



Southwark and East Surrey Area

**Syllabus for
Dean's Award (Bronze)**

for singers of all ages

for all sessions between 2010 – 2014 inclusive

*Syllabus approved by the local area committee
Validated by the RSCM*

General Information on Awards

The scheme is designed to encourage singers to achieve a high standard of vocal technique and musicianship. It is intended that the Dean's and Bishop's awards are used in conjunction with the RSCM *Voice for Life* scheme. The *Voice for Life* scheme enables singers to develop their musical skills and understanding within 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, according to the standard achieved (The Dean's Award (Bronze) or the Bishop's Award (Silver) Award). The Dean's Award (Bronze) is worn with green ribbon, the Bishop's Award (Silver) with purple ribbon.

The awards are open to singers of all ages and denominations and the syllabus has been carefully compiled with this in mind.

Examinations

These will be held twice a year (usually in February and June). Successful candidates who so wish will be presented with their certificate and medal at an annual presentation service in Southwark Cathedral each September.

Enquiries/Entries

Entries or enquiries should be sent to the Area awards administrator:

Roger Brice,
12 Kings Avenue, Carshalton Beeches, Surrey, SM5 4NX,
Tel: 020 8643 3271 Email: rogerandlucy@blueyonder.co.uk

To check the forthcoming dates of examinations, please download a copy of this year's Awards Entry Form from the Area website www.rscmsouthwark.org.uk

Structure and distribution of marks

The structure of this award reflects that of the *Voice for Life* scheme. There are five sections, only four of which are examined. (Section D, which is not assessed during the examination, is satisfied by means of an appropriate testimonial to be submitted with the candidate's application.) The 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%. In order to pass, candidates should demonstrate consistency throughout the examination, though a pass mark in every section is not required. Successful candidates will be classified as follows:

85%+	Distinction
75%+	Merit
60%+	Pass

Other Information

Copies of *Voice for Life* books and all the music required may be readily purchased from RSCM Music Direct, tel 0845 021 7726, fax 0845 021 8826, musicdirect@rscm.com, 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

Examination conditions

1. There is no age limit on candidates for this award.
2. Candidates will be required to sing the melody or their own voice part with the exception of test 3 in Section A, the set anthem which is performed at the presentation service and therefore Soprano/Treble, Alto, Tenor or Bass should be sung.
3. Those candidates aged 15 and below **must** pass the Dean's Award (Bronze) before attempting the Bishop's Award (Silver). Those candidates aged 16 and above may opt for either award without preliminary qualifications.
4. The examination will take approximately 30 minutes, with the time allocated to each section in proportion to the marks available. The examiner will be RSCM-validated. Solely for the purposes of examiner training and moderation, a recording may be made which shall remain the property of the RSCM. The exam is usually taken in two separate sections, A-D being examined together and section E alone.
5. An accompanist is not required.
6. Candidates will be offered somewhere to warm up before the examination if requested.
7. Copies of all prepared pieces and any other relevant materials should be provided for the examiners' use. Please refer to the syllabus.
8. The use of illegal photocopies will automatically disqualify a candidate. Copies may be used in A1, A2 (a) and E1 and E2 (c) when referring to the Bible story, psalm and hymn. Candidates must not photo copy anthems or worship songs.
9. The fee for this award is detailed on the back page of this examination pack or on our area web site, and includes the ribbon, badge and certificate. Cheques should be payable to "RSCM Southwark and East Surrey" and sent with the entry form to arrive no later than the closing dates shown on the back page of this pack or on our area web site.
10. The RSCM reserves the right to refuse an examination entry without stating a reason. In such cases, the examination fee will be refunded in full.
11. In the event of non-attendance at an examination, through illness or emergency, an email or letter of explanation must be sent immediately to the organising officer. 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.
12. On signing the entry form, candidates (and their representatives and trainers) are deemed to be accepting the entry conditions, and the examiners' judgement.
13. The result of the examination will be sent to the candidate (or representative, as indicated) by post, usually within two weeks of the examination. Examiners will not divulge results at the time of the examination.
14. Any appeal, concerning either the conduct or the outcome of the examination, must be made in writing to RSCM Education, enclosing a copy of the mark sheet and setting out in detail the grounds on which the appeal is lodged, no later than seven days after receiving the result. The examiner is not to be contacted directly. After due consultation, and not later than one month after receipt of the appeal, a response will be issued by the Head of Education & Training, whose decision is final. If the appeal is successful, a re-examination, or alternatively a full refund of the entry fee, will be offered.
15. Candidates who are successful after session 1 will be offered the opportunity to receive their ribbon and medal prior to the annual presentation service. Candidates who are successful in session 2 may receive their badges in the presentation service held each September, or will be sent them by post soon afterwards. No certificates are awarded before the presentation service.

