 (8)
3. PSALM (NB Roman Catholic numbering may vary – any authorised translation is acceptable – opening words are given for guidance)	- Sung either to a single or double Anglican chant or to a responsorial setting at the candidate's choice - If sung to Anglican chant, the Gloria should be included at the end - Candidates may sing the melody or any suitable voice part - Chosen from the following list: B301 – Psalm 53 – <i>The foolish body hath said in his heart</i> B302 – Psalm 114 – <i>When Israel came out of Egypt</i> B303 – Psalm 121 – <i>I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills</i> B304 – Psalm 129 – <i>Many a time have they fought against me</i> B305 – Psalm 130 – <i>Out of the deep</i> B306 – Psalm 138 – <i>I will give thanks unto thee, O Lord</i>	24 (16)

Bronze Award continued**4. ANTHEM**

- Choice of melody line or a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list* **or** an approved own choice

30 (20)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info	Information		
B401	Peter Aston	Loving God	BC1		Up	
B402	Thomas Attwood	Teach me, O Lord	BC2			
B403	John Dankworth	Light of the world	HP		Up	
B404	Colin Davey	An Irish blessing	CPDL		Up	
B405	Richard Farrant	Hide not thou thy face	BC1			
B406	J Forbes L'Estrange	Saint Richard's Prayer	SAM YV20			
B407	Louis Halsey	Let all the world	BC1			
B408	Martin How	Fairest Lord Jesus	BC1			
B409	J-F Lalouette	O mysterium ineffabile	BC1		Un	Up
B410	Simon Lole	I am the Bread of life	BC1	D		Up
B411	Sarah Macdonald (arr.)	Love bade me welcome	Encore			Up
B412	John Madden	We will remember them	WWR			
B413	Joanna Marsh	Song of St Anselm	AGA			Up
B414	Piers Maxim	Candle burning in the night	AGA		Un	Up
B415	Morfydd Owen	He prayeth best who loveth best	MOV		Un	Up
B416	Henry Purcell	Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets	BC2			
B417	Andrew Reid	Author of life divine	AGA			Up
B418	John Rutter	A Gaelic blessing	BC1		Un	Up
B419	David Sanger	Child in the manger	BC1	D		
B420	Richard Shephard	And did'st thou travel light	BC1		T	
B421	Christopher Tye	O Holy Spirit, Lord of grace	BC1			
B422	Norman Warren	Eternal Light	SPS	D		
B423	Geoff Weaver (arr.)	Sent by the Lord am I	BC1	D		
B424	Leonard White	A prayer of St Richard of Chichester	BC1	D		Up

D – taking the descant part where marked

Un – Setting for unison voices

T – ATB singing the tune in unison verses

Up – Setting for upper voices

Practical Skills

Sight-Reading

Bronze Award

12 (8)

For 'in person' exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, accompanied by the piano.

- The examiner will play through the whole test; both piano and candidate parts will be played. Candidates may, if they wish, sing or hum their line whilst this happens. This will not be marked.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
- After this, the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in, continuing to play and accompany the test, marking only this attempt.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

For online exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, unaccompanied.

- The examiner will play through the whole test. The candidate may sing or hum along (with their microphone muted) if they wish.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
 - After this, the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in to indicate the tempo. The candidate should commence singing at the end of the count-in. The examiner will be aware of, and not penalise, any 'lag' in starting to sing. This attempt will be marked.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

*candidates who are eligible for extra time will have one minute at the 'look through' stage of the test.

a. Technical Questions

Bronze Award

12 (8)

- The examiner will refer to the piece of music from the sight-reading test and ask five questions requiring knowledge of key signatures, time signatures, note names and lengths, symbols and Italian terms.
- A full list of the extent of terms and symbols for each level can be found [here](#).

b. Aural Tests

Bronze Award

12 (8)

Candidates will be required to:

1. Clap the rhythm pattern of a melody after it has been played twice.
 - The examiner will count 2 bars in 2/4, 3/4 or 6/8 time before playing it for the first time
2. Sing three 2-bar phrases as echoes.
 - The examiner will first give the key chord and starting note and then count 2 bars before playing the first phrase
3. Sing both notes of an interval and then name it – at least two examples will be given.
 - Intervals will be a major or minor 3rd, or a perfect 4th or 5th

Choir in Context

24 (16)

a. Bible**Bronze Award**

Candidates will be asked two short questions asking them to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the meaning of the psalm they sang as part of the exam.

b. Liturgy**Bronze Award****N.B. CHRISTMAS HAS BEEN REMOVED AS AN OPTION IN THIS SECTION**

Candidates will be required to choose **one** of the following church festivals

- Easter Day
- Pentecost

and then to answer three short questions showing knowledge and understanding of the main elements of the chosen festival as described in their biblical accounts.

They will also be asked to suggest **EITHER** a hymn **OR** a psalm **OR** an anthem (at their choice) to be used at that festival.

c. Ministry**Bronze Award**

Candidates will be required to be familiar with the Choristers' Prayer and will be asked to respond to two questions about its meaning and how it relates to their life as a chorister.

Training resources for all sections of the exam are available. please see the RSCM website – www.rscm.org.uk.

