

Guidance for Remotely-Assessed ARSM Exams

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Introduction

The ARSM diploma (www.abrsm.org/arsmdiploma) is available to candidates via two methods of assessment - the traditional, face-to-face exam where the candidate performs to a member of our highly-trained examiner panel, or remotely, where an examiner from the same panel makes their assessment using a video recording of the candidate's performance. This document provides detailed guidance on the procedures you need to follow when booking, recording and submitting a **remotely-assessed** ARSM exam.

You can find full details of the exam content and requirements in the ARSM syllabus available at www.abrsm.org/arsmdiploma. The rules set out for exams are given in our Exam Regulations, available at www.abrsm.org/examregulations. It is very important that you read both of these documents if you are preparing candidates for an ARSM exam.

Definitions

In this guidance, the following terms have the meanings given here:

Applicant:	Anyone who is 18 or over and submits a booking for an ABRSM exam (often the school, music teacher, parent of a candidate or the candidate, if he or she is 18 or over).
Candidate:	The person taking the exam. Where a candidate is 18 or over and books their own exam, he or she will also be the applicant.
Contact ID:	Everyone using our online booking service is given a unique Contact ID that allows us to identify individuals in our system. A Candidate's Contact ID is also used on submitted materials.
Responsible adult:	The person who will oversee the exam for candidates under 18. The responsible adult must be aged 18 or over and may be the applicant, teacher or parent/carer.

Remote-assessment requirements

For candidates taking a remotely-assessed ARSM exam, we require the following:

1. A video recording, which includes:
 - a continuous, unedited, performance of the chosen repertoire;
 - a completed programme form shown to the camera before the performance begins;
 - the opening of any own-choice repertoire shown to the camera before the performance begins;
 - announcements to the camera before the performance begins;
 - candidate identification shown to the camera before the performance begins.
2. A declaration completed during the upload process by the candidate or responsible adult (where the candidate is under 18).

Candidate identification

We require all candidates taking ARSM exams to provide a form of photographic identification (photo ID) in accordance with our Candidate Identification Policy (www.abrsm.org/policies). The photo ID should be shown to the camera at the beginning of the exam.

Place of exam

The candidate and/or applicant can choose where the exam performance takes place. This can be the candidate's school, their teacher's studio, or any other location where appropriate space and instruments are available (including a suitable piano for any accompaniments). The exam can also take place in the candidate's home.

Booking an exam

Online exam booking

ARSM exams are booked using our online booking service. If you have not used the service before you will need to register and create an account before you book an exam (www.abrsm.org/createaccount). The person making the booking (the applicant) must be aged 18 or over. The applicant does not need to be the responsible adult or teacher.

Before you book, please have the following candidate information ready:

- Contact ID (if known);
- name;
- date of birth;
- grade and subject being entered for;
- email address for candidate or parent/carer (compulsory);
- any access arrangements or reasonable adjustments.

To make a booking, log in to our online exam booking service (<https://portal.abrsm.org/Global/Login>) during the booking period, click 'Public Venue Booking' and select the instrument(s) and grade(s) for the exams you want to book. You can then select the exam date(s), add candidate details, and pay.

It is compulsory to provide a candidate (parent/carer) email address as this allows us to invite the candidate to register and create an ABRSM account. It may be necessary for the candidate (parent/carer) to upload their video independently of the applicant and to do this the candidate needs an ABRSM account in their name.

The exam date you select will be the deadline for submitting the video recording to ABRSM.

Once the booking period has closed, we will email applicants, and candidates (parents/carers) who have an account, to let them know that they can log in to view their confirmed exam submission slots. You will be able to view the date and the time by which the applicant or candidate should upload the video recording to our online service.

From this point applicants and candidates (parents/carers) with an account, will be able to log in to change an exam submission slot, subject to availability. We are unable to make changes by phone or email.

You can change your slot up to 48 hours before the existing exam submission date. You will only be able to view alternative slots that are more than 48 hours ahead.

For more information about exam rescheduling visit:

www.abrsm.org/en/exam-booking/faqs/rescheduling-practical-exams-at-public-venues

Late entries

At the end of the booking period, once submission slots have been confirmed, customers who did not make an entry may be able to book into any remaining available appointment slots. You can make a late entry up to 48 hours before the available submission date. You will only be able to view appointments that are more than 48 hours ahead.

Late submissions

It will not be possible to submit video recordings after the exam submission date/time has passed. If we do not receive a submission the candidate will be marked as absent. A candidate who is marked as absent, may be eligible for a partial refund under certain circumstances. Please see our Withdrawals, Non-Attendance and Fee Refund Policy available at www.abrsm.org/policies. The candidate can take the exam in the future, but a new booking and full payment must be made.

