

## WOODWIND REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION

*This section provides a summary of the most important points that teachers and candidates need to know when taking ABRSM woodwind exams. Further details, as well as administrative information relating to the exams, are contained in the Exam Information & Regulations which should be read before an exam booking is made. The Exam Information & Regulations are published annually and are available free of charge from music retailers and from [www.abrsm.org/regulations](http://www.abrsm.org/regulations).*

### Entering for an exam

**Eligibility:** There are eight grades of exam for each subject (Descant Recorder, Grades 1–5 only) and candidates may be entered in any grade irrespective of age and without previously having taken any other grade in the same subject. Candidates for a Grade 6, 7 or 8 exam must already have passed Grade 5 (or above) in Music Theory, Practical Musicianship or a solo Jazz subject; for full details see Regulation 1d at [www.abrsm.org/regulations](http://www.abrsm.org/regulations).

**Access:** ABRSM endeavours to make its exams as accessible as possible to all candidates, regardless of sensory impairments, learning difficulties or particular physical needs. There is a range of alternative tests and formats as well as sets of guidelines for candidates with particular access needs (see [www.abrsm.org/specificneeds](http://www.abrsm.org/specificneeds)). Where a candidate's needs are not covered by the guidelines, each case is considered on an individual basis. Further information is available from the Access Co-ordinator ([accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk](mailto:accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk)).

**Exam booking:** Details of exam dates, venues, fees and how to book an exam are available online at [www.abrsm.org/exambooking](http://www.abrsm.org/exambooking).

### Elements of the exam

All ABRSM graded woodwind exams comprise the following elements: three Pieces; Aural tests; Scales and arpeggios; and Sight-reading. In all grades, marks are allocated as follows:

Pieces:	1	30
	2	30
	3	30
Aural tests		18
Scales & arpeggios		21
Sight-reading		21
Total		<hr/> 150

**Marking scheme:** 100 marks are required for a Pass, 120 for a Merit and 130 for a Distinction. A Pass in each individual section is not required to pass overall. See pp. 10–11 for the marking criteria used by examiners.

## Pieces

**Programme planning:** Candidates must choose one piece from each of the three lists in each grade (A, B and C) and they are encouraged to present a contrasted and balanced programme. In the exam, candidates should inform the examiner which pieces they are performing, and they are welcome to use the form on p. 115 for this purpose.

**Accompaniment:** All pieces in Lists A and B must be performed with a live piano accompaniment, whereas all pieces in List C must be performed solo. Candidates must provide their own accompanist, who may remain in the exam room only while accompanying. The candidate's teacher may act as accompanist; under no circumstances will the examiner do so.

**Exam music & editions:** Wherever the syllabus includes an arrangement or transcription, the edition listed in the syllabus must be used in the exam; in all such cases the abbreviation 'arr.' or 'trans.' appears in the syllabus entry. For all other pieces, the editions quoted in the syllabus are given for guidance only and candidates may use any edition of their choice (in- or out-of-print or downloadable). Information on obtaining exam music is given on p. 108.

**Editorial indications:** Indications such as the realization of ornaments, phrasing, fingering, metronome marks, etc., need not be strictly observed. Where the music contains no such indications, candidates should use their discretion to achieve a musical performance.

**Repeats:** All da capo and dal segno indications should be observed but all other repeats (including first-time bars) should be omitted unless they are very brief (i.e. of a few bars) or unless the syllabus specifies otherwise.

**Cadenzas & tuttis:** Cadenzas should not be played unless the syllabus specifies otherwise. Lengthy orchestral tutti sections should be cut.

**Performing from memory:** Candidates are free to perform any of their pieces from memory; in such cases they must ensure that a copy of the music is available for the examiner's reference. No additional marks are awarded for playing from memory.

**Page-turns:** Candidates should make any page-turns in their music themselves, and pauses or difficulties with page-turning will not affect the marks. Particularly awkward page-turns may be overcome through the use of an additional copy of the music or a photocopy of a section of the piece (but see 'Photocopies' below). If necessary, in a Grade 8 exam only, a candidate's accompanist is permitted to bring a page-turner to assist with difficult page-turns in the piano part.

