



# AGO PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR 2026

## EXAMINATION DATES

**Service Playing Examination:** Oct. 1, 2025, through Mar. 31, 2026 (application opens July 1, 2025, and is due between Sept. 1, 2025, and Feb. 1, 2026)

**Colleague Examination:** Friday, Nov. 14, 2025 (application opens July 1, 2025, and is due Oct. 15, 2025); Friday, May 15, 2026 (application opens Jan. 1, 2026, and is due Mar. 1, 2026)

**Choir Master Examination:** Wednesday, June 3, 2026 (application opens Jan. 1, 2026, and is due Apr. 1, 2026)

**Associateship Examination:** Thursday, June 4, and Friday, June 5, 2026 (application opens Jan. 1, 2026, and is due Apr. 1, 2026)

**Fellowship Examination:** Thursday, June 4, and Friday, June 5, 2026 (application opens Jan. 1, 2026, and is due Apr. 1, 2026)

## ELIGIBILITY

In compliance with the status of the AGO as a not-for-profit educational organization, examinations are open to AGO members and nonmembers. Nonmembers will pay a surcharge. The Service Playing, Colleague, Associateship, and Choir Master examinations may be taken in any order. The Associateship certificate, however, must be acquired at least one year before the Fellowship examination is taken. Holders of the ARCO or ARCCO certificates are considered eligible to take the FAGO examination, provided that applicants send a copy of the ARCO or ARCCO certificate with the completed application form.

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All exam applications may be submitted using the appropriate online application form, found at [agohq.org/certification](http://agohq.org/certification). To request a paper copy, please send an email to the exams administrator at [exams@agohq.org](mailto:exams@agohq.org).

### Service Playing Examination

Tests may be taken at any chapter where a suitable organ and recording equipment are available, since the exams are recorded and the recordings are sent to AGO Headquarters for evaluation.

### Colleague Examination

Both sections of this exam (practical and written) may be taken on the same date, or each section may be taken singly. Exams may be taken at any chapter where a suitable organ (not normally played by the candidate) is available and recording is feasible, since the exams are recorded and the recordings are sent to AGO Headquarters for evaluation.

### Choir Master, Associateship, and Fellowship Examinations

Both sections of these exams (practical and written) may be taken in the same year, or each section may be taken singly. If only the paperwork section is to be taken, the exam may take place at any chapter, since the papers are sent to AGO Headquarters for evaluation. If the practical section, or both sections, will be taken, the exam must take place at one of the designated regional exam centers, since two examiners must be present for the practical section. Candidates may choose the most convenient examination center. A list of these examination centers is available in the January edition of TAO each year.

### AGO/NPM Joint Certification

Candidates who are members in good standing of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians may obtain Service Playing certification in both organizations by earning a passing grade on the exam. In applying to AGO Headquarters for the exam, candidates must indicate their desire for joint certification. Certain options in the exam, indicated in the list of requirements, must be chosen. NPM joint certification candidates should be fully aware of all NPM certification requirements. Each exam will be graded by at least one examiner who is a member of NPM.

## EXAMINATION FEES

**Service Playing:** full exam, \$250. Student rate full exam, \$150.

**Colleague:** full exam, \$350; section 1, \$200; section 2, \$100; single part, \$100. Student rate full exam, \$250; section 1, \$150; section 2, \$100; single part, \$100.

**Associateship:** full exam, \$475; section 1 or 2, \$300; single part, \$150. Student rate full exam, \$375; section 1 or 2, \$250; single part, \$125.

**Fellowship:** full exam, \$475; section 1 or 2, \$300; single part, \$150.

Student rate full exam, \$375; section 1 or 2, \$250; single part, \$125.

**Choir Master:** full exam, \$500; section 1, \$300; section 2, \$150.

Student rate full exam, \$400; section 1, \$275; section 2, \$125.

Surcharge for nonmembers of the AGO is \$115. To qualify for the student rate, candidates must be age 30 or under and have a valid student ID.

All candidates will initially take Colleague, Associateship, and Fellowship exams either in full—both section 1 (practical) and section 2 (written)—or one entire section at a time: practical, consisting of repertoire and keyboard skills (section 1), or written, consisting of aural and written questions (section 2).

## REFUNDS

AGO exams may no longer be postponed to the following date. If the exam is not taken as scheduled, an application must be made again, and new fees paid. Requests for cancellation of any exam must be received by AGO Headquarters one full month before the exam date for a refund to be issued. In the case of all exams, there is a nonrefundable portion (\$40) of the fee.

