

Music Performance - Keyboard Grade 1 and Grade 2

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Duration of Study

The duration of study needed to gain a qualification is dependent on each individual. Regulated qualifications are all assigned a total qualification time as set out below. The total qualification time is an estimate of the hours spent learning with a teacher and the hours spent learning individually.

	Guided learning hours	Independent learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)
Grade 1	12	48	60
Grade 2	18	72	90

Exam Overview

Each exam consists of two main sections – pieces and technical.

Exam Structure			
Section	Score	Marking Elements	Mode
Pieces			
Performance Piece	30	Notational Accuracy & Timing (10) Technique (10) Expression & Communication (10)	Online
Workout Piece 1	25	Notational Accuracy & Timing (10) Technique (10) Expression & Communication (5)	Online
Workout Piece 2	25	Notational Accuracy & Timing (10) Technique (10) Expression & Communication (5)	Online
Technical			
Scales / Chords / Arpeggios	20	Pitch Accuracy (8) Timing & Rhythm Accuracy (8) Finger positions (4)	Online
TOTAL	100		

Assessment and Attainment Levels

Pieces are marked in the following three elements:

- **Notational Accuracy & Timing:** The ability to maintain accurate pitch and rhythm with a good sense of pulse and continuity.
- **Technique:** The ability to demonstrate technical control of the instrument effectively; sound quality.
- **Expression & Communication:** The ability to express musical detail (such as dynamics) and the style and character of the piece effectively; perform with awareness of the presence of an audience.

Technical is marked in the following three elements:

- **Pitch Accuracy:** The ability to maintain accurate pitch.
- **Rhythm & Timing Accuracy:** The ability to maintain accurate rhythm with a good sense of pulse & continuity.
- **Finger Positions:** The ability to maintain correct finger positions.

The exam is marked out of 100. It is not necessary to pass all sections or any particular section in order to achieve a pass overall. Candidates' results correspond to the following attainment levels:

Overall Mark	Attainment Level
86 - 100	Distinction
70 - 85	Merit
55 - 69	Pass
39 - 54	Below Pass 1
0 - 38	Below Pass 2

Exam Durations

Grade Level	Duration
Initial	7-12 minutes
Grade 1	15-18 minutes
Grade 2	15-18 minutes

Example Learning Outcomes and Objectives

Initial	
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:
Secure a basic foundation on their instrument and produce a performance that demonstrates a basic fluency and accuracy in notation.	Perform basic repertoire with the ability to maintain the correct pitch and rhythm with an adequate sense of pulse and continuity.
Demonstrate confidence in executing basic techniques.	Demonstrate basic techniques with an adequate sound.
Perform with enthusiasm and confidence with an awareness of the presence of an audience.	Demonstrate a sense of performance with some confidence and awareness of an audience. Demonstrate an awareness of musical detail.
Grade 1	
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:
Produce a performance that demonstrates a secure foundation in their instrument with fluency and generally accurate notation.	Perform grade-specific repertoire with the ability to maintain the correct pitch and rhythm with a secure sense of continuity and pulse.

Demonstrate confidence in executing grade specific techniques.	Demonstrate a reliable technique with basic tonal control and projection.
Perform accurately with confidence and express mood to an audience.	Perform with confidence and a good overall awareness of an audience. Perform with accurate musical detail and stylistic understanding.
Grade 2	
Learning Outcomes The learner will:	Assessment Criteria The learner can:
Produce a secure and fluent performance with good notational accuracy.	Perform grade-specific repertoire with the ability to maintain the correct pitch and rhythm with a secure sense of continuity and pulse.
Demonstrate confidence in executing grade specific techniques.	Demonstrate a competent level of technique with a reliable tonal control and a good quality sound that is well projected.
Perform accurately with the ability to express mood and engage the audience effectively.	Perform with confidence and accuracy with a capacity for audience engagement demonstrated. Perform with accurate musical detail and stylistic understanding, with the beginnings of individuality demonstrated.

Pieces

Performing pieces is fundamental to the development of a performing musician. It is in performing pieces that candidates can put their skills into practice, solidify their learning and build confidence. Performing a piece from start to finish also allows a musician to learn how to recover from mistakes in a live environment which is a very important skill to master.

A candidate will be asked to perform three pieces in their exam - one performance piece and two workout pieces. All pieces must be performed with the right-hand playing the melody and the left-hand playing the chords indicated above the staff. For performance pieces, candidates can either choose one of the pieces listed from the Keyboard Course book, or an own-choice piece from electronic keyboard syllabus at the equivalent grade level.

Technical

We believe that implementing a good technique early on is vital in order to allow a musician to flourish and reach their full potential. In each exam, a candidate will be tested on certain techniques such as scales and chords to help support their musical journey.

Keyboard Specifications

Candidates will need to ensure that their keyboard has at least 5 octaves and is touch sensitive with full-size keys. It is recommended that a candidate uses a keyboard that contains multiple synth sounds and rhythmic beats in order to portray the correct style of the pieces. If a candidate does not have the specific synth sound indicated, a synth sound "as close to" this is acceptable.

