

## GRADE 8

**PREREQUISITE FOR ENTRY:** ABRSM Grade 5 (or above) in Music Theory, Practical Musicianship or any solo Jazz instrument. For alternatives, see [www.abrsm.org/prerequisite](http://www.abrsm.org/prerequisite).

**THREE PIECES:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three Lists, **A**, **B** and **C**:

	COMPOSER	PIECE / WORK / ARRANGER	PUBLICATION (PUBLISHER)
<b>A</b>	1 S. Dussek	The Garland of Love, trans. Shaljean	S. Dussek: The Garland of Love (Blue Crescent Music)
	2 Handel	Air and Variations 'The Harmonious Blacksmith', arr. Bouchaud	Pièces Classiques, Book 6 (Billaudot)
	3 Handel	Andante allegro <i>and</i> Larghetto (1st <i>and</i> 2nd movts from <i>Concerto in B♭</i> , Op. 4 No. 6, HWV 294), arr. Le Dentu <i>unaccompanied</i>	Handel: Concerto in B♭ for Celtic Harp (Billaudot)
	4 Anne-Marie O'Farrell	The Knappogue Medley	Anne-Marie O'Farrell: The Knappogue Medley (O'Farrell)
	5 arr. Hannah Phillips	The Spanish Ladie <i>and</i> The Butterfly <i>observing repeat as needed</i>	The Scottish Harp Anthology, Vol. 3: Advanced (Pentland Publishing)
	6 Bonnie Shaljean	Fantasia on a Sonata by Cardon	Bonnie Shaljean: Fantasia on a Sonata by Cardon (Blue Crescent Music)
<b>B</b>	1 Debussy	Première arabesque, trans. Brundage	Debussy: Première arabesque (Seaside Press)
	2 Anne Macdearmid	Sea Rapture	Anne Macdearmid: Sea Rapture (Macdearmid) <b>L</b>
	3 D. McNulty	Fantasia <i>and</i> Rondo	Pp.163-5 <i>and</i> 168-71 from The Irish Harp Book (Carysfort Press)
	4 Alfredo Rolando Ortiz	Milonga para amar <i>advanced version</i>	P.52 from The International Rhythmic Collection, Vol. 2 (AROY Music)
	5 Bonnie Shaljean	Slow Train	Bonnie Shaljean: Slow Train (Blue Crescent Music)
	6 Victory	Grazioso <i>and</i> Lento assai (Nos. 1 <i>and</i> 2 from <i>Three Pieces for the Irish Harp</i> )	Pp.135-137 <i>and</i> 138-140 from The Irish Harp Book (Carysfort Press)
<b>C</b>	1 J. S. Bach	Prelude (from <i>Lute Suite</i> , BWV 1006a), trans. O'Farrell	J. S. Bach: Prelude from Lute Suite, BWV 1006a (O'Farrell)
	2 Beethoven	Mandolin Sonatina in C, arr. Shaljean	Beethoven for Harp (Blue Crescent Music)
	3 Alfredo Rolando Ortiz	Theme (from <i>Suite to Luzma</i> )	Latin American Harps History, Music and Techniques (AROY Music)
	4 Kim Robertson	Boundless	Treasures of the Celtic Harp (Mel Bay)
	5 Bonnie Shaljean	Prelude in D minor (from <i>12 Preludes</i> )	Bonnie Shaljean: 12 Preludes for Concert or Celtic Harp (Blue Crescent Music)
	6 Bonnie Shaljean	Prelude in F (from <i>12 Preludes</i> )	Bonnie Shaljean: 12 Preludes for Concert or Celtic Harp (Blue Crescent Music)

**SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS:** from memory; for further details (including examples) see pages 3–4 & 8–9