Southwark and East Surrey Dean's Award (Bronze)

Prerequisites

Candidates presented for this award should normally:

1. Have been regular members of an RSCM-affiliated choir or singing group for at least two years (transfer will be acceptable if clearly documented). If RSCM affiliation is not currently maintained, the candidate must instead be an RSCM individual member.
2. Have completed *Voice for Life* Dark Blue level.
3. Submit, with their application, a written testimonial from their trainer, counter-signed by the vicar or minister (or head teacher or school director of music), confirming their commitment to the choir or singing group and general musical competence. (This corresponds to section D mentioned above.) This testimonial must also give details of RSCM singing courses or training events in which the candidate has participated.

Candidates will have the opportunity to warm up at the beginning of the exam with a couple of scales.

SECTION A ~ Using the voice well

1. Hymn Singing

Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should sing three verses from a prepared hymn (of four line verses). The second verse should be sung unaccompanied. Candidates singing alto, tenor, or bass can choose to sing either the melody or their own voice part. A copy of this hymn is acceptable.

2. Psalm Singing

Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

Candidates should prepare and sing:

either (a) chanted psalmody (melody *or*, at their choice, their own voice part), to music of their own choice. This should be *either* eight consecutive verses and the Gloria to Anglican chant, *or* to a plainsong tone, *or* the whole of a responsorial psalm. Copies of the psalm and chant are acceptable.

or (b) the whole of one of the following Psalm Songs, chosen 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 awarded will take account of the accuracy of the performance, but equal weight will be given to interpretation and musicality.

3. Prepared item

Maximum 20 marks (12 to pass)

Candidates should sing with piano accompaniment the anthem set for the examination. Candidates singing alto, tenor, or bass should sing their **own voice part**. The anthem will be performed at the Award Service. Only the anthem for the listed year will be allowed for examination.

Throughout the above tests the examiner will be looking for:

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

Candidates must bring three copies of all music to be performed under section A.

SECTION B ~ Musical skills and understanding

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, a short melody (of about 10 notes), in a key of up to three sharps or flats, to a vowel or solfa (at the candidate's choice). The key chord and first note will be given. A second attempt will be allowed if necessary.

2. & 3. *Aural tests & Further question*

Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be expected 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 heard only once. The key chord and the tonic will be sounded, and the pulse indicated, before the excerpt begins.
- Identify the following intervals each heard not more than twice (both notes played simultaneously): major and minor 3rd, perfect 4th and 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 any item sung as a starting point, the examiner will ask questions to ascertain candidates' knowledge of:

- Time Signatures (Simple time only)
- Key Signatures (up to three sharps and three flats in the major keys only)
- Simple dynamics (*p*, *mp*, *mf*, *f*)
- Pauses, accents, repeats
- Basic tempo markings
- Simple rests
- Names of notes in the treble clef but not including any with a ledger line. (Tenors and Basses may elect the bass clef).
- Note values to include quavers, crotchets, minims, semibreves, dotted crotchets and dotted minims.

Note: Candidates are encouraged to use Italian terms in their answers wherever possible

SECTION C ~ Repertoire

Maximum 10 marks (6 to pass)

Candidates will be asked two questions on their understanding of their prepared item (A3). Answers may be expressed in language appropriate to their age or experience. The topics to be covered will be selected from:

- Text and music (origin, style, meaning of words, 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 would be:

"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."

"What can you tell me about the composer?"