Taking a remotely-assessed exam

Exam date

The applicant selects a submission date when they book the exam. While the exam video must be uploaded to our online booking service by the submission date/time, the candidate does not have to record their exam performance on that day.

Instructions for the responsible adult (where applicable)

Role of the responsible adult

The responsible adult is responsible for overseeing the exam for candidates under 18. The person taking on this role must read this guidance before the exam recording takes place and make sure that the requirements outlined in this guidance document are followed. The responsible adult must also be present when the applicant or candidate uploads the video to our online booking service, as they will need to complete the declaration form.

During the exam

The responsible adult must:

- stay in the exam room for the duration of the exam;
- make sure that the exam is recorded in one continuous take.

The responsible adult may also:

- act as page-turner where needed;
- provide accompaniment for the candidate;
- help the candidate with the video recording device;
- carry out any of the pre-performance procedures that must be filmed, except showing the candidate's photo ID.

Video recording

General recording requirements

The exam should be recorded as one continuous audio-visual file – this means that once recording has started, the candidate should make their announcements, show their documents to camera and perform all their repertoire in one continuous take. You can find full instructions covering the recording process below.

Tuning before the exam does not need to be recorded, as the examiner only assesses the performance itself. However, any subsequent re-tuning or break during the performance should be included as part of the continuous recording. See the syllabus for further details about breaks: www.abrsm.org/arsmdiploma.

The recording must not be edited in any way after the exam.

Recording devices and set-up

Video resolution

Most modern smartphones, tablets and laptops will be suitable for the video (and audio) recording of the exam. Camera resolution should be 720p (and should be set before the recording is made). This will give appropriate clarity. Lower resolution (e.g. 480p) may produce an unclear, grainy picture and higher resolutions are likely to result in files that are too large to upload successfully. Video resolution can usually be altered in the device settings.

Camera position

Either landscape or portrait view is acceptable. The camera should be static with candidate, instrument and music stand (if used) clearly in view, in order to enable an overall sense of performance. Where an accompanist is part of the performance, they should be in view, although the candidate should be the main focus. It is also important for the examiner to be able to hear the candidate and any accompaniment in appropriate balance. The in-built microphone on most devices will be suitable.

For keyboard instruments, the whole of the keyboard(s) should be visible and, where applicable and possible, the pedals should also be in view. For percussion candidates, each instrument being played in the exam should be visible throughout (as the camera will be static).

We acknowledge that in certain circumstances, for example in Organ exams, the recording device may need to be set at a distance from the candidate in order to secure a balanced sound. In these instances, we understand that a clear picture of, for example, manuals and/or pedal board may not be possible; the candidate must, however, be clearly visible.

People present

If a responsible adult, or any other person not actively involved in the performance, is in the room they should remain still and silent during the performance and be situated out of the camera view. They should not disrupt or direct the candidate's performance, or interfere with the recording in any way.

Testing and trialling

We recommend testing the recording device and trialling recording before the exam – to make sure that the recording will be of a good enough quality, with clear, undistorted sound and vision. Other things to check include, suitable lighting levels, camera position and the legibility of the written programme form on screen (see below). Before starting the recording, it may be helpful to check that audible or potentially distracting notifications are disabled on the device, that it is well charged (where appropriate) and has enough available storage space.

The recording must be of a good enough quality to allow assessment of all aspects of the performance, including tone quality and dynamic range. Examiners will mark based on what they hear and see, and they cannot take poor quality – or balance of – a recording into account. We will not accept any requests for exam result appeals made on the grounds of recording quality.

File size

Recordings must be in one of the following formats: MP4, WMV, MOV or MPG. The file size must not exceed 2GB.

If the resolution of the video is too high, the file may be too large or slow to upload. In these circumstances, the file should be compressed to ensure it uploads successfully. There are a number of platforms available online and through Android and Apple app stores to help with this.

Pre-performance procedures

Programme form

Candidates should complete a programme form and show it to the camera at the start of the video recording, for approximately 5 seconds. The following information is required, presented in programme order:

- the candidate's name and subject (instrument);
- the list number, for items chosen from the ARSM repertoire list; own-choice repertoire can be marked with a dash (—);
- the composer's name and, where applicable, the arranger's/transcriber's name;
- full information on each piece to be performed, including:
 - the name of the piece/larger work
 - the catalogue number, where available – Opus number, BWV for Bach, K. for Mozart, etc.
 - details of individual movements/sections
 - for own-choice repertoire, the edition used
- for woodwind, brass and singing candidates, where the break (if planned) will be taken and its length;
- where applicable, any related instrument(s) to be used;
- an approximate timing for each piece (broken down for individual movements/sections of larger works);
- the overall programme length, which should include gaps between items and, where applicable, a longer break.