	RANGE	REQUIREMENTS
<b>SCALES (SIMILAR MOTION)</b>		
E♭, B♭, F, C, G, D, A, E majors	3/2 oct. ♦	hands separately, <i>or</i> hands together one octave <i>or</i> a sixth apart, as chosen by the examiner
C, G, D, A, E harmonic minors		
C, G, D, A, E melodic minors	3 oct.	right hand only
<b>CONTRARY-MOTION SCALES</b>		
E♭, B♭, F, C, G, D, A, E majors	1 oct.	hands starting one octave, a third <i>or</i> a sixth apart, as chosen by the examiner
C, G, D, A, E harmonic minors		
<b>ARPEGGIOS</b>		
E♭, B♭, F, C, G, D, A, E majors	3/2 oct. ♦	hands separately <i>or</i> together, root position, first <i>or</i> second inversion, as chosen by the examiner
C, G, D, A, E minors		
<i>same keys as above</i>	4/3 oct. ♦	divided between the hands; root position, first <i>or</i> second inversion, as chosen by the examiner
<i>same keys as above</i>	3 oct.	narrow position, divided between the hands (root position only)
<b>DOMINANT SEVENTHS</b>		
in the keys of C, F, G and B♭	3 oct.	hands separately <i>or</i> together, root position, first, second <i>or</i> third inversion, as chosen by the examiner
	4 oct.	divided between the hands; root position, first, second <i>or</i> third inversion, as chosen by the examiner
	4 oct.	narrow position, divided between the hands (root position only)
<b>DIMINISHED SEVENTHS</b>		
starting on C♯, F♯ and G♯	3 oct.	hands separately <i>or</i> together, as chosen by the examiner
	4 oct.	divided between the hands

♦ *three or two octaves (four or three for arpeggios divided between the hands), as range of instrument permits*

**SIGHT-READING:** a short piece of previously unseen music; for further details see page 4

**AURAL TESTS:** administered by the examiner from the piano; for further details see pages 42 & 47

## **HARP GRADES:** requirements and information

*These syllabuses are valid from 2019 until further notice.*

*This section provides a summary of the most important points that teachers and candidates need to know when taking ABRSM graded harp exams. Further details, as well as administrative information relating to the exams, are given in ABRSM's Exam Regulations (available at [www.abrsm.org/examregulations](http://www.abrsm.org/examregulations)) which should be read before an exam booking is made.*

### **Changes in 2019**

- ABRSM now offers two distinct qualifications for harp – Harp (Pedal) and Harp (Non-pedal).
- The specific instrument must be indicated when booking an exam. This instrument will then appear on mark forms and certificates.
- For clarity and ease of use, the syllabus requirements have been separated for each instrument and presented in a new format.
- Pieces have not changed from the preceding syllabus except for the replacement of a small number of pieces, affecting Grade 1 (both harps), Grade 2 (both harps) and Grade 8 (non-pedal harp). Further details are available at [www.abrsm.org/syllabuscorrections](http://www.abrsm.org/syllabuscorrections). Candidates who have been preparing any of the replaced pieces can play them in their exam until 31 December 2019 worldwide.
- All other requirements – Scales and arpeggios, Sight-reading and Aural tests – are the same as in the preceding syllabus.
- Some key exam information has been updated and clarified, particularly in relation to page-turns.
- Information about ABRSM's post-Grade 8 qualifications for harp is also included.
- This syllabus document is available online only and not in a printed booklet.

### **Entering for an exam**

**Eligibility:** There are eight grades of exam for each instrument and candidates may be entered for any grade irrespective of age and without previously having taken any other grade on the same instrument. Candidates for a Grade 6, 7 or 8 exam must already have passed ABRSM Grade 5 (or above) in Music Theory, Practical Musicianship or a solo Jazz instrument; for full details, including a list of accepted alternatives, see [www.abrsm.org/prerequisite](http://www.abrsm.org/prerequisite).

**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, locations, fees and how to book an exam are available online at [www.abrsm.org/exambooking](http://www.abrsm.org/exambooking).

### **Instruments**

**Pedal harp:** The requirements from Grade 4 are generally for instruments with a minimum of 46 strings.

**Non-pedal harp:** The requirements from Grade 3 are for instruments with E $\flat$  tuning and with a minimum of 34 strings (pitch of bottom string: C two octaves below middle C, or lower). At Grades 1 and 2, three tuning groups (C tuning, E $\flat$  tuning and F tuning) are provided for.

## Elements of the exam

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

Pieces: 1	30
2	30
3	30
Scales and arpeggios	21
Sight-reading	21
Aural tests	18
Total	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. 52–53 for the marking criteria used by examiners.

## Pieces

**Programme planning:** Candidates must choose one piece from each of the three lists (A, B and C) in each grade. In the exam, they should inform the examiner which pieces they are performing, and they are welcome to use the form on p. 54 for this purpose.

