

General Information

Information Sheet 1

These notes are offered as guidance, however they do not replace study of the *Composer's Guide*. They come from frequently asked questions and from issues that have regularly arisen in the process. Following the guidance given in Sections 2 and 3 will mean that a setting is more likely to be accepted on first submission. The issues noted in Section 4 often derive from observations made and are about the presentation of the published music.

1. What should be submitted?

The process is for any musical setting of a prescribed liturgical text which is published in England and Wales.

What is a prescribed liturgical text?

A text taken from a liturgical book (e.g. the Roman Missal) where it is the only text (e.g. Sanctus) or it is one of a given range of texts (Memorial Acclamation) which may be used at that point. Texts which the Missal, for example, offers as models but where other texts may be used, i.e. at the Entrance and Communion Procession, are not subject to the process. [18–24 & Appendix 2] Lectionary texts such as responsorial psalms and gospel acclamations are not currently subject to the process.

What is meant by published?

To make available to others on paper or electronically a musical setting whether freely or for a charge. However it is recognised that it may need to be tried in the liturgy prior to publication and therefore local use in a single community is permitted. [39]

What should be submitted?

A musical setting may exist in a number of editions: full score, melody/guitar, vocal parts, assembly edition etc. Any edition which includes the liturgical text should be submitted (instrumental parts do not need to be submitted).

It is not necessary that all editions are submitted together. Where, for example, an Assembly edition is submitted separately from a Full Score and where the Full Score has already been accepted the Assembly edition will usually be reviewed by the Office rather than submitted to the Panel.

What if another publisher wishes to publish an already accepted setting?

If Publisher B wishes to include a piece by Publisher A in a hymnbook, for example, it will usually be reviewed by the Office provided that the piece has already been accepted by England and Wales and it is not different in any significant way to the original submission.

2. Text matters

Accuracy of text

Composers and publishers need to take care that the text is accurate. Part of the purpose of the *Composer's Guide* is to provide an accurate text. The following issues should be noted.

Capitalisation and Spelling

In the liturgical text great care has been taken over capitalisation and this should be followed in any musical setting. Broadly speaking capitalisation is used to denote an attribute (e.g. Most High) or action (e.g. Death and Resurrection in the Memorial Acclamations) of God.

While it may seem obvious that spelling should be correct care should be taken with hyphenated words. Common mistakes are: *Res-sur-rec-tion* and *u-nit-ty*.

Punctuation

In a similar way the punctuation given in the liturgical text and reproduced in the Composer's Guide should be followed. Exclamation marks should not be added to the text — their purpose is better expressed through dynamics etc. Some more specific issues are dealt with below.

Use of refrains

Refrains for the assembly are permitted and have been used successfully in the Gloria. The placing of the refrain should follow the structure of the text. In the Gloria this means that a 'Glory to God...' refrain is inappropriate in the middle of the section beginning 'Lord Jesus Christ'. [20]

Repetition of text

Repetition of text is permitted. The guideline is succinct: the repetition of words and phrases should neither unduly prolong the setting nor adversely affect the structure or meaning of the text. [19] (As noted in November 2011 report though repetition was initially a matter of concern to people it has not been a significant issue.)

The following notes are offered:

If the repetition of text in, for example, a Memorial Acclamation means that the musical setting is longer than the remainder of the Eucharistic Prayer that might be considered unduly prolonged — part of the consideration will be surrounding liturgical context.

The meaning of the text can be altered through repetition. *When we eat, we eat this bread*, for example. Reading the text through may help identify any ambiguities.

Composers may need to reflect whether the significant repetition of a word or phrase is 'dictated' by the melody at the expense of the words.

Repetition of text — punctuation

Where a word or phrase is repeated it should be punctuated following normal English style. It is not possible to be too dogmatic about this but it should be recognised that punctuation will affect how a phrase is sung.

Neither 'hosanna' or 'amen' are capitalised when they are repeated. Either of the following is acceptable:

Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen, amen, amen.

A setting which uses call and response between a cantor and the assembly is more complex particularly when both parts are on the same stave. As a rule two approaches are possible:

Treating it as a single line of text

When we eat this Bread, when we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, and drink this Cup,

Treating it as two separate texts

When we eat this Bread When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, and drink this Cup,

The image shows two musical staves in 4/4 time, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The first staff is labeled with four vocal parts: Cantor, All, C, and A. The lyrics are: "When we eat this Bread, when we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, and drink this Cup,". The second staff also has four vocal parts: Cantor, All, C, and A. The lyrics are: "When we eat this Bread When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup, and drink this cup,". The music consists of simple rhythmic patterns of quarter and eighth notes.

The use of italic and/or bold to distinguish the different voices will be helpful. If the repetition is quite close or overlapping 2 separate staves may be clearer.

Overall one thing that will be looked for is consistency of approach.

Hyphenation

Words which are made up of more than one syllable are hyphenated in musical settings. Single syllable words which are sung over more than one note are not hyphenated e.g. *Lord, God* not *Lo-rd, Go-d*, but they should have a slur.

Hyphenation should follow normal English practice and how a word should be hyphenated is shown in some dictionaries. There are also online tools. As a rule words should be hyphenated so that the singer can easily comprehend the word and the vowel sound.

