

Module F1: Choral director (15 credits)

The focus of this module is on practical work directly related to the duties of a musician active in worship. You should be able to draw on your other studies for the diploma as a means of enriching and developing your understanding of, and approach to, the practice of music in liturgy and worship. Much of your preparation for this module is likely to be related to your regular work as a choir trainer.

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module you will be able: (a) to show evidence of a broad familiarity with the liturgical choral repertory; (b) to show competence in voice training and in rehearsing and directing a contrasting group of liturgical choral compositions (chosen by yourself and by the examiners); and (c) to demonstrate competence in liturgical planning appropriate to your work as a choral director.

Study

Although there are books on choral conducting and direction you will gain most by observing experienced choral directors (both in sacred and secular choirs) and by being observed. Where you have difficulty in finding a suitable observer, much can be learnt by watching and evaluating videos of your own rehearsals and performances. It is expected that you will be working towards this module during both years of study for the diploma.

Assessment

Assessment is based on a practical session and a discussion with the examiners. This session will take place in your own church or chapel with your own choir or choral group. Two examiners will attend the session on an agreed date. Exceptionally, where this is impossible to arrange, you may be asked to submit a VHS video recording.

1. Rehearsing and performing repertory identified by you and approved in advance by the Academic Board (see below). This will consist of a rehearsal of two contrasting pieces of liturgical music (30 minutes), and the performance of one of them (2 to 3 minutes in performance).
2. Rehearsing and performing two pieces of liturgical music chosen by the examiners (30 minutes). The candidate will be provided with the music in

advance but must not rehearse the pieces before the session. Choir copies will be provided by the examiners on the day.

3. A discussion with the examiners. This will address issues of planning for the liturgy, repertory, techniques and strategy for choral and vocal training, and matters arising from the practical sessions. The discussions of planning and repertory will be based on the material specified by you in advance.

When the examiners allocate grades and marks, equal weight will be given to each of the three elements of the assessment.

Arrangements for the assessment

You should submit a proposal for the content of the practical session to the Course Secretary before the session takes place. This should include scores of the music to be rehearsed and performed.

If there is no difficulty with your proposal, approval will be granted by the time the study period begins. If there are reservations the matter will be resolved as quickly as possible. The Course Secretary will forward single copies of the items to be rehearsed and directed by you (Section 2, above) when communicating approval.

One month before the end of the study period (i.e. 31 May or 31 December) you must submit a plan for music for three events: a regular service in your own church, a service for a major festival or special occasion in your own church, and a para-liturgical service or sacred concert with a capable amateur choir (SATB). You should list the music, include a single copy of each item selected (if requested), and provide a brief explanation for your choices (200-400 words for each event).