Every effort has been made to ensure the syllabus lists feature a broad range of repertoire, with items to suit and appeal to candidates of differing ages, backgrounds and interests. Not every piece will be suitable for every candidate due to technical reasons or wider context (historical, cultural, subject matter of the larger work from which it is drawn, lyrics if an arrangement of a song etc.). It is advised that pieces selected are considered carefully for their appropriateness to each individual, which may require consultation between teachers and parents/guardians. Given the ever-changing nature of the digital world, teachers and parents/guardians should also exercise caution when allowing younger candidates to research items online: [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety).

**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. 5.

**Interpreting the score:** Printed editorial suggestions such as fingering, metronome marks, realization of ornaments etc. need not be strictly observed. Whether the piece contains musical indications or not, candidates are always encouraged to interpret the score in a stylistically appropriate manner. Ultimately, examiners’ marking will be determined by consideration of pitch, time, tone, shape and performance, and how control of these contributes to the overall musical outcome.

**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.

**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 to refer to if necessary. No additional marks are awarded for playing from memory.

**Page-turns:** Examiners will be understanding if a page-turn causes a lack of continuity during a piece, and this will not affect the marking. A variety of solutions for awkward page-turns exist, including the use of an additional copy of the music or a photocopy of a section of the piece (but see 'Photocopies' below). In cases where candidates at Grades 6–8 believe there is no solution to a particularly awkward page-turn, they may bring a page-turner to the exam (prior permission is not required; the turner may be a candidate's teacher). Examiners are unable to help with page-turning.

**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

At Grades 1 and 2, there are three tuning groups for non-pedal harp, and examiners will ask candidates which group they have chosen.

Examiners will usually ask for at least one of each type of scale/arpeggio etc. required at each grade. They will also ask to hear a balance of the positions and hand requirements across the requests as a whole. When asking for requirements, examiners will specify:

- the key (including minor form – harmonic *or* melodic – when the syllabus stipulates both) or the starting note
- the hand(s) (e.g. left hand, right hand, hands together, divided between the hands, narrow position)
- the position (root or inversion) for arpeggios and dominant sevenths (Grades 4–8)
- the interval between the hands (hands-together scales, Grades 6–8)

All scales and arpeggios should:

- be played from memory
- be played in even notes (except for dominant and diminished sevenths, where specific patterns are indicated)
- ascend and descend according to the specified range (and pattern)

Candidates are welcome to use any fingering that produces a successful musical outcome.

Candidates are free to start at any octave, provided the required ranges are covered. For all 'hands together' requirements, the hands should be one octave apart, unless otherwise indicated.










## *Harp grades: requirements and information*

Scales a sixth apart should begin with the tonic as the upper note, while scales a third or a tenth apart should begin with the tonic as the lower note.

Examples of patterns specified in this syllabus are given for pedal harp on pp. 6-7 and for non-pedal harp on pp. 8-9.

Books of the scale requirements (for Grades 1-5 and 6-8) are published for pedal and non-pedal harp by Alaw ([www.alawmusic.com](http://www.alawmusic.com)).

The following speeds are given as a general guide:

	pattern	Grade / Speed							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Scales</b>		♩ = 63	♩ = 69	♩ = 76	♩ = 42	♩ = 50	♩ = 60	♩ = 66	♩ = 72
<b>Melodic minor scales</b> (non-pedal harp)					♩ = 52	♩ = 60	♩ = 69	♩ = 76	♩ = 84
<b>Contrary-motion scales</b>								♩ = 60	♩ = 66
<b>Arpeggios</b>		♩ = 100	♩ = 112	♩ = 42	♩ = 56	♩ = 63	♩ = 72	♩ = 76	♩ = 80
<b>Arpeggios</b> (divided between hands)			♩ = 126	♩ = 50	♩ = 63	♩ = 70	♩ = 80	♩ = 84	♩ = 88
<b>Arpeggios</b> (narrow position)									♩ = 72
<b>Dom. &amp; Dim. 7ths*</b>						♩ = 46	♩ = 54	♩ = 60	♩ = 66
<b>Dom. &amp; Dim. 7ths*</b> (divided between hands)						♩ = 50	♩ = 60	♩ = 66	♩ = 72
<b>Dom. 7ths</b> (narrow position)								♩ = 66	♩ = 72

\* Dim. 7ths at Grade 8 only

## **Sight-reading**

Candidates will be asked to play a short unaccompanied piece of music which they have not previously seen. They will be given half a minute in which to look through and, if they wish, try out all or any part of the test before they are required to play it for assessment. For practice purposes, a book of sample sight-reading tests is published for harp (pedal and non-pedal) by ABRSM.

