

## **Fair access guidelines for candidates who are deaf or hearing impaired**

These guidelines contain information for candidates who are Deaf or hearing impaired.

They detail the access arrangements and reasonable adjustments that ABRSM offer for our Practical, diploma and theory exams.

For convenience we use the term 'hearing impaired' throughout these guidelines.

Before reading these guidelines or making a booking, we recommend you also read our Access Policy which can be found on the Specific Needs page of our website.

### **Examples of reasonable adjustments**

Typical reasonable adjustments for candidates who are hearing impaired include:

- Five minutes of extra examining time to allow for any communication difficulties
- Alternative aural tests if required

All ABRSM examiners are provided with basic information relating to hearing impairments and how this might affect a candidate taking an exam. In addition, you are welcome to supply any further information you think would be helpful for the examiner to know in advance.

It is important to understand that while we are able to make provisions for the administration of the exam, e.g. extra time or alternative tests, we are not able to make any concessions in the marking – all candidates will be treated equally.

### **General arrangements for Practical Exams**

If you notify us that you have a hearing impairment, we will be happy to add five minutes of extra time to allow for any communication difficulties. Please select the most appropriate option when making your entry.

Examiners have been asked to:

- Speak slowly and clearly
- Ensure they are not with their back to a window to aid you with lip-reading
- To establish eye contact with you, or use your name to ensure they have your attention
- Repeat any instructions if asked or to allow five seconds before prompting

### **Written comments**

Marks will always reflect the standard of your performance. However, examiners will aim to avoid comments that may draw undue attention to your specific needs and any access arrangements.

In addition, you are welcome to contact the Access Coordinator to let us know about your specific needs. For example, you may wish to ask the examiner to stand on a particular side, or request the examiner to

wear a microphone or To use the phonetic alphabet (or similar) when giving scale requests.

## **Practical Graded Music Exams**

### **Aural tests**

If you are Deaf or hearing impaired you may choose to take the Alternative Aural tests in Practical graded exams, including Jazz exams. Please select the appropriate option when making your exam entry. The details for these tests for each grade are listed below.

**Specimen tests:** Books of specimen tests are available for purchase. These tests have an instrument specific insert for test D, so it is important to ensure you purchase the correct version. Specimen tests for Piano candidates can be purchased from [www.abrsm.org/shop](http://www.abrsm.org/shop) or from any music retailer. Specimen tests for all other instruments are available on order from Allegro Music and their details can be found at the end of these guidelines.

Provided that the keyboard is not in sight, you may stand wherever you wish in the room or place one or both hands on the piano.

For any test that requires a 'clapped' response, you are free to either clap or tap.

In tests where a change of rhythm is to be described, examiners are happy to accept any valid verbal, clapped or tapped response.

The examiner will be happy to repeat any instructions in the Aural tests if necessary, but any replays of the extracts themselves will be at the examiner's discretion and may well affect the assessment.

If you would benefit from having the standard Aural tests played within a certain range on the piano, please contact the Access Coordinator at the time of entry

### **British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters**

You are welcome to bring a BSL Interpreter to your exam by selecting the appropriate option when making your exam entry. The five minutes of extra time will allow the examiner and BSL interpreter to meet at the start. ABRSM has published separate guidelines for candidates using BSL interpreters.

### **ARSM**

ARSM involves no supporting tests or anything that requires candidates to respond to questions from the examiner, so alternative tests for candidates who are hearing impaired are not normally needed. We will add five minutes to the exam to allow for any communication difficulties. This does not alter the criteria for the length of your programme.

You are welcome to bring a BSL interpreter. We do not need prior notification of this. If you have access requirements that the examiner should be aware of, please contact the access coordinator before you make your entry with the relevant details.

### **Diplomas**

You will be given 15 minutes of general extra time to allow for any difficulties in communication. If you are also using a BSL interpreter, an additional 15 minutes will be allowed, giving a total of 30 minutes extra time. No alternative tests are required for these exams.

### **Music Theory exams**

If you notify us that you are hearing impaired, we will be happy to send you a written copy of the invigilator script ahead of the exam. You are welcome to provide any further information at the time of entry.