## CERTIFICATES

Colleague, Associateship, Fellowship, and Choir Master certificates will be issued to those who obtain at least 50 percent of the points for each item and 70 percent of the total maximum marks in each section (i.e., practical and written). The Service Playing Certificate will be issued to those who pass each item and the entire exam with the same minimum scores.

## GRADING POLICY

The evaluation process for AGO certification is rigorous and involves two evaluators to ensure fairness and objectivity. All examiner results are final, as exams are graded under the supervision of the Committee on Professional Certification.

## REPEATED ATTEMPTS

Any sections of the Colleague, Associateship, Fellowship, or Choir Master examinations may be taken on any designated exam date. The fee for taking any section(s) of an examination remains the same, regardless of whether it is a first attempt or a retake. Credit will be given for sections previously passed within the last five years. Any sections that received a passing grade before Dec. 31, 2020, are no longer valid and must be retaken.

## PREPARATION

Materials from AGO headquarters are available online at [agohq.org/certification](http://agohq.org/certification) to assist candidates who are preparing for Guild examinations. These include exam and solution booklets from the last several years; the current editions of the *Colleague Study Guide* and the *Service Playing Study Guide*; *Psalm Preparation Resource*; ear-training exercises for AAGO, ChM, and FAGO exams; and helpful articles from TAO. For practice purposes, it is highly recommended that candidates for Choir Master, Associateship, or Fellowship certificates work out a full set of a prior year's paperwork tests, within the time limits specified, sometime before the actual exams are given. For those taking the Colleague or Service Playing exam, the respective study guides offer comprehensive approaches to preparation. The table of contents for the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet* is available online as a PDF. Previous editions are no longer valid. The updated Manual of Procedure is also available online.

## REPERTOIRE

The Committee on Professional Certification has listed the acceptable editions for the repertoire on the exams. No other editions may be used. When various editions are acceptable for a given piece, candidates must choose one from which to play. IMSLP editions are only permitted when explicitly listed by edition and IMSLP number. Candidates should verify the number on IMSLP prior to downloading to ensure that they have the proper score.

## EXAMINATION WORKSHEETS

Paper will be supplied for paperwork sections. For the Colleague, Associateship, Fellowship, and Choir Master exams, no papers or books may be brought into the examination room. All candidates' answer sheets are retained at AGO Headquarters.

## RECORDING POLICY

To maintain the integrity and security of the examination process, candidates are strictly prohibited from recording any portion of the exam, including their own performance, using any device. This includes but is not limited to cameras, mobile phones, audio recorders, and smartwatches. Any violation of this policy may result in disqualification.

## DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS

The AGO aims to make the certification examinations inclusive of all qualified organists and conductors, regardless of disabilities. To that end, the AGO invites candidates with disabilities to submit requests for reasonable accommodations using its standard Request for Reasonable Accommodations form, which is available on request from the exam administrator at exams@agohq.org. All requests will be handled in strict confidence. Please submit your completed form to the exam administrator at exams@agohq.org at least 60 days before your scheduled exam.

## SERVICE PLAYING REQUIREMENTS

The Service Playing examination will be recorded at a site with a suitable organ and recording equipment and then sent to AGO Headquarters for evaluation by two national examiners. **The recording must be continuous, completely unedited, and provided as a single track.** A proctor will be appointed and will be the only person in the room with the candidate when the test is given (other than the singer). The candidate may engage any singer, including one with whom they perform regularly. Neither the candidate nor the examination proctor may serve as the singer. The singer will be escorted in for S3 and will remain in the exam area until completing S6. The identity of the singer will not be revealed on the recording to examiners in order to preserve the candidate's anonymity.

The repertoire pieces are played separately: at the beginning (S1), middle (S7), and conclusion (S10). Candidates will perform one work each from lists A, B, and C.

### LIST A

**J.S. Bach:** Any of the following chorale preludes from the *Orgelbüchlein*: Ich ruf zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ, BWV 639; Komm, Gott Schöpfer, heiliger Geist, BWV 631; Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 599; Jesu, meine Freude, BWV 610; Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten, BWV 642; Das alte Jahr vergangen ist, BWV 614 (any edition)

**J.S. Bach:** Any of the following fugues from the *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues* (attributed to the Bach Circle): D Minor, BWV 554; G Major, BWV 557; B-flat Major, BWV 560; or the Fugue in E Minor ("Cathedral"), BWV 533 (any edition)

**Dieterich Buxtehude:** Any of the following chorale preludes: Christ unser Herr zum Jordan kam, BuxWV 180; Herzlich tut mich verlangen, BuxWV 178; Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BuxWV 211 (any edition)

### LIST B

**Samuel Coleridge-Taylor:** Melody from *Three Short Pieces* (Novello: IMSLP #385111)

\***Jeanne Demessieux:** Either Hosanna filio David or Rorate caeli from *Twelve Chorale Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes* (Alfred 00-0603)