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 no: F0100) provides helpful training material for this section of the examination.

Southwark and East Surrey Dean's Award (Bronze)

SECTION D ~ Belonging to the choir

There is no formal examination for this section and no marks are allocated. Nevertheless it remains a vital part of the Deans (Bronze) Award. On application, candidates must present a written testimonial from their choir trainer, signed by the vicar/minister/head teacher/ director of music, confirming their commitment to the choir or singing group.

SECTION E ~ Choir in context

1. Reading

Maximum 5 marks (3 to pass)

Candidates will be required to read aloud a prayer from any authorised worship book no fewer than 30 words of their choice, clearly and audibly as if reading in front of a congregation. The marking will particularly take into account projection and clarity of speech. A copy is acceptable.

(Candidates should bring two copies of their chosen prayer)

2. Liturgy & Ministry

Maximum 15 marks (9 to pass)

- a) Referring back to their prepared psalm, candidates will be asked to describe what kind of prayer it is (joyful, sorrowful, praise, thanksgiving etc.) and why.
- b) Candidates will be asked to describe the sung parts of a 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.
- c) 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 they consider helps explain the significance of the festival, and to say what makes it appropriate; and to name, and show knowledge of, a suitable anthem for the festival. Copies are acceptable to bring when referring to Bible stories, hymns and psalms in this section (see exam conditions, 8). **(Candidates should bring two copies of their chosen pieces)**
- d) Candidates will be asked questions on the Christian Faith and the Church. They should be able to: i) give examples of a parable and a miracle, ii) give a brief 'guided tour' of a church, naming and explaining four important features of the building that are likely to be found in any church, and explain what they are for, iii) show a knowledge of the Saint(s) to which their church is dedicated. This knowledge should include the date on which the Patronal Festival is held and a general background of the Saint's life. N.B. candidates whose church, school or organisation is not dedicated to a particular saint are expected to offer some knowledge on its dedication or offer some knowledge on a saint of their choice.
- e) 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.

Candidates are not expected to perform any examples in Section E, but they may refer to their copies of the chosen music. Their understanding of issues raised in this section may vary according to age and experience, and answers may be expressed in straightforward language. Examiners will keep in mind that this is a first award.

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES AND THEIR TRAINERS

SECTION A

The performance of each piece will be assessed on the following:

1. *Posture and presentation*

Good candidates will:

- Stand and hold their music well throughout the examination.

Poor candidates may:

- Bury their head in their music and sing into their copy.
- 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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

2. Musical understanding

Musical understanding will be assessed not only through the 'further questions' indicated 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.

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.

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.

Poor candidates may:

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

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.
- 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.

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

Application Form – 2010 ~ 2014 Examinations

(Please complete all except email address in BLOCK CAPITALS)

*delete as appropriate

CHOIR TRAINER/MUSIC LEADER/APPLICANT DETAILS

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Other* _____ Choir trainer/Music leader name: _____

Affiliated Organisation/Friend: _____
(the name as given here will appear on the certificate)

Home address: _____

_____ Post Code: _____

Telephone no.: _____ Email: _____

CANDIDATE DETAILS

Candidate's name: _____
(the name as given here will appear on the certificate)

(Candidate's preferred familiar name, if different from first name shown: _____)

Age group: Date of birth (if under 18) ____/____/____ 18-25 26-45 46 – 60 over 60

Voice Part: _____ Length of service in choir: _____

RSCM training days/courses attended (if applicable): _____

EXAMINATION DETAILS

The set anthem for each year is as follows:

2010 ~ Turn thy face from my sins – Attwood

2011 ~ A Gaelic Blessing - Rutter

2012 ~ Day by Day - How

2013 ~ From the rising of the sun - Ouseley

2014 ~ Ave Maria – Lindley

Music/Liturgy Choices

Section A

(1) Hymn chosen (First line and tune): _____
Hymn book: _____ Hymn number: _____

(2) *Either* a) Chanted Psalmody
Psalm chosen: number _____ Style of chant Anglican/Responsorial/Plainsong/*delete as appropriate