Silver Award Syllabus

Using the Voice Well

Candidates will be required to sing:

Item	Detail	Marks (pass)
1. HYMN	- The hymn should have 6 lines per verse - Three verses are to be sung - The middle verse is to be sung unaccompanied - Candidates may sing any suitable voice part - Hymns with significant and/or frequent repetition of text are not acceptable.	12 (8)
2. UNACCOMPANIED ITEM	One item to be chosen from the following list. - These are available as free downloads here: www.rscm.org.uk S201 – Sing my tongue – Pange Lingua – Plainsong S202 – Drop down, ye heavens – Advent Prose – Plainsong S203 – At the foot of the cross	12 (8)
3. PSALM (NB Roman Catholic numbering may vary – any authorised translation is acceptable – opening words are given for guidance)	- Sung either to a double Anglican chant or to a responsorial setting at the candidate's choice or to plainsong - If sung to Anglican chant or to plainsong, the Gloria should be included at the end - Candidates may sing any suitable voice part where available - To be chosen from the following list: S301 – Psalm 14 – <i>The fool hath said in his heart</i> S302 – Psalm 32 – <i>Blessed is he whose unrighteousness is forgiven</i> S303 – Psalm 46 – <i>God is our hope and strength</i> S304 – Psalm 95 – <i>O come, let us sing unto the Lord</i> S305 – Psalm 101 – <i>My song shall be of mercy and judgement</i> S306 – Psalm 141 – <i>Lord, I call upon thee, haste thee unto me</i>	18 (12)

Silver Award continued

4. EARLY STYLE ANTHEM

- To sing a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list* **or** an approved own choice

24 (16)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info	Information
S401	Adrian Batten	O Praise the Lord	A1102	
S402	William Byrd	Sanctus & Hosanna (Mass for 4 voices)	C0033	
S403	John Blitheman	In pace in idipsum dormiam	TUA	
S404	Luca Marenzio	O Rex gloriae	KOG	
S405	W A Mozart	Benedictus and Hosanna (Missa brevis in F k.192)	Bärenreiter	Including solo sections
S406	W A Mozart	Kyrie (Missa brevis in D k.194)	Bärenreiter	
S407	Peter Philips	Ave verum corpus	CP9	
S408	Henry Purcell	O God, the King of Glory	KOG	
S409	Henry Purcell	Hear my prayer, O Lord	APA	
S410	Thomas Tallis	Sanctus (Mass for 4 voices)	CP56	
S411	T A Walmisley	From all that dwell below the skies	CPDL	
S412	Ludovico Viadana	Exsultate justi in Domino	Carus	
S413	T L da Victoria	Gaudent in coelis	WSS	

5. LATER STYLE ANTHEM

- To sing a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list **or** an approved own choice

24 (16)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info	Information
S501	Edward Bairstow	Save us, O Lord, waking	A0128	
S502	Mark Blatchly	For the fallen	WWR	Up
S503	Mark Blatchly	Give us the wings of faith	HP	Up
S504	Benjamin Britten	Gloria (Missa Brevis)	C0333	Up
S505	Ernest Bullock	Give us the wings of faith	A0176	
S506	J Forbes L'Estrange	Magnificat (King's College Service)	RES164	
S507	William Harris	Holy is the true light	WSS	
S508	Herbert Howells	Magnificat (Service in G major)	C0245	
S509	William Mathias	Lift up your heads	ADP	
S510	Cecilia McDowall	Bless to me this day	Oxford	Up
S511	Philip Moore	Come, dearest Lord	SAM	
S512	June Nixon	God is why I am	AON2	
S513	Rosephanye Powell	The Lord is my light and my salvation	Hal Leonard	
S514	Sergei Rachmaninov	The Cherubic Hymn	KOG	
S515	Richard Shephard	A new commandment	KOG	
S516	Richard Shephard	The Secret of Christ	GCGW	
S517	C V Stanford	Benedictus in C	WSS	
S518	Heathcote Statham	Magnificat in E minor	C0228	
S519	Herbert Sumsion	Magnificat in A	C0087	
S520	C-M Widor	Agnus Dei (Messe op.36)	C0416	
S521	Philip Wilby	An Irish Blessing	SAM	
S522	Charles Wood	Expectans expectavi	A0232	

Up – Setting for upper voices

Practical Skills

d. Sight-Reading

Silver Award

12 (8)

For 'in person' exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, accompanied by the piano.

- The examiner will play through the whole test; both piano and candidate parts will be played. Candidates may, if they wish, sing or hum their line whilst this happens. This will not be marked.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
- After this, the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in, continuing to play and accompany the test, marking only this attempt.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

For online exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, unaccompanied.