\***Marcel Dupré:** Te lucis ante terminum from *Le Tombeau de Titelouze* (Alphonse Leduc)

**Felix Mendelssohn:** Any of the following movements: Prelude in G Major, Op. 37 (prelude only); Sonata No. 3, mvmt. 2; Sonata No. 4, mvmt. 2; Sonata No. 6, Finale (Edition Peters EP1744; also: IMSLP #04743, #58280)

**Louis Vierne:** Berceuse or Lied from *24 Pièces en style libre*, Livre II (Durand & Cie.: IMSLP #04038)

### LIST C

**Kenneth Leighton:** Rockingham from *A Leighton Organ Album* (Oxford University Press)

**Paul Manz:** Liebster Jesu from *God of Grace: A Compilation* (Canticle Distributing/MorningStar MSM-10-599)

**Craig Phillips:** Prelude on Engelberg from *Glad Praises We Sing* (Selah Publishing 160-814)

**Robert Powell:** There Is No Rose from *A Medieval Carol Celebration* (Wayne Leupold Editions)

**Florence Price:** Adoration (ClarNan Editions CN24)

**Margaret Sandresky:** IV. Cantabile from *Six Variations on a Ground Bass in Organ Music Vol. VI* (Wayne Leupold Editions)

\*Candidates seeking NPM certification should choose either the Demessieux or Dupré piece as their list B selection.

**S1: Prelude repertoire** (20 points). The candidate will prepare and perform one work from either list A, B, or C.

**S2: Opening hymn with two transpositions** (20 points). The candidate will select and use *one hymn* from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. They will transpose the hymn into two keys, playing one stanza in each key, as indicated in the table of contents of the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. The transposed versions are not to be written out in advance, and the hymn is not to be played in the original key at any point during the exam. The use of pedals is optional. No introduction is to be played, and the candidate must transpose the hymn as printed in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*.

**S3: Psalm playing** (20 points). The candidate will select one of the seven psalm accompaniments in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet* and will play refrains (if printed) and four verses of the psalm as though it were being sung in a service of worship. A singer is required for the performance of this work. For NPM certification candidates, the required psalm selection is either Psalm 23 (Gelineau) or Psalm 22/23 by Mary Francis Reza (Oregon Catholic Press 93688). (Psalm 22/23 by Mary Francis Reza may be sung in either English or Spanish, but not both or alternating.)

**S4: Anthem accompaniment** (20 points). Choice of one anthem from the following anthem list. The candidate will play the accompaniment as though accompanying a competent choir.

**Moonyeen Albrecht:** O Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem (available on the AGO website as a PDF, courtesy of St. James Music Press)

**Martin How:** Day by Day (GIA G-4178)

**William Bradley Roberts:** For the Bread Which Thou Hast Broken (available on the AGO website as a PDF, courtesy of St. James Music Press)

**Richard Shephard:** Tomorrow Shall Be My Dancing Day (available on the AGO website as a PDF, courtesy of St. James Music Press)

[Note to candidates using this selection: play choral parts in passages with no accompaniment marked *acc. ad lib.*]

**Charles Villiers Stanford:** O for a Closer Walk with God (GIA G-4181)

**S5: Middle hymn, no required transposition** (20 points). The candidate will select and use one hymn from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*, different from the hymn chosen for S2. They will play an introduction followed by three stanzas as though leading a large, enthusiastic congregation. The first stanza should use the harmonization given in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. The use of pedals for at least one stanza is mandatory. Some contrast in the presentation of the three stanzas is expected, as is sensitivity to the text. The introduction and any alternate harmonization may be original, selected from published repertoire, or improvised. NPM candidates are required to play "Draw Near" by Steven Janco (Oregon Catholic Press 30134643) or "Alabaré," as found in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*.

**S6: Accompaniment of a vocal solo** (20 points). **Hal Hopson:** The Gift of Love, medium low solo (Hope Publishing Company #371). A singer is required for the performance of this work.

**S7: Offertory repertoire** (20 points). The candidate will prepare and perform one work from either list A, B, or C—whichever was not chosen for S1.

**S8: Sight-reading** (20 points). The candidate will sight-read a short passage of music with minimal pedal. The candidate's score will be based on their ability to maintain the indicated tempo with accuracy of notes and rhythm.

**S9: Closing hymn, no required transposition** (20 points). The candidate will select and use one hymn from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*, different from the two hymns chosen for S2 and S5. They will play an introduction followed by three stanzas as though leading a large, enthusiastic congregation. The first stanza should use the harmonization given in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. The use of pedals for at least one stanza is mandatory. Some contrast in the presentation of the three stanzas is expected, as is sensitivity to the text. The introduction and any alternate harmonization may be original, selected from published repertoire, or improvised.

