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## **INTRODUCTION**

The information incorporated in this booklet is to provide practical advice and helpful information for the busy teacher toward the achievement of the candidate's personal goal. It is imperative that the teacher uses this booklet in conjunction with any NZMSM syllabus.

The candidate's success is the culmination of teamwork between the teacher, candidate and parent/caregiver.

# EXAMINATION PROSPECTUS

## **PIANO:**

<b>STYLE</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>
<b>Traditional</b>	Initial	
	Preliminary	
	Preparatory	
<b>Modern</b>	Grades 1-7	
	Grade 8	- a minimum pass of 130 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
	Diploma	- a minimum pass of 170 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
	Performance	- a minimum pass of 400 marks in NZMSM Diploma Theory or above.
		<i>(For grade 8 to performance these theory requirements must be completed prior to the practical examination.)</i>
<b>Recital</b>	Inaugural	- suggested for use after pregrades
	Junior	- suggested for use after grades 1/2
<b>Contemporary</b>	Levels 1-6 require completion of the theory level one grade higher than the practical exam level being sat.	

## **KEYBOARD:**

<b>STYLE</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>
<b>Traditional</b>	Initial	
	Preliminary	- Option A ( <i>notated</i> ) or Option B ( <i>chords</i> )
	Preparatory	- Option A ( <i>notated</i> ) or Option B ( <i>chords</i> )
<b>Modern</b>	Grades 1-7	
	Grade 8	- a minimum pass of 130 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
	Diploma	- a minimum pass of 170 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
	Performance	- a minimum pass of 400 marks in NZMSM Diploma Theory or above
		<i>(For grade 8 to performance these theory requirements must be completed prior to the practical examination.)</i>

## **GUITAR:**

<b>STYLE</b>	<b>GRADE</b>	<b>CRITERIA</b>
<b>Traditional</b>	Initial	
	Preliminary	
	Preparatory	
<b>Modern</b>	Grades 1-7	
	Grade 8	- a minimum pass of 130 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
	Performance	- a minimum pass of 400 marks in NZMSM Diploma Theory or above
		<i>(For grade 8 and performance these theory requirements must be completed prior to the practical examination.)</i>
<b>Recital</b>	Inaugural	- suggested for use after pregrades
	Junior	- suggested for use after grades 1/2

## **RECORDER:**

Initial to grade 3 is available from the manager on request.  
These exams are suitable for descant or tenor recorder.

## **SPECIFIC NEEDS SYLLABUS:**

Adjustments to a syllabus may be considered for a candidate with a disability upon request from the manager. Twelve months notification is required together with supporting documentation. Applications for such a requirement are to be made in writing to the administrator of the Practical Examination Advisory Board (PEAB).

# EXAMINATION ENTRY FORM

- All applications must be on the official entry form.  
**USE BLOCK LETTERS** when completing this form.
- Fill in both sections of the form **except** the venue, date and time of the examination.  
Circle the appropriate letter for the instrument, e.g. P C RP **(K)** G RG R
- Double check that the spelling of the candidate's name is correct.
- Write 'electric' on the form if using an electric guitar.
- For grade 8, diploma and performance examinations, a copy of the theory examination result sheet must accompany the entry form (*see relevant syllabi*).
- A dispensation may be granted for a medical condition or impairment (e.g. hearing).  
The manager should consult the administrator in advance.
- Consideration will be given for an independent interpreter. A written request must be attached to the entry form and sent to the administrator.
- The completed and signed entry form together with the relevant fee and any other information required must be with the manager by the closing date. **Late entries will NOT be accepted.**
- The manager will submit the spreadsheet electronically to the administrator together with the reconciliation form. Payment to the administrator must be a bank transfer.  
The bank account number will be on the manager Reconciliation spreadsheet.
- Once the administrator has collated the information and submitted the details of the examination centre, dates and times, the manager will distribute these to the teachers.
- **Note:** fees are nonrefundable for a candidate's nonattendance at the examination.  
In the case of sickness, bereavement or accident, written proof is required for the examination to be rescheduled or apply for a credit or refund to be granted.  
This should be sent to the manager who will forward it on to the administrator.  
An additional fee may be charged for rescheduling of an examination.
- Check the examination fees are current for the year.

## EXAMINATION TIMES:

<b>Initial</b>	15 minutes	<b>Grades 3 and 4</b>	25 minutes
<b>Preliminary</b>	15 minutes	<b>Grades 5 and 6</b>	35 minutes
<b>Preparatory</b>	15 minutes	<b>Grade 7</b>	45 minutes
<b>Recital Inaugural</b>	15 minutes	<b>Grade 8</b>	50 minutes
<b>Grades 1 and 2</b>	20 minutes	<b>Diploma</b>	1 hour
<b>Recital Junior</b>	20 minutes	<b>Performance Certificate</b>	1 hour + ½ hour oral.

Additional time of 5 minutes will be allocated for setting up keyboards and electric guitar amps.