- The examiner will play through the whole test. The candidate may sing or hum along (with their microphone muted) if they wish.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
 - After this the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in to indicate the tempo. The candidate should commence singing at the end of the count-in. The examiner will be aware of, and not penalise, any 'lag' in starting to sing. This attempt will be marked.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

*candidates who are eligible for extra time will have one minute at the 'look through' stage of the test.

a. Technical Questions

Silver Award

12 (8)

- The examiner will refer to the piece of music from the sight-reading test and ask five questions requiring knowledge of key signatures, time signatures, note names and lengths, symbols and Italian terms. Each question will be in two parts or worth two marks.
- A full list of the extent of terms and symbols for each level can be found [here](#)

b. Aural Tests

Silver Award

12 (8)

Candidates will be required to:

- Clap the pulse of a melody on its second playing and identify whether it was in 2, 3 or 4 time.
 - The melody will be unaccompanied and will not necessarily start on the 1st beat of the bar.
 - In online exams only candidates should continue clapping at the end, counting the numbered beats aloud until asked to stop by the examiner.
- Sing two melodic phrases as echoes and in time.
 - The key chord, starting note and pulse will first be given.
 - Each phrase will be played twice, without a break between, before the echo is sung.
- Sing the middle or lowest note of two triads and identify whether each is major or minor.
 - The key note will first be given and the candidate asked to sing it.
 - The triad may be in root position, 1st or 2nd inversion.
- Pitch a note a given interval above the tonic – two examples will be given.
 - The tonic will first be played and the candidate asked to sing it.
 - Intervals asked could be 2^{nds} (major or minor), 3^{rds} (major or minor), 6^{ths} (major or minor), perfect 4^{ths} or perfect 5^{ths}.

Choir in Context

24 (16)

a. Bible

Silver Award

Candidates will need to have studied text(s) from **one** of the following:

- Sanctus (Holy, holy, holy) **and** Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) (Candidates must study **both** texts)
- Magnificat
- Nunc Dimittis

The examiner will ask the candidate questions requiring understanding of meaning and usage.

b. Liturgy

Silver Award

Candidates should choose **two** of the following holy days and be prepared to answer short questions about **one** of them in the exam, which will be chosen by the examiner:

- Candlemas
- The Annunciation
- Ash Wednesday
- Maundy Thursday
- Good Friday
- Ascension Day

Questions will require understanding of

1. How the biblical accounts relating to the festival are reflected in the liturgy for that day.
2. The significance of the holy day for Christians today.

Candidates will also be asked:

3. To suggest EITHER a hymn OR a psalm OR an anthem (at their choice) to be used at that festival and to explain why it is suitable for that season.

c. Ministry

Silver Award

Candidates will be given a short passage from the New Testament. The passage will be taken from the New International Version of the Bible.

Candidates will have time to read through the passage, which they may do aloud if they wish. They will **not** be assessed on their reading of the passage.

Candidates will be asked a question about the meaning of the passage, and about how it might apply to their ministry as a chorister.

Training resources for all sections of the exam are available. please see the RSCM website – www.rscm.org.uk.

Gold Award Syllabus

Using the Voice Well

Candidates will be required to sing:

Item	Detail	Marks (pass)
1. HYMN	- The hymn should have 8 lines per verse - Three verses are to be sung - The middle verse is to be sung unaccompanied - Candidates should sing any suitable voice part - Hymns with significant and/or frequent repetition of text are not acceptable	12 (8)
2. PSALM <i>(NB Roman Catholic numbering may vary – any authorised translation is acceptable – opening words are given for guidance)</i>	BOTH - Sung to Anglican chant, using more than one chant, and including the Gloria at the end - Candidates should sing any suitable voice part - To be chosen from the following list: G201 – Psalm 13 (changing between verses 4&5) <i>How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord?</i> G202 – Psalm 18 vv.1–6 (changing between verses 2&3) <i>I will love thee, O Lord my strength</i> G203 – Psalm 25 vv.1–8 (changing between verses 6&7) <i>Unto thee, O Lord will I lift up my soul</i> G204 – Psalm 44 vv.1–6 (changing between verses 4&5) <i>We have heard with our ears, O God</i> G205 – Psalm 78 vv.41–46 (changing between verses 44&45) <i>Many a time did they provoke him in the wilderness</i> G206 – Psalm 107 vv.21–27 (changing between verses 22&23) <i>O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness</i> AND - Sung to plainsong unaccompanied - These are available as free downloads here: www.rscm.org.uk - To be chosen from the following list: G221 – Psalm 23 – <i>The Lord is my shepherd</i> G222 – Psalm 70 – <i>Haste thee, O God, to deliver me</i> G223 – Psalm 82 (omit vv.5–6) – <i>God standeth in the congregation</i> G224 – Psalm 93 – <i>The Lord is King</i> G225 – Psalm 127 – <i>Except the Lord build the house</i> G226 – Psalm 150 – <i>O praise God in his holiness</i>	12 (8)

3. 16–17TH CENTURY STYLE ANTHEM

- Sing a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list* **or** an approved own choice

24 (16)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info
G301	Richard Dering	Quem vidistis pastores	TUA
G302	Orlando Gibbons	O Lord, in thy wrath	OTA
G303	G P da Palestrina	Gloria (Missa Brevis)	C0034
G304	G P da Palestrina	Rorate caeli	ADP
G305	Robert Parsons	Ave Maria	OTA
G306	Peter Philips	Ascendit Deus	OTA
G307	Thomas Tomkins	Almighty God, the fountain	TUA CP67
G308	T L da Victoria	Gloria (Missa O Quam Gloriosum)	C0347
G309	Thomas Weelkes	Alleluia. I heard a voice	OTA
G310	Thomas Weelkes	Hosanna to the Son of David	OTA