**S10: Postlude repertoire** (20 points). The candidate will prepare and perform one work from either list A, B, or C—whichever was not chosen for S1 or S7.

## COLLEAGUE REQUIREMENTS

The Colleague examination will be recorded at a site with a suitable organ (not normally played by the candidate) and recording equipment and then sent to AGO Headquarters for evaluation by two national examiners. **The recording must be continuous, completely unedited, and provided as a single track.** A proctor will be appointed and will be the only person in the room with the candidate when the test is given. No singer is required for this exam.

### SECTION 1: PRACTICAL

#### PART 1: ORGAN REPERTOIRE

**C1: Organ pieces** (60 points; 20 points possible per piece). Candidates will prepare one work each from lists A, B, and C. They may play the following repertoire in any order. (For the works by J.S. Bach in list A, any edition is acceptable.)

##### LIST A

**J.S. Bach:** In dulci jubilo, BWV 729

**J.S. Bach:** Mvmt. 3 from Concerto in G Major after Ernst, BWV 592

**J.S. Bach:** Prelude and Fugue in C Major, BWV 545

**Dieterich Buxtehude:** Chaconne in E Minor, BuxWV 160 (Breitkopf, ed. Klaus Beckmann, EB 6662)

##### LIST B

**Léon Boëllmann:** Menuet gothique from *Suite gothique*, Op. 25 (Les Éditions Outre-remontaises: IMSLP #125904)

**Johannes Brahms:** O Welt, ich muss dich lassen, Op. 122, No. 3 (G. Henle Verlag)

**Gabriel Fauré:** Pavane, trans. Julian Elloway, from *The Oxford Book of Funeral and Memorial Music for Organ* (Oxford University Press)

**César Franck:** Fugue from Prelude, Fugue, and Variation (Durand & Cie.: IMSLP #490386)

##### LIST C

**Dan Locklair:** IV. The Peace May Be Exchanged from *Rubrics: A Liturgical Suite for Organ* (E.C. Kerby)

**William Mathias:** Processional from *A Mathias Organ Album* (Oxford University Press)

**Flor Peeters:** Festival Voluntary from *The Oxford Book of Ceremonial Organ Music* (Oxford University Press)

**Rebecca Groom te Velde:** Contemplation on "On Eagle's Wings" from *The Oxford Book of Funeral and Memorial Music for Organ* (Oxford University Press)

**C2: Accompaniment of a choral work** (20 points). **Martin Shaw:** With a Voice of Singing (Schirmer: IMSLP #392543)

**C3: Accompaniment of a vocal solo** (20 points). **Calvin Hampton:** The Magnificat from *Christmas Oratorio* (Wayne Leupold WL700028)

**Note: C2 and C3 must be played on the organ.**

**C4: Hymns** (20 points; 10 points possible per hymn). The candidate will select two hymns from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. They will play an introduction followed by three stanzas as though leading a large, enthusiastic congregation. The first stanza should use the harmonization given in the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. The use of pedals for at least one stanza is mandatory. Some contrast in the presentation of the three stanzas is expected, as is sensitivity to the text. The introduction and any alternate harmonization may be original, selected from published repertoire, or improvised.

#### PART 2: KEYBOARD SKILLS

**C5: Sight-reading** (20 points). Play a passage of organ music in trio texture and on three staves, at sight and at the indicated tempo. The use of pedals is required.

**C6: Harmonization** (20 points). Do *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- Harmonize a simple hymn tune.
- Harmonize a plainsong melody.
- Accompany a "folk style" hymn tune in an appropriate manner.

**C7: Transposition** (20 points). Transpose a passage of homophonic music in four parts up to eight measures in length. Interval of transposition no more than a major 2nd in either direction (i.e., up or down). The candidate should keep a consistent, moderate pace. The use of pedals is optional.

**C8: Improvisation** (20 points). Do *a*, *b*, or *c*.

- Improvise a passage of music (of approximately eight measures) consisting of two (approximately four-measure) phrases, each involving a modulation and a clearly defined cadence.
- Improvise a passage of music (of approximately 16 measures) consisting of two (approximately eight-measure) phrases based on a given melodic motif, each involving a modulation and a clearly defined cadence.

- In a passage of approximately 30 seconds' length, provide a bridge or modulatory passage between two hymns (in different keys) from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*. The hymns will be specified on the examination sheet.

A room with a piano will be provided for candidates for a 30-minute preparation session for questions C6, C7, and C8. Section 1 of the exam need not proceed as listed here. Candidates may choose to begin their exam with organ repertoire or keyboard skills.

