

## Diploma of Associate (ARCO) Summer 2024 and Winter 2025

*Associateship of the College indicates a standard of professional competency in organ playing technique, essential keyboard skills, and interpretative understanding. It also indicates accuracy in aural perception and fluency in those written disciplines (standard stylistic techniques and analysis of performance and historical issues in relation to organ repertoire) which support practical musicianship.*

The Associateship examination consists of two sections:

Practical Examination (comprising Organ Performance and Keyboard Skills Portfolio)  
Written Papers (comprising Stylistic Techniques, Aural Perception, and Historical/Repertoire Studies)

Each section may be entered separately. A pass in any either section is valid for a period of four years (from the date on which it was granted) and is conditional upon continuous membership of the College during that period.

The Practical Examination is divided into two parts: Organ Performance and Keyboard Skills Portfolio. The two parts must be taken together until one or both parts have been passed. A pass in either part is valid for a period of four years.

The Written Papers section comprises two papers, which must be taken together until one or both papers have been passed. A pass in either paper is valid for a period of four years. Written Paper II consists of two parts: Part A and Part B. In order to pass Paper II overall, it is necessary to gain a pass mark of two-thirds, which must include a pass in Part A (Aural Perception) and a pass in Part B (Repertoire/Historical Studies). A pass in either part of Paper II is valid for a period of four years.

### Practical Examination

#### *Organ Performance*

The Organ Performance part of the Practical Examination is to be completed in person at an examination centre. Where an exception has been applied for and granted in advance, this part may be completed through audio-visual submission ('AV submission'). See page 2 for guidance on these pathways.

Twenty-five minutes will be allowed for the candidate at the examination centre. This includes up to 5 minutes for checking the general pistons set by a candidate during their practice time. Details of the registration aids and console layout of each examination organ are to be found in the relevant specification document, which may be downloaded from [www.rco.org.uk/examinations.php](http://www.rco.org.uk/examinations.php) or requested from the College's administration.

Candidates may use general pistons.

Candidates are to choose **three** pieces for performance, **one** from List A, and **one each from any two** of Lists B, C, and D, the choice of pieces to be made by the candidate. Attention is drawn to the rubric concerning Pieces, Editions, and Copyright on page 7 of the *General Regulations*. Candidates may play the pieces in any order.

## A

Johann Sebastian Bach

1. Heut triumphieret Gottes Sohn BWV 630

### AND

Wenn wir in höchsten Nöten sein BWV 641

Bärenreiter 5171; Breitkopf 6587 and 8807; Peters 244a

2. Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland BWV 659

Bärenreiter 5172; Breitkopf 6587 and 8808; Peters 246a

3. Wer nur den lieben Gott lässt walten BWV 647

Bärenreiter 5171; Breitkopf 6588 and 8806; Peters 246a

4. Fantasia in C minor BWV 562

Bärenreiter 5175; Breitkopf 6585 and 8803 (**not** the early version); Peters 243a

5. Fugue in B minor ('on a theme of Corelli') BWV 579

Bärenreiter 5176; Breitkopf 6584 and 8803; Peters 243a

6. Adagio [Movement 2] *from* Sonata I BWV 525 (**without repeats**)

Bärenreiter 5177; Breitkopf 6586 and 8805; Peters 240a

## B

1. Georg Böhm

Vater unser im Himmelreich

**Breitkopf 8087 (No. 19)**

2. Dieterich Buxtehude

Toccat in F BuxWV 157

Bärenreiter 8222; Breitkopf 6662; Schott 21112

3. Girolamo Frescobaldi

Canzon Quarti Toni Dopo il Post Comune (Messa delli Apostoli) *from* Fiori Musicali

Armelin Musica FM 001 (open score, modern clefs, ed. Stembridge); Bärenreiter 2205 and 8415

4. Jean Adam Guilain

Tierce en taille *from* Suite du second ton

Schott

5. Johann Ludwig Krebs

Trio in C minor (KrebsWV 438)

Breitkopf 8413 (No. 24)

6. John Stanley  
Voluntary in A minor, Op. 6 No. 2  
OUP (facsimile edition, ed. Vaughan); Peters 7723 (ed. Phillips)

## C

1. Felix Mendelssohn  
Allegretto *from* Sonata IV in B flat major, Op. 65  
Bärenreiter 8197; Breitkopf 8088 (facsimile of original German edition) and 8641; Novello (ed. Little **not** Atkins)

2. Gabriel Pierné  
Prelude (No. 1 *of* Trois Pièces, Op. 29)  
Butz 2080; Durand

3. Max Reger  
Canzonetta (No. 3 *of* Six Trios, Op. 47)  
Breitkopf 8495; Carus 52.805

4. Josef Rheinberger  
Präludium (No. 1 *of* 12 Character Pieces, Op. 156)  
Butz 972; Carus 50.156

5. Charles Villiers Stanford  
Allegretto (No. 1 *of* Six Short Preludes and Postludes, Op. 101)  
Stainer & Bell

6. Louis Vierne  
Andantino (No. 2 *of* Pièces de Fantaisie, Op. 51)  
Bärenreiter 9227; Carus 18.157; Lemoine

## D

1. David Bedford  
Carillon  
Faber Music (Unbeaten Tracks, ed. Scott)

2. Petr Eben  
Ad communionem (No. 2 *of* Versetti)  
Universal Edition 17478

3. Paul Hindemith  
Mässig bewegt [Movement 1] *from* Sonata III  
Schott 3736

4. Ronny Krippner  
Wies Gott, so gefällt mirs auch (**with repeat**)  
Peters 73145 (The Orgelbüchlein Project 4, ed. Whitehead)