Titles

The titles of individual movements should be clear and succinct. The titles given in the *Composers' Guide* should be followed. However a number of alternatives for some titles are recognised: *Gloria* or *Glory to God*. It should be noted that following the *Missal Penitential Act* should be used rather than *Penitential Rite*. In the Ordinary Form the *Sanctus* or *Holy, Holy* is a single text and should not have *Benedictus* placed as a title within the setting.

3. Eucharistic Prayer

Complete set of acclamations

The acclamations in the Eucharistic Prayer are: Holy, 3 Memorial Acclamations and Amen. It is necessary that any setting which includes any of these texts should include all these texts. [74]

Unity of setting

Settings of these acclamations should display a unity. [74]

The guidelines are quite broad in the description of ways this unity can be achieved. Some settings will achieve this through the repetition of the same melody — care should be taken that all the words fit naturally so that the music is the servant of the text rather than the other way around.

The guidelines note other ways of providing unity: through common motifs or melodic formula, metre and tonality. It may be helpful to note that the liturgical context means that the Memorial Acclamations are not heard together in the liturgy. This means that there might not be a unity across the Memorial Acclamations but there will be between each one and the Holy and Amen.

Lack of perceived unity will mean a 'withheld' decision. In these cases the publisher/composer is invited to demonstrate a unity which may not have been recognised.

It may be worth reiterating that musical unity is not required of a complete Mass setting, indeed it is not required to set a complete Mass. Furthermore neither the text or those who may eventually sing the setting will be served well when a single melody is used throughout with little melodic or harmonic variation. In such settings it is likely that the natural accents of the texts will be misplaced and the meaning of the text reduced.

Including indication of Missal tones

It is necessary to include an indication of the pitch of the Missal tones for the Invitation to the Memorial Acclamation and Doxology. Composers may include their own setting of these texts but the Missal tones should always be included.

This is required as part of the general desire that priests sing parts of the liturgy.

Indicating the Missal tones

This can be done in one of two ways: through notation (either the first couple of notes or the whole text) or by a rubric (e.g. Missal tone A-C).

It is suggested that at least the first 2 notes be indicated. Where an accompaniment is given for the Missal tone it might be marked optional.

Pitching Missal tones

The purpose of providing the pitch is so that the musical setting of the Acclamation or Amen follows smoothly. Therefore the pitch should be set in the same or a related tonality.

4. Presentation of settings & musical issues

A professional discipline for composers is to present their music clearly and with enough information that somebody else can take it up and use it as the composer intended.

Some of the matters listed below are about good practice and would be a matter for observation; others, including ministry and range, may demonstrate a lack of understanding of the liturgical context of the text and lead to either withheld editorial or withheld — for example, a setting of the Sanctus, with no indication of ministry, which includes a top F# will suggest that the composer has not appreciated that the Sanctus is a text generally sung by the whole assembly. [78]

Submitted settings should be ready for publication. It is possible that a setting will not be considered if it is deemed not ready for publication. The availability of music notation software means that it is easier to produce professional looking publications however this will require the composer/publisher to understand and make good use of the software. Indeed in some cases a well presented manuscript may be preferable.

Ministry

It is usually helpful, indeed necessary, that the score indicates who sings what whether it is by the priest, a cantor, all or the choir.

Range

Composers should be aware of the normal musical range of the assembly. As a rule many will not be comfortable above D and below B flat (a range of an octave and a third). This does not just affect the outer limits of the melody but also its *tessitura* — where it lies in the voice. In a similar way it can be possible to go beyond this range by a tone but this usually requires the composer to lead up to the note effectively and support in the accompaniment — some top E's are easier than others.

Basic musical information

Introductions

It is good practice to include or indicate the musical introduction. This can establish tonality, speed and the initial note for singing. Where the text is part of a larger liturgical unit, e.g. the Sanctus in the Eucharistic Prayer, too long an introduction can have the effect of separating the text from what precedes it. Where the setting is preceded by a sung intonation, e.g. the Doxology before the Amen, an introduction may not be necessary.

Tempo

An indication either by text or metronome marking of what the tempo (speed) is will be useful.

Time Signatures

These should be given at the beginning of each text. This can be an issue where a composer sets, for example, all 3 Memorial Acclamations within a single document and the time signature is not reiterated before the 2nd and 3rd acclamations.

Slurs

Slurs indicate where a number of notes are sung to one syllable. This is an aid to the singer so that they know how to phrase what they are singing.

Guitar Chords

Where in a setting the harmony changes with every beat and/or the harmony is quite complex a composer may sometimes have to decide whether the purpose of guitar chords, where they are included, is to provide a shorthand for the keyboard accompaniment (indicating every chord) or a more playable guitar part (chords may be simplified or not always given).

Developing Musical Skills

Some musicians who do not have a great deal of experience of composition and publishing music may benefit from the advice of more experienced church musicians. This may include helping:

- to notate accurately what is sung and played,
- to write effectively for the chosen musical resources within a particular style,
- to understand the demands of the liturgy,
- to present the music professionally.

It is hoped that such assistance might be available through diocesan liturgical commissions or through organisations such as the Society of St Gregory.

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<http://www.romanmissal.org.uk/Home/Music/Composing>