Or b) Psalm song from *Music for Common Worship I* : (please tick as appropriate)

O God, you search me and you know me (Farrell)

O Lord, be my help (Ogden)

Sing to God with joy and gladness (Bell)

Section E

Hymn, psalm or worship song chosen: _____

and Anthem chosen: _____

for use during the chosen season/festival: _____

Southwark and East Surrey Dean's Award (Bronze)

TESTIMONIAL ~ Section D

This should be completed by the choir/singing trainer on a separate sheet of paper, countersigned by the incumbent, school chaplain or head teacher and attached to this form. It should confirm the necessary prerequisites, or alternative experience for the Dean's Award (Bronze) as stated in the current RSCM Southwark and East Surrey Area Syllabus.
N.B. Please note that 'blanket' testimonials submitted for multiple entries will **not** be accepted. Testimonials should relate specifically to the skills, hobbies and attributes of each candidate.

PARENTAL CONSENT

For candidates aged under 18 a signed parental consent form must also be completed and submitted with the application form.

FEES

The current examination fees can be found on the back page of this examination pack or on our area website. Alternatively, please contact the Awards Secretary (details can be found on pg2 of this syllabus).
Please make cheques payable to *RSCM Southwark and East Surrey*. There is no part refund for unsuccessful candidates.

EXAMINATION DATES

Examinations are held twice a year, usually in February and June. Further details of examination dates and closing dates for applications can be found on the back page of this examination pack or on our area website.

There is one presentation service each year usually held in September. Successful candidates from both examination sessions will be invited to receive their awards at this service. The opportunity will be offered for successful candidates from session 1 to receive their badge in the meantime and details of this will be included in the results letter. All certificates are presented in Southwark Cathedral at the presentation service.

I wish to enrol this candidate for the following examination session:

February 20___ June 20___ (please complete as appropriate)

Please state here any time constraints on your examination dates (e.g. "afternoon only please")

We will endeavour to meet any time constraints stated however this may not always be possible. Once you have received confirmation of your examination date and time, these details cannot be changed and fees are non-refundable.

DECLARATION BY CHOIR LEADER/MUSIC TEACHER

"I hereby agree to the conditions of entry as laid down in the current RSCM Southwark and East Surrey Area syllabus"

Parents/guardians are reminded that this examination will take place in a room with only the candidate and the examiner/s present. There will be another adult supervisor present outside the room, and this person, as well as the examiner, will have fulfilled all RSCM child protection clearance procedures.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Please send this completed application form, with cheque, testimonial and parental consent (if applicable) to:

**The Awards Secretary
Roger Brice,
12 Kings Avenue,
Carshalton Beeches,
Surrey,
SM5 4NX**

Confirmation of receipt of entry will be sent to the choir leader/music teacher by email. If an email address is not shown, but confirmation is required, an s.a.e. must be enclosed.

Please note that incomplete or late applications will not be accepted

Southwark and East Surrey Dean's Award (Bronze)

To be completed and signed by parent/guardian of choristers under 18 and returned with application form.

Singing Award: Dean's Award (Bronze)

Location:

Examination Session:

(month and year)

Full name of young person under 18:

Age on day of examination:

Emergency contact on day of examination:

Name of Parent/Guardian (in BLOCK capitals): (if different from above)

Tel:

Address:

[include email and mobile contacts]

Any special medical conditions or aspects which require our attention (e.g. Dyslexia):

Any other comments:

Parents are reminded that this examination will take place in a room with only the candidate and the examiner/s present. There will be another adult supervisor present outside the room, and this person, as well as the examiner/s, will have fulfilled RSCM Child Protection clearance.

Successful candidates' names are published in the RSCM magazine, Church Music Quarterly and additionally on the area website. A group photograph of all successful candidates may also appear.

“I give my consent for my child to attend this examination in accordance with the arrangements that have been explained to me”.

Signed:

Date:

“I am happy for my child's name and a group photograph of successful award candidates to be published in Church Music Quarterly and also on the area website: YES/NO*"

(*please delete as applicable)

N.B. No young person will be individually identified unless specific permission is given, and any images will be stored and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act.