4. LATE 17TH–19TH CENTURY STYLE ANTHEM

- Sing a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list **or** an approved own choice

24 (16)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info
G401	William Boyce	Save me, O God	
G402	Johannes Brahms	How lovely are thy dwellings	A0130
G403	Anton Bruckner	Os justi	A1156
G404	G F Handel	Hallelujah Chorus	A2840
G405	F J Haydn	Achieved is the glorious work (from Creation) <i>(no.25b, the longer version of this chorus)</i>	E0115
G406	F J Haydn	Benedictus (Missa Sancti Nicolai)	E0003
G407	W A Mozart	Gloria (Orgelsolomesse, inc solos)	E0149
G408	Henry Purcell	I was glad	APA
G409	S S Wesley	Cast me not away	A0856

Gold Award continued

5. 20TH–21ST CENTURY STYLE ANTHEM

- Sing a suitable vocal part at the candidate's choice
- To be chosen **either** from the following list **or** the supplementary list* **or** an approved own choice

24 (16)

*a supplementary list of previously approved own choice repertoire is on the RSCM website

	Composer	Title	Collection / Order info
G501	Edward Bairstow	Though I speak with the tongues	A1203
G502	Edward Bairstow	Lord, I call upon thee	A1030
G503	Arnold Bax	Nunc dimittis in G	C1147
G504	Lennox Berkeley	The Lord is my shepherd	KOG
G505	Gerald Finzi	God is gone up	A0124
G506	Patrick Hadley	My beloved spake	A0404
G507	Herbert Howells	Sing lullaby	A1282
G508	Kenneth Leighton	Drop, drop slow tears	GCGW
G509	C V Stanford	Justorum animae	A0120
G510	Louis Vierne	Agnus Dei (Messe Solennelle)	C0422
G511	Charles Wood	Hail, gladdening light	A2440

Practical Skills

Gold Award

d. Sight-Reading

12 (8)

For 'in person' exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, accompanied by the piano.

- The examiner will play through approximately half of the test; both piano and candidate parts will be played. Candidates may, if they wish, sing or hum their line whilst this happens. This will not be marked.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
- After this, the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in, continuing to play and accompany the test, marking only this attempt.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

For online exams, candidates will be required to sing a melody, unaccompanied.

- The examiner will play through approximately half of the test. The candidate may sing or hum along (with their microphone muted) if they wish.
- After the preparatory play-through, candidates will have a further half minute* to look through the test and may try out any sections they wish.
- After this the examiner will give the key chord, the candidate's starting note, and then a two-bar count-in to indicate the tempo. The candidate should commence singing at the end of the count-in. The examiner will be aware of, and not penalise, any 'lag' in starting to sing. This attempt will be marked.
- Only one attempt is permitted.

*candidates who are eligible for extra time will have one minute at the 'look through' stage of the test.

a. Technical and Aural Questions

9 (6)

- The examiner will refer to the piece of music from the sight-reading test and ask questions requiring knowledge of theory and the musical elements.
- Additionally, candidates may be asked features of style/period.
- A full list of the extent of knowledge for this level can be found [here](#)

Choir in Context

21 (14)

a. Bible

Gold Award

Candidates should choose and study **two** of the following saints. They will be asked about only **one** of them in the exam, which will be chosen by the examiner. Candidate responses should focus on an understanding of the relevance of the Saint to the church and Christian life. Factual recall of their story is unlikely, alone, to be credited.

- Saint Thomas
- Saint Luke
- Saint Peter
- Saint Mary Magdalene
- Saint John the Baptist

b. Liturgy

Gold Award

Candidates should choose **one** of the following psalms. They will be asked short questions about its meaning, and links to season(s) of the church year. They will also be expected to understand how Psalms are used in the liturgy. An unmarked copy of the text may be brought to the exam for reference.

(NB Roman Catholic numbering may vary – any authorised translation is acceptable – opening words are given for guidance)

- Psalm 22 – *My God, my God, look upon me, why hast thou forsaken me*
- Psalm 51 – *Have mercy upon me, O God, after thy great goodness*
- Psalm 80 – *Hear, O thou Shepherd of Israel*
- Psalm 114 – *When Israel came out of Egypt*
- Psalm 130 – *Out of the deep have I called unto thee, O God*

c. Ministry

Gold Award

Candidates will be given a short passage from the Old Testament and asked to respond to short questions about its meaning. The reading will be taken from the New International Version of the Bible. Candidates will have time to read through the passage, which they may do aloud if they wish. They will not be assessed on their reading of the passage.

The questions asked will range from comprehension style questions ('what is happening in the reading?') to those which ask candidates to make links between the unfamiliar reading and broader Christian themes, particularly of Ministry.

Training resources for all sections of the exam are available. please see the RSCM website – www.rscm.org.uk.

Publications

Repertoire listings

Where a piece is published as sheet music by the RSCM, or is a standard item in the webshop, its order code is shown in the RH column in **GREEN**.

If a piece is available in an anthology or collection, that will use one of the codes below in **BLUE**.