In cases where there isn't enough room on the form, the programme information can be continued on a second form.

A blank form to print and complete is provided as an appendix below. Alternatively, you can write the information on a blank piece of paper. A sample completed form is also provided as an appendix, as a guide.

Where a responsible adult is present, they can show the form to the camera if the candidate prefers, as this does not form part of the assessed performance.

Own-choice music

The opening of the candidate's copy of any own-choice repertoire should also be shown to the camera, with the following easily visible:

- the title;
- the opening clef(s), key and time signatures, tempo marking and any other performance indications;
- a few lines of music from the beginning of each piece/song;
 - a whole page of music may be shown, but this is not needed.

If more than one movement/piece from a multi-part work is presented as own-choice repertoire, the opening of each should be shown to the camera as described.

Where a responsible adult is present, they can show the music to the camera if the candidate prefers, as this does not form part of the assessed performance.

Announcement

As well as showing the programme form and own-choice music to the camera, the candidate should announce the following information before beginning their performance:

- their name;
- exam subject (instrument);
- title, composer name and list number (where applicable) for each piece/song, in the order they will be performed.

Where a responsible adult is present they can make the introductory announcement if the candidate prefers, as this does not form part of the assessed performance.

Candidate identification

We require all candidates taking ARSM exams to provide a form of photographic identification (photo ID) in accordance with our Candidate Identification Policy (www.abrsm.org/policies). The photo ID should be shown to the camera at the beginning of the exam.

The candidate must show their photo ID to the camera themselves.

Submitting the video recording and declarations

The candidate or applicant can upload the video recording via our online service from the point at which we confirm the exam booking.

When you are ready to upload you will need to login through either account (it does not need to be the same person who made the entry) and select 'Submit Recordings'. Once you have selected the correct candidate you will be able to start the upload process.

As part of the upload process, a declaration must be completed to confirm that the recording was made in accordance with our Exam Regulations (see Appendix 1). When the candidate is under 18, this declaration should be made by the responsible adult who was present at the time of the recording. The responsible adult must therefore also be present when the video is uploaded. Candidates over 18 must also be present at the point of upload to complete the declaration.

You will only be able to submit your recording once, so make sure the file you are selecting is the correct one.

We will keep recordings of Performance Grade exams for 90 days after we have issued the results. We will then destroy the recordings.

Other uses of the video recording

The video recording of the exam is made for the sole purpose of ABRSM's assessment and it must not be shared or used for any other purpose. This means that the video recording of the exam must not be shared with any other person or uploaded to file sharing or social media websites such as Facebook or YouTube. **If the exam recording is shared with anyone other than ABRSM for assessment purposes, the candidate may be disqualified.**


Status of the video recording (for data protection purposes)

A video recording of an exam has the status of an examination script and is therefore exempt from subject access requests made under data protection law. However, candidates are allowed to retain a copy of their video recording after submitting it to ABRSM. They can request other information about themselves and how ABRSM uses their personal data in accordance with our Privacy Policy: www.abrsm.org/privacypolicy.

Appendices

Declaration content

Candidates over 18

DASHBOARDPUBLIC VENUE BOOKINGPRIVATE VISITSUBMIT RECORDINGSALTOHELPUser Icon

Log in or register → Select exam → Declaration → Upload recording → Confirmation

Declaration

This should be completed by the person submitting the recording. If a candidate is under 18, this must be a responsible adult. See our [website](#) for a definition of 'responsible adult'.

Candidate: John Smith, Piano ARSM

By ticking this box, I confirm the following: *


- the video being submitted is the work of the candidate named above
- the exam was conducted under the [conditions specified](#) by ABRSM
- the video of the exam will not be shared with any other person, or uploaded to any file sharing or social media website, such as Facebook or YouTube

For safeguarding and security purposes, please list everyone present in the room during the recording of the exam and their reason for being present

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Upload recording

Candidates under 18

DASHBOARDPUBLIC VENUE BOOKINGPRIVATE VISITSUBMIT RECORDINGSALTOHELPUser Icon

Log in or register → Select exam → Declaration → Upload recording → Confirmation

Declaration

This should be completed by the person submitting the recording. If a candidate is under 18, this must be a responsible adult. See our [website](#) for a definition of 'responsible adult'.

Candidate: Jill Thomas, Violin ARSM

By ticking this box, I confirm the following: *

- the video being submitted is the work of the candidate named above
- the exam was conducted under the [conditions specified](#) by ABRSM
- the video of the exam will not be shared with any other person, or uploaded to any file sharing or social media website, such as Facebook or YouTube

For safeguarding and security purposes, please list everyone present in the room during the recording of the exam and their reason for being present

Name of responsible adult *

Relationship to candidate *

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Upload recording