## **Aural tests**

The requirements are the same for all subjects. Full details of the Aural tests are given on pp. 42-47.

## In the exam

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

**Tuning:** Candidates must bring their own instrument to the exam and ensure that it is tuned beforehand. They will be given sufficient time to make the necessary pedal/lever changes for scale requirements and pieces. Examiners are unable to help with tuning.

**Music stands:** All ABRSM public venues provide a music stand, but candidates are welcome to bring their own if they prefer. The examiner will be happy to help adjust the height or position of the stand.

**Order of the exam:** The individual sections of the exam may be undertaken in any order, at the candidate's choice.

## Assessment

The tables on pp. 52–53 show the marking criteria used by examiners. 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. 52–53 (broadly categorized by pitch, time, tone, shape and performance) are demonstrated and contribute towards the overall musical outcome.

## Obtaining exam music

Exam music is available from music retailers, specialist harp retailers and online, including at the ABRSM music shop: [www.abrsm.org/shop](http://www.abrsm.org/shop). Every effort has been made to ensure that all the publications listed will remain available for the duration of the syllabus. Candidates are advised to obtain their music well in advance of the exam in case of any delays with items not kept in stock by retailers. Apart from queries relating to exams, all enquiries about the music (e.g. editorial, availability) should be addressed to the relevant publisher: contact details are listed at [www.abrsm.org/publishers](http://www.abrsm.org/publishers).

## SCALE AND ARPEGGIO PATTERNS: Harp (Non-pedal)

The examples below clarify patterns and ranges found in the Harp (Non-pedal) syllabus. Reference should be made to the appropriate syllabus pages for the full requirements.

### ARPEGGIOS divided between the hands

two octaves, root position



three octaves, root position (and similarly, first or second inversions)

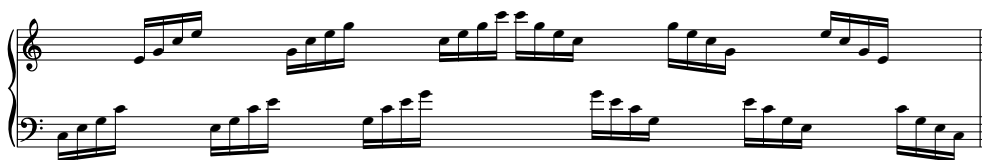


four octaves, root position (and similarly, first or second inversions)



### ARPEGGIOS narrow position

three octaves, root position





**DOMINANT SEVENTHS** hands separately or together

two octaves, root position (and similarly, three octaves and first, second or third inversions)

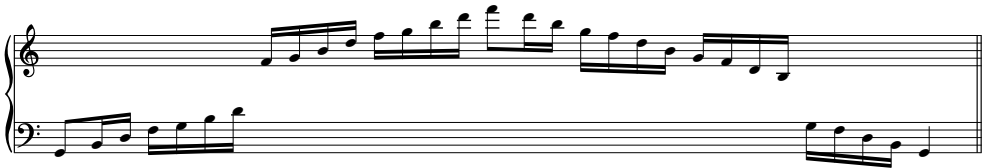


**DOMINANT SEVENTHS** divided between the hands

three octaves, root position (and similarly, first or second inversions)

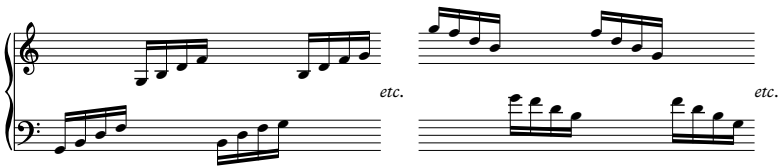


four octaves, root position (and similarly, first, second or third inversions)



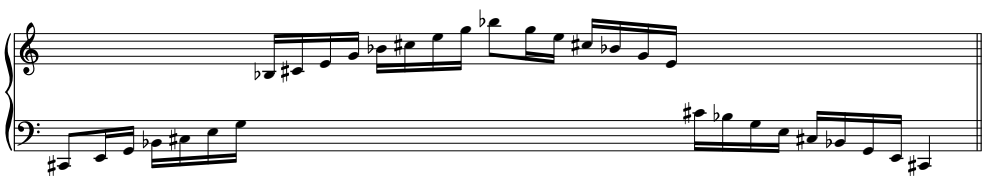
**DOMINANT SEVENTHS** narrow position

three octaves, root position (and similarly, four octaves)



**DIMINISHED SEVENTHS** divided between the hands

four octaves



## **AURAL TESTS:** included in the Practical exams for all subjects

Listening lies at the heart of all good music-making. Developing aural awareness is fundamental to musical training because having a ‘musical ear’ impacts on all aspects of musicianship. Singing, both silently in the head and out loud, is one of the best ways to develop the ‘musical ear’. It connects the internal imagining of sound, the ‘inner ear’, with the external creation of it, without the necessity of mechanically having to ‘find the note’ on an instrument (important though that connection is). By integrating aural activities in imaginative ways in the lesson, preparation for the aural tests within an exam will be a natural extension of what is already an essential part of the learning experience.