5. Jean Langlais  
Tiento *from* Suite médiévale  
Salabert

6. Cecilia McDowall  
O Radix Jesse (No. 3) **AND** O Clavis David (No. 4) *from*  
O Antiphon Sequence  
OUP

### ***Keyboard Skills Portfolio***

The Keyboard Skills Portfolio tests are based on those skills and techniques that both broaden musicianship and have practical application in the organist's work. They are to be completed remotely and submitted as an audio-visual recording ('AV submission'). See the *General Regulations* page 3 for guidance. The recording should be made in one take and strictly in accordance with the instructions in the *Protocol for AV submission of Diploma Practical Examinations*. The tests should be played in the published order.

Candidates are asked to respect the following behaviour at the console once recording the Portfolio: 30 seconds for final, silent preparation before playing the test, except Repertoire Performance, which should have 40 seconds. Indicative registrations are given for each test and candidates should at all times use their judgement when realising these on their chosen instrument. A more detailed, but again indicative, registration is given for the Repertoire Performance test. Candidates may use, without restriction, the registration aids available to them on their chosen instrument. The use of metronomes is strictly prohibited during the recording. A clock may be visible at the console for assisting with the timing of the improvisation test. The test paper should be printed out for use and be clearly visible on the console as the only source for playing the tests. Annotations are not permitted, except in the Repertoire Performance test, where candidates may if they wish identify modifications to the registration and mark in other helpful directions. Before commencement of the tests, the printed-out paper must be shown to the camera in such a way as to demonstrate that no annotations have been made to Tests 1–3.

The Keyboard Skills Portfolio comprises **four** tests:

#### **1. Transposition**

To transpose a hymn tune up or down a tone or a semitone. The pedals are to be used. Neither the given version nor the transposed version will be in a key with a key signature of more than four sharps or flats. The direction and distance of the transposition will be indicated in the examination paper. A hymn tune of up to 16 bars will be set.

#### **2. Score Reading**

To play on manuals only an open score in four parts. The given extract will be from a passage of late-Renaissance vocal polyphony and will include text. The soprano, alto, and tenor voices will be written in the G clef, and the bass voice in the F clef. A variety of four-voice combinations may be expected (e.g., SATB, AATB, ATTB, etc.). The crossing of parts may be expected. A manual-to-pedal coupler may be drawn in order for the candidate to negotiate exceptionally large intervals between tenor and bass. A passage of up to 24 bars will be set.

### 3. Harmonisation or Improvisation or Figured Bass

*Either*

(a) To harmonise a given short melody by adding three lower parts. The melody will not be in a key with more than three sharps or flats. Candidates may expect a modulation to a closely related key. The pedals are to be used.

*or*

(b) To improvise for around 75–90 seconds in one of four genres (listed below), of which three will be set for each session. The first option will always be set. In each genre credit will be awarded for command of straightforward tonal harmony within a coherent texture and for an ability to handle simple modulation and structure. The style should be congruent with the chosen material. The candidate should select the registration most appropriate for the improvisation. No subsequent registration changes are permitted, except in option (i) where they are permitted but not required.

The options are:

- (i) *Hymn tune extension.* The melody plus the text of the first and last verses is given. The candidate plays the last line with harmony, which will be given, and continues. The pedals must be used.
- (ii) *Prelude to an anthem or motet.* The opening of the anthem is given. The use (or not) of the pedals will be indicated.
- (iii) *Solemn processional.* An opening will be given in the style of the baroque French *plein jeu* or German *organo pleno* traditions, which the candidate will continue. The pedals are to be used.
- (iv) *Melody and accompaniment.* An incipit will be given of a melody and accompaniment from the baroque or romantic periods which the candidate will continue. The registrational colours will be indicated, though the exact registration will be chosen by the candidate. The use (or not) of pedals will be indicated.

*or*

(c) To realise a figured bass on manuals only. Candidates may expect to realise a range of figures (including those for suspensions and seventh chords in all inversions), which will be presented according to general convention. The chromatic alteration of figures will be indicated in the customary ways. Passages may be presented where figuring is sparse and the candidate's innate harmonic sense is tested according to context. In the absence of an examiner to play the melody, this test is exclusively an exercise in harmonic and rhythmical accuracy. There is no requirement to incorporate the melody in the realisation. A passage of up to 24 bars will be set.

### 4. Repertoire Performance

To play a passage of organ music written on three staves. This may be presented as a facsimile of an original source. Candidates may be expected to make manual and stop changes as directed, together with the appropriate use of pedal couplers and the swell pedal. Where little or no direction for console management is given in a facsimile extract, candidates are expected to interpret the style and idiom and find a suitable solution. The

same applies to tempo. The key signature will contain no more than four sharps or flats. A passage in the region of 24 bars to 48 bars will be set.

