

Fair access information for deaf and hearing-impaired candidates

Our policy

We endeavour to make our exams as accessible as possible to all candidates, regardless of sensory impairments, learning difficulties or particular physical needs. Special arrangements, including extra time and alternative tests are put in place as appropriate. In addition to the specific provisions described below, we are happy to consider each person individually if his or her needs are not covered by our standard arrangements. It's important to understand, however, that whilst 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.

Preparing for the exam

Using the information below, decide which tests and provisions will work best for you. If you need further information or advice, please refer to page 6 for relevant contact information.

Provision	Practical: extra time
S Alternative Aural tests	5 minutes
V Candidates using a sign language interpreter	5 minutes
Z Candidates using a sign language interpreter and alternative Aural tests	10 minutes

For candidates who do not need either a sign language interpreter or alternative Aural tests, but who require extra time in their examination to allow for any communication difficulties, please include a note with the entry form or send an email to: accesscoordinator@abrs.ac.uk and an extra 5 minutes will be automatically added to the exam time.

Diplomas: all deaf and hearing-impaired candidates will be given 15 minutes of general extra time to allow for any difficulties in communication. If the candidate is also using a sign language interpreter, an additional 15 minutes will be allowed, giving a total of 30 minutes extra time. No alternative tests are required for these exams.

Entering for the exam

- Once you are sure of what's needed for the exam, select the correct Specific Needs code when you make your exam entry. In order for the correct provisions to be made, it is important that the correct code is used each time a candidate is entered for an exam. Where additional arrangements are needed, these must be discussed and agreed with ABRSM before entry.
- On occasions, none of the codes will be relevant, in which case you should include a covering letter with your entry form or send an email to accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk once you have submitted your online entry. Alternatively, you may wish to use one of the codes and send a covering letter or email to give us more specific information – the more information you can provide the better.

Practical exams

Alternative Aural tests

Candidates who are deaf or hearing-impaired may choose to take the Alternative Aural tests in their practical graded exams, including jazz exams, and the syllabus for these tests is listed below. For further information or advice, please contact the Access Coordinator.

In some cases, candidates may not require the Alternative Aural tests but may benefit from having the standard Aural tests played within a certain range on the piano. If this is the case, please let us know at the time of entry and we will ensure the examiner chooses a test that best suits this range.

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 our website: www.abrsm.org/shop or from any music retailer. Specimen tests for all other instruments are available on order from Allegro Music (see page 5 for full contact details).

Sign language interpreters

Candidates who require a sign language interpreter are welcome to bring one to their exam, and the five minutes of extra time will allow the examiner and interpreter to meet at the start. ABRSM has published separate guidance on the use of sign language interpreters, which is available from the Access Coordinator.

Performance Assessment

Deaf and hearing-impaired candidates, whose needs cannot be met within the current graded system, may take the Performance Assessment. In this assessment, candidates can play their own choice of repertoire and come away with a written report containing constructive comments and advice from a member of our examining panel; there is no pass or fail criteria for this assessment. A written statement should accompany the entry detailing the specific needs of the candidate (this is essential if the candidate is under 18) so that the information can be passed on to the examiner. For further information, please contact the Access Coordinator for a leaflet or visit our website: www.abrsm.org/performanceassessment

Alternative Aural tests

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

- Provided that the keyboard is not in sight, candidates may stand wherever they wish in the room or place one or both hands on the piano.
- For any test that requires a 'clapped' response, candidates 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

Preparatory Test

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

Grade 1

- A** To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 2 or 3 time played by the examiner. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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. The candidate 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.

Further information

If you require any further information, please contact the Access Coordinator in one of the following ways:

Access Coordinator

ABRSM
24 Portland Place
London W1B 1LU
T: +44 (0)20 7467 8298
T: +44 (0)20 7637 2582 (textphone)
E: accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk
W: www.abrsm.org/specificneeds

For specimen 'Alternatives to the Aural Tests for deaf and hearing impaired candidates' contact:

Allegro Music

T: +44 (0)1885 490375
E: sales@allegro.co.uk
W: www.allegro.co.uk

Fair access information is also available for blind and partially sighted candidates, candidates with Dyslexia, dyspraxia or other learning difficulties, candidates with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and candidates with physical disabilities.

Candidates with a dual sensory impairment should make sure they have a copy of both sets of relevant guidelines.

All information correct at time of going to publication. Updates will be posted on ABRSM's website: www.abrsm.org/specificneeds