



The National Association of Pastoral Musicians
Director of Music Ministry Division

Certification

Choral
Conducting
Component

EXAMINATION PREPARATION

This self-study prepares the candidate for the Choral Exam. During the exam, the candidate is expected to demonstrate the following to the choir and adjudicators:

1. **Score Study and Preparation Skills**

Rate yourself on score study and preparation skills according to the following scale:

(1) *Great attention*; (2) *Little attention*; (3) *No attention*; (4) *Not applicable*

- _____ Harmonic and melodic structure
- _____ Phrase structure & breathing
- _____ Key & Meter changes
- _____ Problem spots
- _____ Accidentals & cross relationships
- _____ Unity of motives & an understanding of overall form & analysis
- _____ Relationship between text, music, dynamics & expressive possibilities
- _____ Understanding of historical style & context
- _____ Knowledge of the composer & author

2. **Group Vocal Technique**

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1=excellent; 2=good; 3=mediocre; 4=poor; 5=very poor), rate your ability to demonstrate and articulate these fundamental group vocal techniques:

- _____ Warm-up exercises stressing healthy vocal production
- _____ Exercises for proper breath management
- _____ Development of a tonal vocabulary
- _____ An understanding of voice production, especially respiration

- _____ An understanding of children's voices
- _____ Relaxation techniques
- _____ Posture & Breathing
- _____ Phonation & exercising range extension
- _____ Interpretive vocal skills: accents, legato, dynamics
- _____ Balance & Blend
- _____ Vowel placement & vowel modification
- _____ Articulation (diction)

3. **Conducting Skills**

Video tape yourself conducting during a rehearsal, Sunday service or concert. Review the video tape and rate your conducting skills using the following scale:

(1) *Very clear*; (2) *Somewhat clear*; (3) *Unclear*; (4) *Confusing*; (5) *Non-existent*

- _____ Preparatory beat
- _____ Down beat
- _____ Meter & pulse - patterns
- _____ Intended musical interpretation
- _____ Intended phrasing (breathing)
- _____ Intended dynamics
- _____ Cue to accompanist
- _____ Entrance cue to choristers
- _____ Clear cut-offs (interior phrases)
- _____ Clear cut-offs (completed sections)
- _____ Overall body language shows intent
- _____ Facial expressions help achieve desired results
- _____ Gestures are a visual representation of desired results

4. **Pastoral, Interpersonal and Group Skills**

Video tape yourself conducting during a rehearsal. Review the video tape and rate your pastoral skills using the following scale: (1) *Positive*; (2) *Somewhat positive*; (3) *Somewhat negative*; (4) *Negative*; (5) *To be improved*

- _____ Speaks kindly but directly to the choir and individual members
- _____ Deals with the technical problems constructively and positively
- _____ Is sensitive to choir members needs as a whole and as individuals
- _____ Solicits constructive comments from choir members
- _____ Encourages choir members to own the process
- _____ Creates a positive pastoral environment
- _____ Encourages a positive group experience during rehearsal
- _____ Is organized in advance
- _____ Is very clear when giving directions

CHORAL CONDUCTING REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION **INSTRUCTIONS**

The purpose of the Choral Conducting Rehearsal/Performance Exam is to assess the candidates ability to:

- a. Teach in a definitive way healthy singing habits and group vocal technique;
- b. Organize and direct an effective, positive choral rehearsal;
- c. Communicate clearly in the rehearsal process through gesture and instruction the desired musical interpretation;
- d. Demonstrate a practical knowledge and correct performance practice of music from different stylistic periods;
- e. Work in a pastoral way with the members of the choir to create an atmosphere of learning and a positive group experience.

This exam takes approximately 2.5 hours, has five parts, and is to be recorded on videotape by the candidate at his/her home parish with the choir he/she conducts regularly. The videotape must record in a clear way the visual and audio work of the candidate. Three adjudicators, one of whom may be the candidate's mentor, must be present for the exam while it is being taped. The candidate accepts responsibility for all necessary costs of producing a quality videotape of the exam. The Certification Committee will assist the candidate in contacting qualified adjudicators. Following the exam, the examiner's written comments along with the videotape are mailed to the members of the DMMD Certification Committee for review and assignment of a final grade. The final Pass/Fail grade is based on the process of preparation and knowledge of performance styles. The Committee may possibly pass the candidate with recommendations for improvement in specific areas.

The following sequence is to be followed for the exam:

1. Score Preparation

The candidate must present scores of all the music chosen for the exam to the examiners prior to beginning the exam. The examiners will review the scores during the exam and look for markings indicating self-study, understanding of stylistic performance practice and the candidate's intended interpretation.

2. Warm-up Exercises (5-7 minutes)

Demonstrate a variety of vocal & choral warm-ups sung *a cappella* and with keyboard accompaniment. These exercises should in some way relate to the music to be rehearsed and performed in the exam and demonstrate a working knowledge of group vocal techniques and healthy singing habits.