Age Groups

Music Performance exams are open to all age groups.

Performing from Memory

Although we encourage students to perform from memory, it is not compulsory, and no extra marks will be awarded.

Photocopies

Candidates must use an original copy or authorized download of the music being performed in the exam. No photocopies of the books will be permitted.

Exam Specifications

Initial

1) Pieces

All pieces must be performed with the right-hand playing the melody line and the left-hand playing the chords indicated above the staff. At the initial stage, candidates are expected to play at least two-note chords in the left hand.

Candidates are expected to play the specified sync sounds on the score (or as close to), along with the rhythmic beat indicated.

Performance Piece

Candidates can choose to perform **one** piece from those listed below, all of which can be found in the Keyboard Course Initial Book.

- **Empire of the Sun** – Performance
- **Rock Formation** – Performance
- **Dreamland** – Performance

Or

Alternatively, a candidate can choose to perform an own-choice piece from the electronic keyboard syllabus at the same grade level.

Workout Pieces

Candidates must choose to perform **two** pieces from those listed below. All workout pieces can be found in the Keyboard Course Initial Book.

- **Majestic**
- **Saviour**
- **Jovian Sky**
- **F.B.I**
- **Slip Away**
- **Blue Funk**

2) Technical

Scales

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the following scales to a metronome at 80 BPM following a 1-bar count-in. Please refer to the Keyboard Course Initial Book.

- **C Major One Octave** - RH - Exercise 1
- **C Major One Octave** - LH - Exercise 2
- **G Major One Octave** - RH - Exercise 1
- **G Major One Octave** - LH - Exercise 2
- **A minor Pentatonic Scale** - Right Hand
- **A minor Pentatonic Scale** - Left Hand

Chords

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the chords below following a 1-bar count-in. The candidate can choose whether they play the chords in the right-hand or left-hand. These chords can be found in the chordal exercise "Pieces of Eights". Please refer to the Keyboard Course Initial Book.

- **C Major**
- **A minor**
- **G Major**

Grade 1

1) Pieces

All pieces must be performed with the right-hand playing the melody line and the left-hand playing the chords indicated above the staff. At Grade 1, candidates are expected to play 3-note chords. The candidate can choose which inversion to play (root, 1st inversion or 2nd inversion).

Candidates are expected to play the specified sync sounds on the score (or as close to), along with the rhythmic beat indicated.

Performance Piece

Candidates can choose to perform **one** piece from those listed below, all of which can be found in the Keyboard Course Grade 1 Book.

- **Who Is Who?** - Part 1
- **Blackberry Jam** - Part 1
- **Chilling At The Blue Frog** - Part 1

Or

Alternatively, a candidate can choose to perform an own-choice piece from the electronic keyboard syllabus at the same grade level.

Workout Pieces

Candidates must choose to perform **two** pieces from those listed below. All workout pieces can be found in the Keyboard Course Grade 1 Book.

- **Union**
- **Neutrino**
- **Electromagnetic**
- **Prize Fighter**
- **DC Rock**
- **Lullaby**
- **The Divide**

2) Technical

Scales

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the following scales to a metronome at 90 BPM following a 1-bar count-in. All scales must be played both hands together. Please refer to the Keyboard Course Grade 1 Book.

- **G Major Scale**
- **E Natural minor Scale**
- **A Natural minor Scale**
- **A minor Pentatonic Scale**
- **E minor Pentatonic Scale**
- **A Blues Scale**

Chords

Candidates will be asked to play one of the following chordal exercises to a metronome at 100 BPM following a 1-bar count-in. Candidates can choose whether to play the chords in the right-hand or left-hand.

- **Chords of A minor - Exercise 1**
- **Chords of E minor - Exercise 1**

Arpeggios

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the following arpeggios, separate hands, to a metronome at 90 BPM following a 1-bar count-in.

- **E minor Arpeggio Inversions**
- **A minor Arpeggio Inversions**
- **C Major Arpeggio Inversions**

Grade 2

1) Pieces

All pieces must be performed with the right-hand playing the melody line and the left-hand playing the chords indicated above the staff. At Grade 2, candidates are expected to play 3-note chords. The candidate can choose which inversion to play (root, 1st inversion or 2nd inversion).

Candidates are expected to play the specified sync sounds on the score (or as close to), along with the rhythmic beat indicated.

Performance Piece

Candidates can choose to perform **one** piece from those listed below, all of which can be found in the Keyboard Course Grade 2 Book.

- **Riff Raff** – Part one
- **More Than This** – Part one
- **Summer Blues** – Part one

Or

- Alternatively, a candidate can choose to perform an own-choice piece from the electronic keyboard syllabus at the same grade level.

Workout Pieces

Candidates must choose to perform **two** pieces from those listed below. All workout pieces can be found in the Keyboard Course Grade 2 Book.