### SECTION 2: WRITTEN (2 hours allowed)

**C9: Ear test** (20 points). Write down from dictation the missing tones in a provided two-part passage in hymn-tune texture. The score will include the time signature, number of measures, and key signature. The tonic chord will be played, followed by one measure of metronome. Each test will be played four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**C10: Aural perception** (20 points). A skeleton score of a passage of organ music will be provided for the candidate to answer questions regarding compositional devices, cadence types, harmonies, and other technical and stylistic characteristics. The score notates the rhythm of the highest sounding part. The key at the beginning of each test will be announced, and each test will be played four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**C11: Fugal exposition analysis** (20 points). Provide answers to questions about a music score utilizing fugal techniques. The candidate will be expected to identify the key, order of voice entries, character of the answer (tonal or real), countersubject qualities (invertible, regular, etc.), and other techniques of counterpoint found in a fugal exposition.

**C12: Continuo realization** (20 points). Write primarily three-voice right-hand chords on an empty staff above a bass line with figures following common practice voice-leading.

**C13: Analysis** (20 points). Analyze a short piece in binary or ternary form by answering questions about phrase structure, cadences, and specific chords in selected measures, and by identifying A and B themes. Provide possible composer and time period.

## ASSOCIATESHIP REQUIREMENTS

### SECTION 1: PRACTICAL

#### PART 1: ORGAN REPERTOIRE

**A1: Repertoire** (80 points; 20 points possible per piece). Candidates will prepare one piece from each of the following four lists. One (and only one) of the selections will be a slow movement, marked with an asterisk \* in the lists below. Candidates may play the repertoire in any order.

##### LIST A

**Dieterich Buxtehude:** Ich ruf zu dir, BuxWV 196 (Bärenreiter BA08404, Wilhelm Hansen HL.14005565, or IMSLP #483823)

\***François Couperin:** Tierce en taille from *Mass for the Parishes* (Alfred/Kalmus AP.K.03314 or IMSLP #319278)

**Pierre Dandrieu:** Variations on O filii et filiae (Les Éditions Outre-remontaises: IMSLP #299607)

**Louis-Claude Daquin:** Noël X from *12 Noëls* (Alfred/Kalmus AP.K.03368 or Durand & Cie.: IMSLP #334008, ed. A. Guilman and A. Pirro)

\***Girolamo Frescobaldi:** Toccata per L'Elevazione from *Messa d'ella Madonna* (Senart: IMSLP #207177, or Bärenreiter: IMSLP #39823)

**Franz Tunder:** Chorale Prelude on Komm, heiliger Geist, Herre Gott (Schott HL.49017547 or Breitkopf & Härtel BR.EB.8825)

**Johann Walther:** Chorale Partita on Jesu, meine Freude (Breitkopf & Härtel: IMSLP #273858)

##### LIST B

(For the following works by J.S. Bach, any edition is acceptable.)

\*Adagio e dolce (ii) from Trio Sonata No. 3, BWV 527

Allegro (iii) from Trio Sonata No. 1, BWV 525

Fantasia super Valet will ich dir geben, BWV 735

Fugue in E-flat Major, BWV 552/ii (St. Anne)

\*Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland, BWV 659

Prelude and Fugue in A Major, BWV 536

Toccata in D Minor, BWV 538/i (Dorian)

Trio in D Minor, BWV 583

##### LIST C

\***Johannes Brahms:** Fugue in A-flat Minor, WoO 8 (G. Henle Verlag HN1368)

**Jeanne Demessieux:** O filii et filiae from *Twelve Chorale Preludes on Gregorian Chant Themes* (Alfred 00-0603)

**César Franck:** Pastorale, Op. 19 (Wayne Leupold Editions: *Complete Organ Works of César Franck*, Vol. 1)

**Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel:** Prelude in G (Furore FUE2490)  
**Herbert Howells:** Psalm Prelude, Set 2, No. 1: Psalm 130 (Novello 14015553)  
**Charles Ives:** Variations on America (Mercury Music Corp.)  
**John Knowles Paine:** Variation IV (fugue only) from Variations on the Austrian Hymn (Wayne Leupold Editions: *John Knowles Paine Complete Organ Works*, Vol. 1)  
**Max Reger:** Praeludium, Op. 59 (Carus CV52.850/00)

