



THE ROYAL CANADIAN COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS LE COLLÈGE ROYAL CANADIEN DES ORGANISTES

WORSHIP ACCOMPANIST/SERVICE PLAYING CERTIFICATES (2023-25)

INTRODUCTION

The Certificate examinations are intended for musicians who regularly lead and accompany the music of worshipping communities, and for whom the music of worship is their primary function as organists. Worship always blossoms when the music is well led, and becoming an accomplished service player is a worthy goal for those who work as “ministers of music”. These examinations develop, in a graded fashion, the fundamental skills required both by competent service players and by those who request their services. In particular, this set of exams is intended to encourage those who are new to service playing, who may be serving smaller or rural communities, or for whom advanced study in sacred music and worship is difficult to arrange. For complete Regulations, refer to <http://rcco.ca/exam-regulations>.

The **Worship Accompanist Certificate** is an excellent way to enter the College’s learning paths; it tests basic skills. The confidence gained by preparing for this test leads to the more advanced **Service Playing Certificate**, which surveys the core service playing skills, and builds a foundation for further study, but is itself solid evidence that a musician is ready to meet the needs of many smaller congregations.

Service Playing and Worship Accompanist Certificate examinations may be taken at the College’s annual examination sessions, or at any time during the year, with the playing recorded as an audio file, on CD or in a computer file. This recording must be accompanied by signed declarations by two persons, one of whom is a local, regional or national officer of the College, to the effect that the playing was all recorded at one time, without editing or alteration, and that it is the unaided work of the candidate. The forms are available on the website at <http://rcco.ca/exam-resources>. There are no written or ear test sections for these Certificate examinations. Passing these examinations does not entitle successful candidates to attach any letters to their names, but the appropriate certificates will be awarded at the College’s annual Convocation.

MARKS

Marks are assigned to each part of an examination as indicated. In order to pass, candidates are required to obtain at least 70% in the examination. A report will be sent to each candidate showing itemized marks and the comments of the examiners.

For the complete Regulations, please refer to <http://www.rcco.ca/exam-regulations>.

To apply online, go to <https://rcco.ca/Online-Exam-Registration>

REQUIREMENTS FOR WORSHIP ACCOMPANIST CERTIFICATE (2023-25)

Practical Section (100 marks) This examination may be taken at the organ or the piano.

- (75 marks – 25 per selection)** At the time of application for the examination, candidates are asked to submit three lists, each containing four hymns or congregational songs selected from the candidate's own tradition:
 - List 1: Four hymns or songs of celebration.
 - List 2: Four meditative hymns or songs.
 - List 3: Four seasonal hymns or songs (the season for each hymn or song should be included).The candidate should be prepared to play three hymns or congregational songs, one from each list. Selections to be played must be identified at the time of application.
- (25)** The candidate will accompany a vocal or instrumental solo of his/her own choosing. The music is to be submitted at the time of application, for approval by the Board of Examiners. The candidate is to supply a vocal or instrumental soloist for the performance. A simple hymn with the same music repeated several times will not satisfy this requirement.

REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICE PLAYING CERTIFICATE (2023-25)

Practical Section (100 Marks)

- (10)** Play at sight a passage of organ music which may include a change of manuals. The candidate must demonstrate the ability to maintain a steady pulse. A preview time of 60 seconds is permitted.
- (40 marks, 20 per selection)** Select four contrasting hymns or congregational songs from the Service Playing Hymns leaflet. The candidate will choose and perform the first hymn (song) and a second one will be chosen by the examiners from among the four chosen by the candidate. Be prepared to play an introduction and all stanzas of each hymn as for congregational singing, demonstrating rhythmic control, sensitivity to the text, and effective registration. The Service Playing Hymns leaflet can be downloaded at <https://rcco.ca/resources/pdfs/exams/requirements/Hymns%20Service%20Playing%202023-25.pdf>.
- (10)** Play the accompaniment for one of the following anthems from *The Oxford Book of Flexible Anthems*, ed. Alan Bullard (Oxford University Press, 2007). Candidates should use the pedals as directed in the score.

<i>Irish Blessing</i>	Bob Chilcott (no. 29, p. 128-131)
<i>Let all mortal flesh keep silence</i>	arr. Stephen Cleobury (no. 34, p. 148-151)
<i>The true and living bread</i>	David Blackwell (no. 60, p. 255-258)
- (40 marks, 10 per selection)** Compile a list of twelve different voluntaries, three from each of the following categories:
 - processionals for a wedding;
 - preludes to a funeral;
 - preludes to a service of public worship;
 - postludes for a service of public worship.Four pieces (one from each category) should be prepared to be performed at the examination. The list of twelve pieces must be submitted at the time of application, with the four pieces to be played by the candidate indicated.