Anthologies and single pieces published elsewhere are identified by the anthology code (see below) or the name of the publisher in **RED**.

ALL MUSIC may be ordered through the RSCM shop.

Choral Public Domain Library editions may be used, but any significant changes (as compared to traditional published editions) should be checked by the applicant and approval sought via the Exams Desk.

Code	Collection Title	Publisher
ADP	Advent Pilgrimage	RSCM
AGA	All Glorious Above	RSCM
AON2	Anthems Old and New vol.2	Mayhew
APA	A Purcell Anthology	OUP
BC1	RSCM Bronze Collection 1	RSCM
BC2	RSCM Bronze Collection 2	RSCM
GCGW	God's Church for God's World	RSCM
HP	High Praise	Music Sales
KOG	King of Glory	RSCM
MOV2	Multitude of Voyces volume 2	www.multitudeofvoyces.co.uk
OTA	The Oxford Book of Tudor Anthems	OUP
SAM	RSCM Anthems for S A Men	RSCM
SC1	RSCM Silver Collection 1	RSCM
SC2	RSCM Silver Collection 2	RSCM
SPS	Songs, Psalms and Spirituals	RSCM
TUA	Tudor Anthems	Novello
WSS	With Sainly Shout and Solemn Jubilee	RSCM
WOC	The Way of the Cross	RSCM
WWR	We will remember them	RSCM
YV20	Young Voices Festival Book 2020	RSCM

Scope of Knowledge for Technical Questions

	BRONZE	SILVER <i>Everything needed for Bronze PLUS</i>	GOLD <i>Everything needed for Bronze and Silver PLUS</i>
Pitch/ Clef	Notes of treble OR bass clef as appropriate to candidate's voice	Notes of treble OR bass clef as appropriate to the candidate's voice, including leger lines and accidentals/key signature flats and sharps.	Notes of treble and bass clef. Double sharps and double flats
Key signatures	Major and minor keys up to 3 sharps or flats	Major and minor keys up to 4 sharps or flats	All keys, including identifying modulations within a piece where the key signature does not change.
Intervals	<i>Intervals are tested only in the aural section at Bronze level</i>	<i>Intervals are tested only in the aural section at Silver level</i>	All intervals, including major/minor, perfect, augmented and diminished
Note values and rests	Semibreves, minims, Dotted minims, dotted crotchets, quavers	Breves Triplets Dotted quavers semiquavers Ties	Syncopation Hemiola
Time signatures	Number of beats in a bar in a simple time signature, 2, 3 or 4 time. Crotchet beat types.	Simple and Compound times with 2, 3 or 4 beats per bar and crotchet or dotted crotchet beat types	Minim and quaver beat types.

Dynamic markings	p, mp, pp f, mf, ff	sfz, fp crescendo diminuendo [inc. hairpins]	<i>Technical questions on dynamics will not be asked at Gold Level</i>
Articulation markings	<i>None required at Bronze level</i>	slurs staccato dots accent marks breathing marks tenuto lines	<i>Technical questions on articulation markings will not be asked at Gold Level</i>
Other elements	adagio lento moderato andante allegro rallentando (rall) ritardando (rit) ritenuto (rit) accelerando (accel) a tempo poco molto	allegretto largo larghetto mosso vivace tempo primo/tempo I rubato meno piu e espressivo cantabile sostenuto	maestoso presto piu mosso con moto dolce semplice sempre subito musical textures homophonic/Chordal contrapuntal polyphonic imitative canon octaves/thirds/sixths a capella unison Technical names for the degrees of the scale – Tonic, Supertonic etc. Triads in root positions, first and second inversion. Recognition of cadences (Perfect, Imperfect, Plagal and Interrupted).

Regulations

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Singing awards are designed to encourage singers to achieve a high standard of vocal technique and musicianship. It is hoped that the awards will be used in conjunction with the RSCM *Voice for Life* scheme, which enables singers to develop their musical skills and understanding within the context of their choir (or singing group) and worshipping community.
- 1.2. The awards are open to singers from RSCM Group and Individual memberships of all denominations. Adults and children who have completed the relevant training are welcome to enter.
- 1.3. **Representatives**, when making the exam entry, are deemed (on behalf of the candidate and all involved in the entry) to have read, and agree to abide by, the terms of these regulations and conditions, and to accept the expertise of the examiner in all sections of the exam.
- 1.4. These regulations apply in their entirety to UK examinations. Some regulations may differ in other parts of the world and representatives should refer to their local RSCM region for specific details.

2. Making the award exam entry (UK Only)

- 2.1. All UK and Ireland award entries are made through the online portal by awards **representatives** who have registered with RSCM Education.
- 2.2. The online "entry window" for the session will, in normal circumstances, be open on the system for at least 4 weeks prior to the entry deadline date, and will close automatically at 23:59 (UK time) on that date.
- 2.3. Each online entry will generate an email receipt.
- 2.4. The entry is complete when all choices have been made online and the payment has been successfully received.
- 2.5. The RSCM will compile the exam day timetable, and notify **representatives** of the appointments (by email if possible), with venue location. An appointed exam supervisor will be in attendance.