3. Repertoire Rehearsal (1 hour)

The candidate is to demonstrate rehearsal and conducting proficiencies in five compositions of contrasting styles and periods. The candidate is to choose in advance one composition from each of the following categories and prepare the score for each. The candidate is encouraged to choose works with which he/she is unfamiliar but nonetheless may be suitable to the ability of and usable with their parish choir. Each composition is to be rehearsed only ONCE with choir prior to the exam. By so doing, the candidate's ability to teach will be more honestly observed. The adjudicators may stop the candidate at

any time during the exam or make specific requests for specific works or portions of works as chosen by the candidate.

A. Chant Style (*choose one*)

Plainchant	<i>Kyrie from Mass XI (Orbis Factor)</i>
Arr.Proulx	<i>Te Deum: You Are God, We Praise You</i>
Plainchant	<i>Victimae paschali laudes (Easter Sequence)</i>
Plainchant	<i>Veni creator Spritus (Pentecost Sequence)</i>

B. Renaissance Period (*choose one*)

Farrant	<i>Lord, for Thy Tender Mercies' Sake</i>	(SATB, Easy)
Gibbons	<i>Hosanna to the Son of David</i>	(SSAATBB, Dif.)
Palestrina	<i>Sicut cervus desiderat</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Tallis	<i>If Ye Love Me</i>	(SATB, Easy)
Vittoria	<i>O magnum mysterium</i>	(SATB, Dif.)

C. Baroque Period (*choose one*)

Bach	<i>Alleluia! O Praise the Lord Most Holy</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Bach	<i>Sicut locutus est from Magnificat</i>	(SSATB, Dif.)
Handel	<i>A Chorus from Messiah</i>	(SATB, Med-Dif.)
Handel	<i>Rejoice and Praise the Lord</i>	(SAB, Easy)
Handel	<i>Then Will I Jehovah's Praise</i>	(Unison, Easy)

D. Romantic Period (*choose one*)

Bruckner	<i>Christus factus est</i>	(SSATB, Dif.)
Faure	<i>A movement from Requiem</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Grieg	<i>Ave maris stella</i>	(SATB+, Med.)
Mendelssohn	<i>See What Love</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Standford	<i>Beati quonum via</i>	(SSATB, Med.)
Vaughn Williams	<i>O Taste and See</i>	(SATB, Easy)

E. Contemporary Period (*choose one*)

Britten	<i>Jubilate Deo (in English)</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Clausen	<i>Set Me As a Seal</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Durufle	<i>Ubi caritas et amor</i>	(SATB+, Med.)
Friedell	<i>Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether</i>	(SATB, Med.)
Harper	<i>Psalm 150</i>	(2-Pt, Easy)
Johnson	<i>Saw Ye My Savior?</i>	(SATB, Fl., Easy)
Arr. Martin	<i>When I Survey the Wondrous Cross</i>	(SATB+, Med.)
Nestor	<i>Puer natus in Bethlehem</i>	(SATB+, Dif.)
Part	<i>The Beatitudes</i>	(SATB+, Dif.)
Pinkham	<i>Gloria from Christmas Cantata</i>	(SATB+, Dif.)
Rutter	<i>O Clap Your Hands</i>	(SATB+, Dif.)
Thomas	<i>Keep Your Lamps</i>	(SATB, Drums, Easy)

4. Music for Cantor, Choir and Assembly (20 minutes)

The candidate is to prepare all of the following works; the examiners will select two during the exam. The candidate is to demonstrate an ability to conduct the following, showing creativity in utilizing the choir, assembly and cantor within a single composition.

Brubaker	<i>O Blessed Savior</i> (WLP)
Chepponis	<i>Magnificat</i> (GIA)
Hillert	<i>We Rely</i> (GIA)
Jones	<i>Glory to God</i> (OCP)
Rosania	<i>Ubi caritas</i> (OCP)

5. Psalmody (20 minutes)

The candidate is to demonstrate a knowledge of Psalmody by preparing all of the following works; the examiners will select two or three during the exam.

Gregorian Psalm Tone	<i>Canticle of Simeon</i> (<u>Ritual Song</u> , No. 212)
Gelineau	<i>Psalm 90</i> (<u>Ritual Song</u> , Choir Edition, No. 120)
Guimont	<i>Psalm 30</i> (<u>Ritual Song</u> , Choir Edition, No. 59)
Haugen/Hass	<i>Psalm 104: Lord, Send Out Your Spirit</i> (GIA)
Russian Chant	<i>Psalm 141</i> (<u>Ritual Song</u> , No. 15)
Walker	<i>Psalm 118: This Day Was Made by the Lord</i> (OCP)

6. Break (15 minutes)

During the break, the choristers may complete a copy of the attached comment form for the candidate's use.

7. Concluding Performance (20 minutes)

Based on the results of the rehearsal, the candidate is to choose the following for a final, non-stop performance on the videotape in the following order:

- One Composition from Part 4
- One Choral Compositions from Part 3
- One Composition from Part 5
- Two Choral Compositions from Part 3

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DMMD Certification – Choral Conducting

CHOIR COMMENTS

By giving you this form, the conducting candidate desires your comments concerning your experience today. Your constructive comments will help the candidate continue the process of education in the months and years ahead. Thank you!

- I. In the space below, please list or discuss the positive aspects of today's rehearsal and performance, such as organization, clarity of direction, experienced feelings, musical interpretation, etc.

- II. On the back of this sheet, please list or discuss negative things you experienced during today's rehearsal and offer constructive suggestions for improvement.