### **Alternative aural tests for Practical Graded exams**

All information in these guidelines refers to the alternative tests introduced in 2007. Please ensure you refer to the correct specimen tests.

### **Preparatory test**

If you are unable to attempt listening games C & D, you may attempt two examples of game A and two of game B. The applicant should give advance notice to ABRSM if this provision is required.

### **Initial Grade**

A To clap the pulse of a passage of music played by the examiner.

B To clap, as an echo, the rhythms of two short phrases played by the examiner.

C To recognise where a rhythmic difference occurs in a phrase played three times by the examiner (the change will be made on the third playing).

D To perform a 1-bar question and improvise a 1-bar answer. The test will be in a simple major key and in 4/4 time. Half-a-minute's preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 1**

A To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 2 or 3 time played by the examiner. you will then be asked to state the time.

B To clap, as an echo, the rhythms of three short phrases played by the examiner.

C To recognise a rhythmic difference between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

D To perform a 2-bar question and improvise a 2-bar answer. The test will be in a simple major key and in 4/4 time. 1 minute's preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 2**

A To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 2 (including 6/8) or 3 time played by the examiner. You will then be asked to state the time.

B To clap, as an echo, the rhythms of three short phrases played by the examiner.

C To recognise a rhythmic difference between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

D To perform a 2-bar question and improvise a 2-bar answer, which should end on the tonic. The test will be in a simple major key and in 4/4 time. 1 minute's preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 3**

A To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 2 (including 6/8), 3 (including 9/8) or 4 time played by the examiner. you will then be asked to state the time.

B To clap, as an echo, the rhythms of three short phrases played by the examiner.

C To recognise a rhythmic difference between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

D To perform a 2-bar question and improvise a 2-bar answer, which should end on the tonic. The test will be in a major key and in 3/4 or 4/4 time. 1 minute's preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 4**

A To clap from memory the rhythm of a 4-bar melody in simple or compound time played twice by the examiner. you will then be asked to state whether it is in 2, 3 or 4 time.

B To recognise a rhythmic difference between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

C To perform a 2-bar question and improvise a 2-bar answer, which should end on the tonic. The test will be in a major key and in 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time. 1 minute's preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 5**

A To clap from memory the rhythm of a 4-bar melody in simple or compound time played twice by the examiner. you will then be asked to state whether it is in 2, 3 or 4 time.

B To recognise two rhythmic differences between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

C To perform a 4-bar question and improvise a 4-bar answer, which should end on the tonic. The test will be in a major key and in 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time. 2 minutes' preparation time will be given.

### **Grade 6**

A To clap from memory the rhythm of a short melody in simple or compound time played twice by the examiner. You will then be asked to state whether it is in 2, 3 or 4 time.

B To recognise two rhythmic differences between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

C To perform a 4-bar question and improvise a 4-bar answer, which should modulate to the dominant and end on the tonic of the new key. The test may be in a major or minor key and in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time. 2 minutes' preparation time will be given.

**Grade 7**

A To clap from memory the rhythm of a short melody in simple or compound time played three times by the examiner. you will then be asked to state whether it is in 2, 3 or 4 time.

B To recognise three rhythmic differences between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

C To perform a 4-bar question and improvise a 4-bar answer, which should modulate to the dominant or the relative major/minor, as directed by the examiner, and end on the tonic of the new key. The test may be in a major or minor key and in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time. 2 minutes' preparation time will be given.

**Grade 8**

A To clap from memory the rhythm of a short melody in simple or compound time played three times by the examiner. you will then be asked to state whether it is in 2, 3 or 4 time.

B To recognise three rhythmic differences between the score of a melody and a version played twice by the examiner.

C To perform a 4-bar question and improvise a 4-bar answer, which should modulate to the dominant or the relative major/minor, as directed by the examiner, and end on the tonic of the new key. The test may be in a major or minor key and in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4 or 6/8 time. 2 minutes' preparation time will be given.

**CONTACT DETAILS**

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**Specimen Alternative Aural tests**

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