- 2.6. Once an entry has been submitted and payment made, the **representative** will be required to pay an administrative surcharge, termed the "deferral fee", if requesting a change of appointment.
- 2.7. RSCM Education may exceptionally agree to waive the deferral fee, or the forfeiture of a substantial proportion of the entry fee, for compassionate reasons, though a minimum of 20% of the entry fee will be retained to help cover administrative costs.
- 2.8. An entry once deferred may be cancelled and the entry fee forfeited if the exam is not completed the second time.
- 2.9. Results will normally be sent to the **representative** within 2 weeks of the exam date.
- 2.10. Personal data in the online entry system will be held according to the RSCM's Privacy Policy, which can be found here: <https://www.rscm.org.uk/privacy-policy/>
- 2.11. RSCM Education reserves the right to decline any entry, returning entry fees in full, and to remove any **representative** from the online system.

3. Payments (UK only)

- 3.1. Current entry fees, and surcharge/deferral fee, are indicated at [rscm.org.uk](https://www.rscm.org.uk).
- 3.2. All payments are made at the time of entry through the online system using standard online payment methods.

4. The Representative (UK only)

- 4.1. Must be at least 18 years old.
- 4.2. May also be the candidate, but if not must be affiliated to the RSCM through the same Group membership as the candidates they enter.
- 4.3. If not the choir leader/trainer/teacher, must register as representative with the agreement of someone responsible for the choir. The RSCM reserves the right to verify that the representative has the authority to enter candidates on behalf of the affiliation.
- 4.4. Must take responsibility for accurately compiling and correctly submitting the entry, any supporting information required, and the payment.
- 4.5. Must submit the entry online no later than 23:59 on the deadline date.
- 4.6. Is deemed to accept all regulations at the point when an entry is made.

- 4.7. Will be the only point of contact with the RSCM, and must forward all details to the candidate and anyone else involved in the entry.
- 4.8. Must make arrangements (including payment if required) for the accompanist for the Using the Voice Well section of the exam.
- 4.9. Must check that all items specified in the syllabus are taken into the exam room, including copies for the examiner's use (see reg. 11.1), are in the same edition (or copied from the same book) as that being used by the candidate.

5. The Candidate

- 5.1. By entering for the exam will be deemed to have accepted these regulations.
- 5.2. Must be affiliated to the RSCM through either a choir/group membership, or (if the choir or group is not currently affiliated to the RSCM) by Personal Membership (Individual Member, or Student Member. Singers with no current affiliation to RSCM are not eligible to enter for RSCM Awards.
- 5.3. May only be entered for one award in any one exam session.

6. Suitable music choices and acceptable changes

- 6.1. Music choices must suit the candidate's voice and range, with the following allowances:
 - 6.1.1. Where a candidate is to sing the melody line only, it may be performed at any suitable pitch.
 - 6.1.2. Candidates may sing different voice parts across the prepared sung parts of the exam. For example, a candidate may sing the tenor part in one or more items whilst singing bass in other areas. This extends to pieces where there is a choice of 1st or 2nd parts, and also to those who might, for example, wish to sing bass and counter-tenor in different works. The candidate should inform the examiner before they start singing where this is the case.
 - 6.1.3. For young, recently changed male voices, when a bass part is almost entirely within range but occasionally drops out of the bottom end of the range, an upward octave transposition is allowed. For example, at cadence points at ends of phrases. The candidate must inform the examiner before they start singing.
 - 6.1.4. Hymns, psalms and anthems may be transposed by any reasonable interval to suit a candidate's vocal register.

7. Candidates with specific individual access needs (UK only)

- 7.1. The online entry form permits the representative to state if the candidate has any physical, social, learning or other access needs that might affect the environment or conduct of the exam.
- 7.2. If extra time is requested, a copy of a letter attesting to this from a head teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator or qualified healthcare professional, or a report from a suitably qualified specialist, must be emailed to examsdesk@rscm.com in support of the request before the booking deadline date. In every case where an adjustment is granted, an extra 5 minutes will be allowed for the exam overall. If evidence supporting the request is not received before the booking deadline the extra time will still be allowed, but the exam result may be withheld pending receipt.
- 7.3. In cases of physical need, it is the responsibility of the representative to request accessibility information, and of RSCM Education to arrange an accessible venue for the exam if this is necessary.
- 7.4. For all other access needs, representatives are asked to make direct contact with RSCM Education.
- 7.5. Requests for alternative tests (e.g., for visual impairment or the use of tinted overlays) should initially be made via the 'Alternative tests' section at online entry stage.
- 7.6. In conducting the exam, the examiner will pay due regard to the candidate's individual needs, including giving guidance, and extra time, where granted, for completing items; but the marking criteria will always be applied unaltered.
- 7.7. Requests for adjustments to be made on the day of the exam to the examiner cannot be accommodated.

8. The Examiner

- 8.1. Is validated by RSCM Education in the UK.
- 8.2. Currently satisfies all RSCM safeguarding procedures (as does the exam supervisor). In overseas territories these procedures may differ from the UK.
- 8.3. Will mark the candidate strictly in conformity with the published marking criteria.
- 8.4. Is regularly moderated, to help ensure uniformity of examining standards across the whole of the RSCM.