- **Open Space**
- **Deep Down**
- **Thunder and Lightning**
- **Gotham City Blues**
- **Soul Sister**
- **For All Time**
- **Drive**
- **Hang In There**

2) Technical

Scales

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the following scales to a metronome at 100 BPM following a 1-bar count-in. All scales must be played both hands together. Please refer to the Keyboard Course Grade 2 Book.

- **E Natural Minor Scale Two Octaves**
- **B Natural Minor Scale Two Octaves**
- **G Major Scale Two Octaves**
- **A Major Scale Two Octaves**
- **D Major Scale Two Octaves**
- **D Major Pentatonic Two Octaves**
- **B Minor Pentatonic Two Octaves**
- **G Blues Scale Two Octaves**

Chords

Candidates will be asked to play one of the following chordal exercises to a metronome following a 1-bar count-in. The candidate can choose whether they play the chords in their right-hand or left-hand.

- **Seventh Chords in C** - Exercise 3 (110 BPM)
(N.B Playing the 1st, 3rd and 7th note only is acceptable in the “Seventh Chords in G” exercise)
- **12 Bar Blues in G** - Variation 1 (115 BPM)

Arpeggios

Candidates will be asked to play a selection of the following arpeggios to a metronome at 90 BPM following a 1-bar count-in.

- **C Major 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **G Major 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **D Major 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **E Minor 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **B Minor 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **A Minor 2 Octave Arpeggio**
- **A Major 2 Octave Arpeggio**

Marking Scheme

Attainment Levels

The exam is marked out of 100. It is not necessary to pass all sections or any particular section in order to achieve a pass overall. Candidates' results correspond to the following attainment levels:

Overall Mark	Attainment Level
86 - 100	Distinction
70 - 85	Merit
55 - 69	Pass
39 - 54	Below Pass 1
0 - 38	Below Pass 2

How Pieces are Marked

Examiners use the following criteria to mark performance songs:
(P = Performance Piece W = Workout Piece)

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Notational Accuracy	9-10 Marks (P) (W) Excellent level of security in pitch and rhythm. Excellent timing throughout.	7-8 Marks (P) (W) Good level of security in pitch and rhythm with only minimal inaccuracies. Good sense of pulse and	6 Marks (P) (W) Generally reliable level of security in pitch and rhythm with some inaccuracies. Generally	4-5 Marks (P) (W) Unreliable level of security in pitch and rhythm. Unreliable sense of pulse and continuity.	0-3 Marks (P) (W) Extremely unreliable level of security in pitch and rhythm with little sense of pulse and continuity.

		continuity with occasional lapses.	reliable sense of pulse and continuity with some lapses.		
Technique	9-10 Marks (P) (W) An excellent degree of technical control. Excellent sound quality throughout the performance.	7-8 Marks (P) (W) A good degree of technical control with minimal insecurities. Good sound quality throughout the performance.	6 Marks (P) (W) Generally reliable degree of technical control with some insecurities. Generally reliable sound quality with some lapses.	4-5 Marks (P) (W) Unreliable level of technical control. Unreliable sound quality.	0-3 Marks (P) (W) Extremely unreliable level of technical control. Extremely unreliable sound quality.
Expression & Communication	9-10 Marks (P) 5 Marks (W) A very high level of stylistic understanding and musical detail expressed. Excellent communication and awareness of audience.	7-8 Marks (P) 4 Marks (W) A good level of stylistic understanding and musical detail expressed with only minimal insecurities. A good level of communication and awareness of audience.	6 Marks (P) 3 Marks (W) A generally reliable level of stylistic understanding and musical detail expressed with some insecurities. A reasonable level of communication and awareness of audience.	4-5 Marks (P) 2 Marks (W) Unreliable level of stylistic understanding and musical detail expressed with frequent insecurities. Unreliable communication and awareness of audience.	0-3 Marks (P) 0-1 Marks (W) Extremely unreliable level of stylistic understanding and musical detail expressed. Little or no communication and awareness of audience.

How Technical Is Marked

Examiners use the following criteria to mark Technical:

	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Pitch Accuracy	8 Marks Excellent Pitch. Excellent sound with crisp and clear notes.	6-7 Marks Good pitch with only minor slips. Good sound.	4-5 Marks Generally reliable pitch with some lapses. Generally reliable sound.	3 Marks Unreliable pitch with frequent lapses. Unreliable sound.	0-2 Marks Extremely unreliable pitch throughout. Extremely unreliable sound throughout.
Rhythm & Timing	8 Marks Excellent timing and rhythm throughout.	6-7 Marks Good rhythmic control with only minor slips in maintaining the pulse.	4-5 Marks Generally reliable rhythmic control with some lapses. Generally reliable timing despite occasional lapses.	3 Marks Unreliable rhythmic control with frequent errors. Unreliable timing with frequent slips in maintaining the pulse.	0-2 Marks Little or no rhythmic control or sense of pulse.
Finger Position	4 Marks Perfect finger positions used throughout.	3 Marks Correct finger positions used with very minor slips.	2 Marks Mostly correct finger positions used despite some lapses.	1 Marks Incorrect finger positions used most of the time.	0 Marks No correct finger positions used.