#### LIST D

**Maurice Durufié:** Final variation from the Choral varié sur le Veni Creator, Op. 4 (Durand & Cie. 16175)  
**Albert Ginastera:** Fugue from Toccata, Villancico y Fuga (Boosey & Hawkes HL.48009772)  
**Adolphus Hailstork:** Toccata on Veni Emmanuel (Schirmer EC.5122)  
**\*Thomas Kerr:** Arietta from *African American Organ Music Anthology*, Vol. 1 (MorningStar MSM-10-545)  
**Cecilia McDowall:** O Adonai from O Antiphon Sequence (Oxford University Press)  
**Georgi Mushel:** Toccata (Oxford University Press)  
**Florence Price:** Toccato from Suite No. 1 from *The Oxford Book of Organ Music by Women Composers* (ISBN 9780193562721)  
**Ad Wammes:** Miroir (Boosey & Hawkes HL.48019466)

**A2: Hymn playing** (20 points). The candidate will prepare a hymn from the 2023 *Examination Hymn Booklet*. They will play an introduction followed by three stanzas as though leading a large, enthusiastic congregation. They should also include an interlude between stanzas 2 and 3. The interlude may be in the form of a modulatory bridge with a change of key for the third stanza. Contrast between the three stanzas and sensitivity to the character of the text and tune will be expected. The introduction, interlude, and any alternate harmonization may be original, selected from published repertoire, or improvised.

#### PART 2: KEYBOARD SKILLS

**A3: Sight-reading** (20 points). Play at sight a passage of music in open score on four staves employing G and F clefs. The use of pedal via the manual-to-pedal coupler is optional.

**A4: Harmonization** (20 points). Harmonize a brief passage of music in four parts, for part of which a treble melody will be given, and for part of which an unfigured bass will be given.

**A5: Transposition** (20 points). Transpose a passage of homophonic music, not more than a major second in either direction (i.e., up or down). The candidate will be permitted to play the passage once through in the original key. Use of pedals is required.

**A6: Improvisation** (20 points). Do a, b, or c.  
a. Improvise five or six variations over a given ground bass.  
b. Improvise a brief prelude on a given hymn tune.  
c. Improvise a brief prelude on a given chant.

**A7: Continuo** (20 points). Play the continuo part of a chorale or a short instrumental movement from figured bass. Only the bass and figures will be given.

A room without a keyboard instrument will be provided for candidates for a 30-minute preparation session for questions A3–A7. Section 1 of the exam need not proceed as listed here. Candidates may choose to begin their exam with organ repertoire or keyboard skills.

#### SECTION 2: WRITTEN

##### PART 1 (3 hours allowed)

**A8: Analysis** (60 points). Respond to questions regarding a composition (printed on adjacent pages of the test pamphlet), which may be drawn from any important period, style, or performance medium. Venture opinions as to composer, approximate date, harmonic and contrapuntal texture, and/or form.

**A9: Fugue** (40 points). The candidate will be asked to write the exposition of a four-voice fugue on a given subject. The subject may begin in any voice and appear on a two- or three-stave score for the organ. The exposition concludes when the subject has been stated in its entirety in all four voices. The candidate will be expected to supply a regular, recurring countersubject in invertible counterpoint. A cadence is not required.

##### PART 2 (3 hours allowed)

**A10: Ear tests** (30 points). Write down from dictation two short passages of music, the first a single melodic line in treble or bass clef, the second in two parts (treble and bass clefs). The score will include the time signature, number of measures, key signature, and at least one reference pitch. The tonic chord will be played, followed by one measure of metronome. Each test will be played four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**A11: Aural perception** (40 points). Excerpts of two organ pieces (one pre-1750, one post-1750) will be played for the candidate as two separate tests. For each piece, a skeleton score will be provided for the candidate to answer questions regarding compositional devices, cadence types, harmonies, and other technical and stylistic characteristics. The key at the beginning and end of each test will be announced, and each test will be played four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**A12: Composition** (30 points). The candidate will continue and bring to a conclusion a passage of organ music. The resulting composition should be idiomatic for organ and remain complementary in style. Approximate length will be specified. Imaginative use of the tools of composition will be expected. Continuous writing in a specified number of parts is not required.

## FELLOWSHIP REQUIREMENTS

#### SECTION 1: PRACTICAL

##### PART 1: ORGAN REPERTOIRE

**F1: Repertoire** (80 points; 20 points possible per piece). Candidates will prepare one piece from each of the following four lists and assemble the pieces in a program order (as in a recital). One (and only one) of the selections will be a slow movement, marked with an asterisk \* in the lists below. Candidates may play the repertoire in any order.