9. Use of English and other languages in the exam

- 9.1. Options or requirements to **sing** a piece in a language other than English are stated in the syllabus.
- 9.2. Candidates wishing the exam to be conducted in a language other than English will need to provide an interpreter at their own expense.

10. Other exam details and conditions

- 10.1. Candidates will be given somewhere to “warm up” for approximately 10 minutes before the exam, but a rehearsal keyboard will not usually be supplied.
- 10.2. The candidate should be prepared to sing the whole of each sung item, as specified in the music lists. The accompaniment must be played on the piano.
- 10.3. Pencilled rehearsal notes and information are permitted in the candidate’s copies. Such notes must be limited to breathing and interpretation elements of that piece and may not be referred to in later sections of the examination.

11. Authorised copies of music for the examiner’s use

- 11.1. For in person exams, examiners should be provided with copies of all of the music being used in the examination.
- 11.2. For online exams, pdf copies of ‘own choice’ repertoire and of the psalm (showing the pointing used) should be emailed to the RSCM exams desk. Repertoire from syllabus lists in this document need not be sent.
- 11.3. The MPA Code of Fair Practice allows a representative or candidate, using a purchased edition of music, to make a copy for the examiner’s use; it must be marked “Examiner’s copy: destroy after use”. Accompanists must not play from photocopies, except where a page has been copied to facilitate a page turn.

12. Accompanists

- 12.1. The quality of accompanying is not marked. Representatives are reminded that, nonetheless, the quality of accompanying may have an effect on the candidate’s singing and are encouraged to ensure that accompanists are fully able to support the candidates.

- 12.2. Where an examiner has concerns about the impact of accompaniment on an exam they will refer this to the Chief Examiner who may contact the representative to discuss the concerns.

13. Online exams

- 13.1. Representatives and candidates should familiarise themselves with the ‘short guide to preparing and taking awards examinations online’ document which is found on the RSCM website
- 13.2. Online exams are conducted via Zoom.
- 13.3. Online exams will be monitored and recorded to ensure safeguarding at all times.

14. Own choice repertoire

- 14.1. Representatives who have candidate(s) wishing to perform an anthem or anthems of their own choice for Bronze, Silver and Gold awards should submit the proposed anthem(s) to the RSCM UK exams desk before making an entry.
 - 14.1.1. It is **not** necessary to have ‘own choice’ repertoire pre-approved for the Singing Certificate
- 14.2. The representative should send the full title, composer and a pdf scan of the whole anthem by email to the RSCM UK exams desk. They should also indicate which voice part their candidate would be singing. The Chief Examiner will review the choice and either approve it or deny it.
- 14.3. The Chief Examiner’s decision will be final. No appeal of the decision is permitted.
- 14.4. Representatives should ensure that their proposed choices are compliant with the style/period indications at Gold/Silver level.
- 14.5. When selecting their own choice of repertoire for each award level, representatives and candidates should consider the standard of their proposed choice, using the syllabus repertoire lists as a benchmark. Repertoire which is either too easy or too difficult for an award level is likely not to be approved.
- 14.6. If a candidate arrives for an award exam with ‘Own choice’ repertoire that has not been previously approved, the examiner will conduct the exam, but the result may be withheld if the repertoire is judged not to meet the required level of difficulty for the award.

15. Recordings (audio / video)

- 15.1. Of all award exams will be made by the Examiner, for safeguarding, training & moderation, and dispute resolution purposes.
- 15.2. Will be used only for these purposes, and under no circumstances be publicly released, but will remain the property of the RSCM in secure electronic storage.

16. Certificates and medals

- 16.1. Successful candidates receive a certificate; this is posted to their **representative**.
- 16.2. Candidates may purchase the appropriate medal and ribbon from RSCM Music Direct (rscmshop.com) upon presentation of proof of a successful result.

17. Cancellation, disqualification and infringement

- 17.1. RSCM Education may cancel an exam session if fewer than 3 candidates in total have entered. In this event, each entry received will, if possible, be offered a choice of later alternative sessions (with no deferral fee payable) or, by mutual agreement, may be cancelled with full refund of the entry fee.
- 17.2. The same provisions will apply in the event of unexpected examiner indisposition, if no substitute can be appointed in time.
- 17.3. Candidates risk disqualification if photocopies, other than authorised ones, are brought into the exam room.
- 17.4. Examiners are instructed to refer to the Chief Examiner in cases of infringement of syllabus or rubrics. In these circumstances, marks may be deducted and an explanatory sentence added in the relevant item box on the marksheet. 30% of the item total, at most, might be deducted for a serious infringement.

18. Comments and appeals

- 18.1. An **appeals procedure** is operated by RSCM Education, but initial reaction to the exam experience is welcome. The **representative** may email examsdesk@rscm.com (Subject title: Bronze/Silver/Gold exam comment) with the candidate's name, the date & venue, and giving details. This must be received within 7 days of the exam date.
- 18.2. The **appeals procedure** is detailed in the appeals document which can be found on the RSCM website or emailed on request.