**Photocopies:** Performing from unauthorized photocopies (or other kinds of copies) of copyright editions is not allowed. ABRSM may withhold the exam result where it has evidence of an illegal copy (or copies) being used. In the UK, copies may be used in certain limited circumstances – for full details, see the MPA's *Code of Fair Practice* at [www.mpaonline.org.uk](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk). In all other cases, application should be made to the copyright holder before any copy is made, and evidence of permission received should be brought to the exam.

## Scales and arpeggios

Examiners will usually ask for at least one of each type of scale/arpeggio etc. required at each grade, as well as aiming to hear a balance of the specified articulations. When asking for requirements, examiners will specify only:

- the key (including minor form – harmonic *or* melodic – in the Grade 6–8 scales)
- the articulation

All scales and arpeggios should:

- be played from memory
- begin from the lowest possible tonic/starting note unless otherwise specified in the syllabus\*
- ascend and descend according to the specified range
- be played without undue accentuation and at a pace that is consistent with accuracy and distinctness

















The choice of breathing place is left to the candidate's discretion, but taking a breath should not disturb the flow of the scale or arpeggio, nor should it be used as a means to negotiate the break or changes of register.

Arpeggios, dominant and diminished sevenths are required in root position only.

For transposing instruments, the naming of scales applies to the notation, not the concert pitch; for example, D major for clarinet in B $\flat$  will sound in C, not D.

Books of scale requirements are published for all woodwind subjects by ABRSM.

The following speeds are given as a general guide:

Grade	Scales, Dominant & Diminished 7ths <sup>†</sup>		Arpeggios	
	<i>speed</i>		<i>speed</i>	
1	 ♩ = 50	 ♩ = 72		
2	 ♩ = 56	 ♩ = 80		
3	 ♩ = 66	 ♩ = 92		
4	 ♩ = 72	 ♩ = 100		
5	 ♩ = 80	 ♩ = 112		
6	 ♩ = 104	 ♩ = 56		
7	 ♩ = 116	 ♩ = 66		
8	 ♩ = 132	 ♩ = 76		

\* Disregarding low B available to flutes with foot-joints

† Includes chromatic scales from Gr. 3, dom. 7ths from Gr. 4, dim. 7ths from Gr. 5, and scales in thirds and whole-tone scales at Gr. 8

## **Sight-reading**

Candidates will be asked to perform a short unaccompanied piece of music which they have not previously seen. They will be given up to half a minute in which to look through and, if they wish, try out any part of the test before they are required to perform it for assessment. Books of specimen sight-reading tests are published for all woodwind subjects by ABRSM.

## **Aural tests**

The requirements are the same for all subjects. Full details of the Aural tests are given on pp. 88–93.

## **In the exam**

**Examiners:** Generally, there will be one examiner in the exam room; however, for training and quality assurance purposes, a second examiner will occasionally be present. Examiners may stop the performance of a piece when they have heard enough to form a judgment. They may also ask to see a copy of the music before or after the performance of a piece. Examiners will not issue, or comment on, a candidate's result; instead, the mark form (and certificate for successful candidates) will be issued by ABRSM after the exam.

**Tuning:** In Grades 1–5, the teacher or accompanist may help tune the candidate's instrument before the exam begins. In Grades 6–8, candidates must tune their instruments themselves. The examiner will not help with tuning.

**Order of the exam:** The individual sections of the exam may be undertaken in any order, at the candidate's choice, although it is always preferable for accompanied pieces to be performed consecutively.

## **Assessment**

The tables on pp. 10–11 show the criteria that examiners use as the basis of assessment. These criteria (newly revised and amended) will be used in exams from January 2014. In each element of the exam, ABRSM operates the principle of marking from the required pass mark positively or negatively, rather than awarding marks by deduction from the maximum or addition from zero. In awarding marks, examiners balance the extent to which the qualities and skills listed on pp. 10–11 (broadly categorized by pitch, time, tone, shape and performance) are demonstrated and contribute towards the overall musical outcome.