## Written Papers

The techniques required in the Written Papers enable candidates to handle musical material in a variety of idioms. Close study of those idioms deepens musical understanding of the process of musical composition, which in turn informs interpretation. Candidates also have the opportunity to display knowledge and understanding of history and repertoire.

There are two Written Papers and the second paper has two parts: Part A (Aural Perception) and Part B (Stylistic Techniques and Historical/Repertoire Studies). Both Papers are to be completed remotely according to the published schedule and instructions, and worked papers should be submitted as digitised files. See the *General Regulations* page 3 for guidance, in particular noting the open-book methodology. The worked papers should be scanned and submitted in accordance with the instructions in the *Protocol for Digital Submission of Diploma Written Papers*.

### Paper I

#### 1. Chorale

To add alto, tenor, and bass parts in the style of J. S. Bach to a given melody (tonal not modal) set in the soprano. Short score will be used. A melody of up to 20 bars will be set.

#### 2. Fugal Techniques

Answer Questions (i), (ii) and (iii):

(i) to compose real or tonal answers to three subjects, in addition providing explanations for the choices made;

(ii) to compose countersubjects (which must be in invertible counterpoint) to two answers;

(iii) to continue one of the passages completed in (ii) by composing an episode four to six bars in length based on a given identified motif. The episode should be largely in three voices and must lead to the arrival of a middle entry in the tonic or a closely related key. The end of the exposition will be shown so that the episode can be constructed from preceding material.

#### 3. Two-Part Counterpoint

*Either*

(a) To add an upper or lower part to a given sixteenth- or early-seventeenth-century vocal line. Questions will be set from works by European (but not English) composers of the period. A passage of up to 20 bars will be set.

*or*

(b) To add an upper and/or lower part in an appropriate style to a given eighteenth-century keyboard line. A passage of up to 24 bars will be set.

## **Paper II**

### **Part A**

#### **1. Aural Perception**

Answer Questions (i) and (ii). Both questions will be presented as sound recordings. Question (i) will be presented on the piano and Question (ii) will be presented on the organ.

(i) *Pitch Test.* To recognise and transcribe a number of alterations in pitch in the lower three parts of a four-part chorale passage (presented in short score) in the style of J. S. Bach, and to complete through dictation the lower three parts of the final cadence in a second, related passage. The first chord will not be altered and will be named at the beginning. Candidates will be required to notate their answers either on the printed music or on the blank staves provided. The two passages, marked A–B and C–D respectively, will each be played four times with an interval of 30 seconds between performances.

(ii) *Perception Test.* To recognise technical and compositional devices, harmonies, cadence types, modulations, and stylistic characteristics in a short passage of organ music. A skeleton score will be provided. The key at the beginning and at the end of the passage will be named. The passage will be played four times with an interval of 30 seconds between performances.

Instructions will be given on the examination paper about the location of the related sound file. These instructions will also be issued to each candidate in advance of the examination day.

### **Part B**

#### **2. Repertoire Extracts**

To answer questions relating (but not limited) to composer, date, genre, style, compositional devices, registration, and performance in three out of five unseen extracts of organ music (at the candidate's choice). Each extract will carry four questions. Score annotation may be required.

#### **3. Historical Studies**

To write one essay of around 750 words on a specified period of organ repertoire. A broad understanding of related organ-building styles may also be required. A choice of three or four titles will be given.

The set topic for 2024/2025 is:

*United Kingdom, 1945 to the present*

#### 4. Set Work(s)

To write one essay of around 750 words on a specified work or works relating to the historical topic set in Question 3.

The set collection/group of works for 2024/2025 is:

*Cecilia McDowall, works for organ, with a particular emphasis on Celebration (2016), First Flight (2021), O Antiphon Sequence (2018), Veni, Creator Spiritus (2022), and Wo Gott der Herr nicht bei uns halt (2012) (all OUP; on-demand printing from the publisher)*

#### Schedule of Maximum Marks

##### ***Practical Examination***

Organ Performance:

Each of three pieces 30

Total 90 (60 marks will be required to pass)

Keyboard Skills Portfolio:

Transposition 15

Score Reading 15

Harmonisation or Improvisation or Figured Bass 15

Repertoire Performance 15

Total 60 (40 marks will be required to pass)

Candidates must pass in both the Organ Playing and Keyboard Skills Portfolio within the exemption period in order to pass the Practical Examination.

##### ***Written Papers***

Paper I:

Chorale 27

Fugal Techniques 24 (9 + 6 + 9)

Two-Part Counterpoint 24

Total 75

Paper II:

Part A:

Aural Perception 18 (9 + 9)

Part B:

Repertoire Extracts 24 (8 + 8 + 8)

Historical Studies 18

Set Work(s) 15

Total 75

50 marks will be required to pass Paper I. In order to pass Paper II overall, it is necessary to gain a pass mark of two-thirds, which must include a pass in Part A (Aural Perception) and a pass in Part B (Historical/Repertoire Studies).