##### LIST A

**Georg Böhm:** Vater unser im Himmelreich (ornamented chorale), IGB 24 (Edition Breitkopf 8087)  
**Nicolaus Bruhns:** Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland (Edition Breitkopf 8663, ed. Harald Vogel)  
**\*Pablo Bruna:** Tiento de falsas del segundo tono (Roose: IMSLP #167158)  
**William Byrd:** A Fancy (Faber Music: *Faber Early Organ Series*, Vol. 2, ed. James Dalton)  
**\*Nicolas de Grigny:** Récit du chant de l'hymne précédent from *Pange lingua* (Les Éditions Outremonaises: IMSLP #182962)  
**Michelangelo Rossi:** Toccata settima (Lang: IMSLP #181395)  
**Franz Tunder:** Jesus Christus, unser Heiland (Les Éditions Outremonaises: IMSLP #517340)

##### LIST B

(For the following works by J.S. Bach, any edition is acceptable.)

Allegro (iii) from Trio Sonata No. 2 in C Minor, BWV 526  
\*Allein Gott in der Höh' sei Ehr', BWV 662  
\*An Wasserflüssen Babylon, BWV 653b  
Christ, unser Herr, zum Jordan kam, BWV 684, from *Clavierübung III*  
Fugue in E Minor ("Wedge"), BWV 548  
Pièce d'orgue, BWV 572  
Prelude and Fugue in G Major, BWV 541

##### LIST C

**Johannes Brahms:** Prelude and Fugue in G Minor (G. Henle Verlag HN 400)  
**\*Jeanne Demessieux:** Consolateur from *Sept Méditations sur le Saint-Esprit* (Durand & Cie. 13312)  
**Herbert Howells:** Rhapsody in D-flat (Augener, Galaxy, ECS, or Wayne Leupold)  
**Max Reger:** Final fugal section of the Chorale Fantasia on Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott, Op. 27, beginning with pickup to m. 136 (Peters: IMSLP #46868)  
**Louis Vierne:** Impromptu from *Pièces de fantaisie*, Suite No. 3, Op. 54 (Lemoine: IMSLP #06177)  
**\*Charles-Marie Widor:** Choral from *Symphonie romane* (Hamelle: IMSLP #412582)

##### LIST D

**William Bolcom:** Jesus Loves Me from *Gospel Preludes*, Bk. 2 (E.B. Marks or *Complete Gospel Preludes*, Hal Leonard 220163)  
**Undine Smith Moore:** Variations on There Is a Fountain from *African-American Organ Music Anthology*, Vol. 9 (MorningStar MSM-10-649)  
**Nico Muhly:** The Rev. Mustard: His Installation Prelude (available through J.W. Pepper, or electronically from Saint Rose Music Publishing Co. as #10453977E)  
**Kola Owolabi:** Dance (downloadable at KolaOwolabi.com)  
**Stephen Paulus:** Impassioned from *Three Temperaments for Organ* (Paulus Publications SP112, available at store.subitomusic.com as #80401070)  
**Margaret Sandresky:** Toccata: Veni Creator Spiritus from *Organ Music of Margaret Vardell Sandresky*, Vol. 1 (Wayne Leupold Editions WL 600031)  
**\*Leo Sowerby:** Requiescat in pace (H.W. Gray: IMSLP #555116)

## PART 2: KEYBOARD SKILLS

**F2: Sight-reading** (20 points). Play a passage of organ music on three staves at sight. Techniques such as manual changes, registration changes, and tempo nuances will be expected.

**F3: Clef-reading** (20 points). Play a passage of choral music written in 16th-century polyphonic style, employing C and F clefs (soprano, alto, tenor, and bass). The crossing of voices is to be expected, and the use of pedal via the manual-to-pedal coupler is optional.

**F4: Piano adaptation** (20 points). Arrange at sight for the organ the *piano* accompaniment of a vocal score, which itself may be a reduction of an original accompaniment for orchestra.

**F5: Transposition** (20 points). Transpose a passage of homophonic music, not more than a major third in either direction (i.e., up or down). The candidate is permitted to play the excerpt in the original key.

**F6: Improvisation** (20 points). Improvise a short piece (approximately three to four minutes in duration) in ternary form on a given theme. The candidate will supply a recognizable contrasting theme for the middle section. Clarity of form and structure will be expected.

A room without a keyboard instrument will be provided for candidates for a 30-minute preparation session for questions F2–F6. Section 1 of the exam need not proceed as listed here. Candidates may choose to begin their exam with organ repertoire or keyboard skills.

## SECTION 2: WRITTEN

### PART 1 (3½ hours allowed)

**F7: Counterpoint** (30 points). Candidates should be prepared to write counterpoint in 16th-century style. At least one voice part will be given in its entirety. The candidate will complete the remaining voice parts in the manner of the opening measures (including text).

**F8: Fugue** (40 points). The candidate will be asked to write the exposition of a four-voice fugue on a given subject. Following a formal exposition, the candidate will be asked to provide an episode leading to the statement of the subject in a related key. The candidate will be expected to supply a regular, recurring countersubject in invertible counterpoint. Skilled handling of contrapuntal techniques is expected.

