



As the month of April begins, we find ourselves in the midst of a global pandemic that has brought significant changes to our daily lives. Self-isolation, social distancing, frequent handwashing, and stocking up on household supplies have all become “the new normal.”

This new reality has given us the opportunity to think creatively and broaden horizons in our personal and professional lives. Many of us have turned to online platforms such as Skype, Facetime, and Zoom to keep in touch with friends and family, but also to offer lessons to our students. At this stressful time of crisis, continuing with music lessons can be especially beneficial to our students, providing a point of focus, a calming influence, and – as always – a sense of accomplishment and joy.

For those students who have been working all year to prepare for RCM History examinations, the prospect of being unable to complete this goal due to current restrictions on public gatherings might be quite discouraging. Fortunately, we have a solution in place that will allow students preparing for Level 9 and 10 History exams in the May session to reach their goals and earn their certificates. Students who had registered for in-person examinations will be provided with an online examination, along with complimentary access to the corresponding online history course to help them prepare for the online exam.

Those of you who are not yet familiar with the online history courses and exams may have some questions. The points below will provide some ideas on how you can best support your students in their transition from preparing for a written in-person history exam, to preparing for an online history exam using a computer or iPad.

As someone who has taught in-person history classes for many years, and who has had the opportunity to become familiar with the RCM online history courses, I encourage you to explore and embrace this solution with an open mind – particularly at this challenging time, when the digital world is providing an opportunity to stay connected and move forward with teaching and learning. In this ever-evolving world around us, the ability to be flexible and adapt to new circumstances is paramount. Your students will likely enjoy making this adjustment: it will provide a new way for them to complement their study of music history using the online course and to demonstrate their knowledge through an online exam that includes a listening component.

Additional information about instructional webinars to introduce you and your students to the online history courses, theory study guides, and online exams will follow shortly. Please be sure to join us for these important sessions.

Wishing you good health and safety in the weeks ahead,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janet Lopinski". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dr. Janet Lopinski
Senior Director, Academic Programs

What you need to know about the Online History Exam

- The concepts tested in the online history exam are based on the requirements outlined in the Theory Syllabus, 2016 Edition.
- Like the in-person written exam, the online exam includes a combination of short answer and essay questions.
- Unlike the in-person exam, the online exam includes a listening test.

A comparison of question types on the Level 9 and 10 history exams is shown in the tables below:

LEVEL 9 HISTORY	WRITTEN EXAMINATION	ONLINE EXAMINATION
Short Answer Questions	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - matching columns - multiple choice - true or false - fill in the blanks 	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - multiple choice: click on the correct answer - choose the correct answer from a drop-down menu
Listening Test Component	Listening Test not included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual identification of score excerpts from required works sometimes included - students identify the title and composer, and answer a series of short questions about the excerpt 	Listening Test included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aural identification of sound clips from required works included on each exam - students identify the title and composer, and answer a series of short questions about the excerpt
Essay Questions	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the life, career and musical style of required composers - Describe required works in detail * Word count not specified 	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare aspects of two composers' lives or musical style - Compare aspects of two required works * 300–500 words expected
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answers hand-written on examination page 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Answers typed into fields provided
Time Allotted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 180 minutes (3 hours) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 70 minutes

LEVEL 10 HISTORY	WRITTEN EXAMINATION	ONLINE EXAMINATION
Short Answer Questions	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - matching columns - multiple choice - true or false - fill in the blanks 	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - multiple choice: click on the correct answer - choose the correct answer from a drop-down menu
Listening Test	Listening Test not included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual identification of score excerpts from required works sometimes included - students identify the title and composer, and answer a series of short questions about the excerpt 	Listening Test included <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aural identification of sound clips from required works included on each exam - students identify the title and composer, and answer a series of short questions about the excerpt
Essay Questions	Question types include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Describe the musical style and contributions of required composers - Describe required works in detail - Trace the development of specific musical genres - Compare the musicals style of two eras *Word count not specified	Question categories include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare aspects of two composers' lives or musical style - Compare aspects of two required works or genres - Trace the development of specific musical genres - Compare the musicals style of two eras *300 – 500 words for short essay 500 – 800 words for long essay
	- Essays worth 20–40 %	- Essays worth 30%
	- All answers hand-written on examination page	- Answers typed into fields provided
Time Allotted	- 180 minutes (3 hours)	- 110 minutes

Students who have worked towards an in-person exam should focus on two main strategies when preparing for the online exam:

1. listening to the required works – available in the complimentary online course to be well-prepared for the listening test
2. preparing for comparative essays rather than individual descriptions of works and composers.

All students preparing for history exams should study and review:

1. required works and genres, as listed in the syllabus
2. required terms, as listed in the syllabus
3. representative composers, as listed in the syllabus
4. musical style of the eras studied