- 18.3. A formal appeal must be made in writing by the **representative**, and the appeal fee paid (see online table of fees; refunded in full if the appeal result is successful). It must arrive not later than 14 days after the results have been issued and may encompass the relevant aspects of any initial concern (as expressed in the email per reg 18.1) and/or the exam result, but no afterthoughts will be entertained.
- 18.4. The outcome of any appeal will normally be sent to the **representative** within three weeks from the date of receipt. The outcome of a successful appeal may be a new mark sheet (and certificate, if necessary) or the offer of a free re-examination, either of which terminate the appeal procedure, whether or not the latter is accepted. The appeal fee will be refunded in full if the appeal is successful.

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Marking Criteria

ALL PREPARED SUNG ITEMS

Total marks (pass mark)	30 (20)	24 (16)	18 (12)	12 (8)	Pitch and intonation	Time	Tone	Shape	Performance
Highly Commended	30 27	24 21	18 16	12 11	• Very accurate • Intonation highly secure	• Rhythmically assured • Fully accurate pointing in psalms	• Very well projected and sustained. Highly consistent across the range. • Excellent diction	• Expressive, idiomatic, shapely and detailed	• Excellent communication and delivery • Breath control well-managed
Commended	26 24	20 19	16 15	10	• Largely accurate • Intonation mainly centred	• Rhythmic detail largely secure • Pointing largely correct	• Largely projected and sustained. Consistent in much of the range. • Mainly clear diction	• Musical shaping is evident and provides suitable contrasts.	• Largely confident delivery • Breath control mainly well managed
Pass	23 20	18 16	14 12	9 8	• Generally accurate. • Intonation generally maintains tonality	• General accuracy of rhythm • Pointing broadly correct.	• Tone sufficiently projected. General control/sustain • Diction generally conveys the text	• General sense of the contours of phrase and shape.	• Generally sustained delivery • Breath control broadly suitable • Continuity maintained
Below Pass	19 15	15 12	11 9	7 6	• Frequent errors • Intonation unreliable with tonality not maintained	• Inaccurate rhythms • Pointing significantly incorrect	• Projection insufficient to convey the music. • Tone unreliable across the whole range. • Diction insufficient to convey the text	• Insufficient use of colour and shape	• Insecure delivery • Some lack of continuity • Breaths frequently interrupt the flow
Well Below Pass	14 1	11 1	8 1	5 1	• Largely or highly inaccurate pitches and/or intonation	• Rhythmic security not established • Pointing wholly incorrect	• Significant lack of tonal control.	• Musical shaping entirely unrealised	• Highly insecure • Frequent interruptions to the musical flow
	0	0	0	0	No work offered				

OTHER SECTIONS – BRONZE AND SILVER AWARDS

		Practical Skills					
Total marks (pass mark)	12 (8)	Sight-Reading	Technical Questions			Aural tests	Choir in Context
			Bronze Qs correct	Silver Qs correct	Marks awarded		
Highly Commended	12 11	- Wholly or almost wholly accurate for pitch and rhythm - Fluent (Some) musical shape realised	5	10 9	12 11	Entirely or almost entirely accurate and confident responses	- Secure and informed responses. - A high level of understanding
Commended	10	- Largely accurate pitch and rhythms - Momentum mostly maintained	4	8	10	Largely accurate and secure responses	- Largely secure responses - A good level of understanding
Pass	9 8	- Pitch and rhythm contours broadly found (with some assistance) - Momentum generally maintained despite hesitation	3	7 6	9 8	- Generally accurate responses - Some caution	- Generally secure responses. - A basic level of understanding
Below Pass	7 6	- Very approximate pitch and rhythm. - Insecure or erratic momentum. - Lack of overall continuity	2	5 4	7 6	- Fewer than half of responses correct - Frequently uncertain responses	- Responses lacked overall security - Limited understanding
Well Below Pass	5 1	- No continuity. - Incomplete - Very uncertain	1	3 2 1 0	5 4 3 0	Inaccuracy throughout.	- Very insecure responses. - Understanding not demonstrated
	0	No work offered					

OTHER SECTIONS – GOLD AWARDS

		Practical Skills				
Total marks (pass mark)	12 (8)	Sight-Reading	9 (6)	Technical and Aural Questions	21 (14)	Choir in Context
Highly Commended	12	- Wholly or almost wholly accurate for pitch and rhythm - Fluent (Some) musical shape realised	9	9 Correct answers	21 19	- Secure and informed responses. - A high level of understanding
Commended	11 10	- Largely accurate pitch and rhythms - Momentum mostly maintained	8	8 correct answers	18 17	- Largely secure responses - A good level of understanding
Pass	9 8	- Pitch and rhythm contours broadly found (perhaps with some assistance) - Momentum generally maintained despite hesitation	7 6	7 or 6 correct answers	16 14	- Generally secure responses. - A basic level of understanding
Below Pass	7 6	- Very approximate pitch and rhythm. - Insecure or erratic momentum. Lack of overall continuity.	5 4	5 or 4 correct answers	13 10	- Responses lacked overall security - Limited understanding
Well Below Pass	5 1	- No continuity. - Incomplete - Very uncertain	3 2 1	3, 2 or 1 correct answers	9 1	- Very insecure responses. - Understanding not demonstrated
	0	No work offered				