**F9: Essay** (40 points). Write an essay on one of three given topics concerning the life and music of J.S. Bach.

### PART 2 (3½ hours allowed)

**F10: Ear tests** (30 points). (A) Write down from dictation a short passage in four parts, for which the key and time signature will be provided and the tonic chord played. (B) Write down from dictation a short passage of two-part counterpoint. The score will include the time signature, number of measures, key signature, and at least one reference pitch. The tonic chord will be played, followed by one measure of metronome. Test A will be played five times, and Test B four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**F11: Orchestration** (40 points). Demonstrate knowledge of the capabilities of orchestral instruments, the craft of orchestration, and the historical stylistic use of the orchestra through the transcription of a brief passage for orchestra or ensemble and/or the reduction of an orchestral score for performance on the organ.

**F12: Composition** (30 points). Write a composition for unaccompanied voices on a given text. The length will be specified. Imaginative use of the tools of composition will be expected.

## CHOIR MASTER REQUIREMENTS

### SECTION 1: PRACTICAL (approximately 45 minutes allowed)

**Ch1: Rehearsal and direction** (120 points; 40 points possible per work [20 points for rehearsal technique and 20 points for conducting technique]). Rehearse and direct the choir in the performance of all or any portion of the following works (in any order the candidate chooses):

**William Byrd:** Ave verum corpus (Oxford University Press, ed. John Morehen)  
**Felix Mendelssohn:** Verleih uns Frieden ("Grant Us Peace"), WoO 5, SATB, English or German (E.C. Schirmer 5212)

And in one of the three following works:

**Moses Hogan,** arr.: This Little Light of Mine (Hal Leonard 8059864)  
**David Hurd:** Love Bade Me Welcome (Selah 418-610)  
**Rosephanye Powell:** The Word Was God (Gentry Publications JG2323)

The choir, consisting of at least four singers (SATB), will be provided at the examination center. The examiners will determine which portions of the pieces will be rehearsed. The candidate will be expected to rehearse the choir as though preparing for an actual performance. Attention should be given, within the context of the rehearsal of these works, to aspects of good choral singing, including general musicality, balance, methods of tone production, and clear enunciation of the text. If the candidate prefers, an accompanist (not an examiner) will be available to play parts on the piano.

**Ch2: Keyboard skills** (60 points; 20 points possible per skill). Demonstrate keyboard ability at the piano or organ by harmonizing a melody, playing harmonic progressions, and playing a hymn from the *2023 Examination Hymn Booklet*.

### SECTION 2: WRITTEN (3 hours allowed)

**Ch3: Ear tests** (30 points). (A) Write down from dictation a short passage in two parts, for which the key and time signature, number of measures, and at least one reference pitch will be provided. (B) The candidate will be given a copy of a passage in hymn style. This will be played with some deliberate wrong notes and/or rhythms, which the candidate will be asked to identify. The tonic chord will be played for each test, followed by one measure of metronome. Each test will be played four times, allowing 45 seconds between each playing.

**Ch4: Analysis** (20 points). Demonstrate knowledge of form and theory through analysis of a piece of choral music.

**Ch5: Gregorian chant** (20 points). Answer questions on Gregorian chant, including range, as well as finals and dominants of the ecclesiastical modes. The candidate will be expected to read and transcribe Gregorian notation.

**Ch6: Hymnody** (20 points). Answer questions on the history and literature of hymns, both texts and tunes, from the earliest examples to the present.

**Ch7: Liturgy** (20 points). Answer questions on liturgy and liturgical trends. The candidate is expected to be familiar with the historic liturgies of the Western church and also with contemporary trends in at least one present-day denomination.

**Ch8: Choir training** (20 points). Questions will deal with the vocal and musical training of both adult and children's choirs.

**Ch9: Choral repertoire** (20 points). Demonstrate knowledge of choral literature for various types of choirs.

**Ch10: General musical knowledge** (20 points). Answer questions on the history and literature of music.

## AGO EXAMINATION PRIZES

The following prizes are awarded each year:

**FAGO Prize:** \$1,000, for the highest overall passing score on the FAGO exam.

**AAGO Prize:** \$750, for the highest overall passing score on the AAGO exam.

**ChM Prize:** \$750, for the highest overall passing score on the ChM exam.

**S. Lewis Elmer Award:** \$500, for the highest overall score on any upper-level exam.

**CAGO Prize:** \$500, for the highest overall passing score on the CAGO exam (November and May).

To qualify for any of these prizes, both sections of an examination must be taken and passed at the same time, and the overall score must be a minimum of 85 percent.