### **In the exam**

Aural tests are an integral part of all Practical graded exams.

The tests are administered by the examiner from the piano. For any test that requires a sung response, pitch rather than vocal quality is being assessed. The examiner will be happy to adapt to the vocal range of the candidate, whose responses may be sung to any vowel (or consonant followed by a vowel), hummed or whistled (and at a different octave, if appropriate).

### **Assessment**

Some tests allow for a second attempt or for an additional playing by the examiner, if necessary. The examiner will also be ready to prompt, where helpful, although this may affect the assessment.

Marks are not awarded for each individual test or deducted for mistakes; instead they reflect the candidate’s overall response in this section. The marking criteria for the aural tests are given on p. 53.

### **Specimen tests**

Examples of the tests are given in *Specimen Aural Tests* and *Aural Training in Practice* (from 2011), available for purchase from music retailers and from [www.abrsm.org/shop](http://www.abrsm.org/shop).

### **Deaf or hearing-impaired candidates**

Deaf or hearing-impaired candidates may choose alternative tests in place of the standard tests, if requested at the time of entry. Further information, including the syllabus for the alternative tests, is available at [www.abrsm.org/specificneeds](http://www.abrsm.org/specificneeds).

- A(i) To sing or play from memory the *lowest* part of a three-part phrase played twice by the examiner.** The lowest part will be within the range of an octave, in a major or minor key with up to three sharps or flats. First the examiner will play the key-chord and the starting note and then count in two bars. (If the candidate chooses to play, the examiner will also name the key-chord and the starting note, as appropriate for the instrument.) If necessary, the examiner will play the phrase again and allow a second attempt (although this may affect the assessment).
- (ii) To identify the cadence at the end of a continuing phrase as perfect, imperfect, interrupted or plagal.** The phrase will be in a major or minor key and will be played twice by the examiner. The chords forming the cadence will be limited to the tonic (root position, first or second inversions), supertonic (root position or first inversion), subdominant (root position), dominant (root position, first or second inversions), dominant seventh (root position) or submediant (root position). Before the first playing, the examiner will play the key-chord.
- (iii) To identify the three chords (including their positions) forming the above cadential progression.** The chords will be limited to the tonic (root position, first or second inversions), supertonic (root position or first inversion), subdominant (root position), dominant (root position, first or second inversions), dominant seventh (root position) or submediant (root position). First the examiner will name and play the key-chord, then play the three chords in sequence, finally playing each chord individually, pausing for the candidate to identify it. The candidate may answer using technical names (tonic, first inversion, etc.), chord numbers (Ib, etc.) or letter names (C major in first inversion, etc.).
- B To sing the *lower* part of a two-part phrase from score, with the upper part played by the examiner.** The candidate may choose to sing from treble or bass clef. The lower part will be within the range of an octave, in a major or minor key with up to four sharps or flats. First the examiner will name and play the key-chord and the starting note and then give the pulse. A brief period of preparation will follow during which the candidate may sing out loud. The examiner will play the key-chord and the starting note again and then count in two bars. If necessary, the examiner will allow a second attempt (although this may affect the assessment).
- C To identify whether the modulations at the end of two different passages are to the dominant, subdominant or relative minor/major.** The first passage will begin in a major key and the second will begin in a minor key; each passage will be played once by the examiner. Before playing each passage, the examiner will name and play the starting key-chord. The candidate may answer using technical names (dominant\*, subdominant, relative minor/major) or the letter name of the new key. (\* Minor-key passages may modulate to the dominant major or minor but the candidate is only required to specify 'dominant' in such cases.)
- D To describe the characteristic features of a piece played by the examiner.** After hearing the piece, the candidate should describe any notable features (such as texture, structure, character, style and period, etc.). The examiner will prompt the candidate with questions only if this becomes necessary.