# EXAMINATION FORM EXAMPLE

## NEW ZEALAND MODERN SCHOOL OF MUSIC



<http://www.nzmodernschoolofmusic.org.nz/>

### Practical Examination Entry Form

BLOCK LETTERS ONLY

Given Name \_\_\_\_\_ MELODY HARMONY \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ FINGERMAN \_\_\_\_\_

Area \_\_\_\_\_ MUSICLAND \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ ONE \_\_\_\_\_ Instrument \_\_\_\_\_ PIANO \_\_\_\_\_

Fee Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ \$\$\$\$\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ MRS KEY \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to the publication of the results (*circle one*)

YES  NO

Signature of Parent/Caregiver \_\_\_\_\_ *PG FINGERMAN* \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN COMPLETED FORM TO YOUR TEACHER BY \_\_\_\_\_ 10 JUNE 2023 \_\_\_\_\_

Entries must be on the official form, signed and accompanied with the examination fee.

Refunds will not be given for nonattendance.

Signing this form means you agree with the conditions of NZMSM examinations.

### TEACHER to fill this section

Given Name \_\_\_\_\_ MELODY HARMONY \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_ FINGERMAN \_\_\_\_\_

Grade \_\_\_\_\_ ONE \_\_\_\_\_ CP  P KB G R RG RP (*circle one*)

Fee \_\_\_\_\_ \$\$\$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Candidate MUST be in attendance 15 minutes before scheduled exam time.*

Examination Centre \_\_\_\_\_ 10 SHORTLAND STREET, MUSICLAND \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 28 AUGUST 2023 \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_ 10.20 AM \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's Name \_\_\_\_\_ MRS KEYS \_\_\_\_\_

# EXAMINATION CENTRE AND SUPERVISOR CHECKLIST

The supervisor and area manager must check these points carefully.

## General

- The NZMSM Health and Safety document will be made available for the supervisor.
- A first aid kit must be available at the examination venue.
- Parents/caregivers, interpreters and teachers, are requested to abide by the supervisor's instructions.
- Signage for the waiting area, toilets and examination room must be easily seen.
- Maintain a quiet waiting room and make a space available for guitars to be tuned.
- Check that the spelling of names is correct on the schedule and the candidate's report form, and that the grade and instrument are correct. Please inform the examiner if a correction is necessary.
- On the candidate's report sheet under the "Pieces" section, the supervisor must write the names of the pieces to be performed beside the appropriate number/heading.
- No one other than the supervisor and candidate is permitted in or near the examination room unless an interpreter or an accompanist is required.
- Mobile phones are not permitted in the examination room.
- Chewing gum and sweets are not to be consumed in the examination room.
- The candidate must remove any bulky or restrictive clothing (e.g. jacket) and hats before entering the examination room.
- Ensure that shoes are clean. It is recommended to avoid footwear with very high heels as these can hinder pedal work. Bare feet are not permitted in the examination room.
- Candidates must take only the syllabus and music to be performed plus any original material required by the syllabus into the examination room.
- The grades 1-5 modern piano candidates must hand a copy of the section III piece along with the candidate report sheet to the examiner upon entering the examination room.

## Room

- Furniture in the examination room must be arranged so that the candidate's back is not facing the examiner. The ideal position for the piano/keyboard is side-on to the examiner so the candidate's hands are in full view and pedalling can be observed easily.  
The guitar and recorder candidate must face the examiner and position the music stand so the examiner has a clear view of the instrument.
- Have a bell available should one be required. The examiner may ring a bell for assistance and only the supervisor may enter the exam room.
- A music stand must be available for the guitar candidate and if necessary, for an accompanist. Check whether an extension cord is needed.
- A footstool should be available for the guitar candidate and the very young piano/keyboard candidate. An accompanist should bring their own footstool if they require one.
- A digital or acoustic piano can be used. The acoustic piano must be tuned for the examination.

## Examiner

- It is the supervisor's responsibility to provide examiners with meals and drinks throughout the day.
- A comfortable chair and suitable table large enough for the examiner to be able to work at must be provided.
- The examiner may request a heater or additional lighting.

# ONLINE EXAMINATIONS

The examiner will have the candidate's email link, and prior to the actual examination time will send the link to join the meeting waiting room.

Please be ready 10 minutes prior to your examination time.

The results and candidate's report sheet will be emailed to the area manager.

## Setup

Place your device approximately 1 metre away from your instrument. Camera view for piano and keyboard is of the keys, for guitarists the front of the guitar body facing the camera and recorder candidates of upper body.

- The minimum height of the platform (desk, table, etc) must be no lower than the height of the keyboard but preferably higher.
- Ensure the platform is sturdy and safe, particularly if the device is being elevated.
- Ensure the device is fully charged.
- Shades should be drawn if windows are behind the candidate. Ceiling lights and lamps will help with any shortfall of natural light.
- The examination room must have no visual distractions and be as free as possible from background noises.

## General

- A large device is preferable to the limitations of a cell phone screen.
- The examiner may direct the guitarist where to place the stand for the performance.
- A reschedule or call back may be required in the event of an internet/connection failure.
- Encourage the candidate to ask the examiner to repeat any instructions.
- Actual examination time will be the normal time allowance of that grade.
- Only the candidate is to be in the room of the online examination.

## Sight Reading and Aural

- The approach with these two sections will differ to an onsite examination.
- Aural tests will be conducted by the examiner either playing the melody or clapping the rhythm twice for the candidate. This will be the candidate's choice of how the test is delivered.
- Any aural observation sheets can be screen shared.
- Sight reading, if possible, may be emailed to the supervisor for printing.  
Other options:
  - screen share for the candidate to view, however the device must be stable and in front of the candidate.
  - if the above are not viable, the examiner will instigate a discussion of the sight reading instead.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

- The minimum number of candidates required for hosting an examination centre is eight. However, at the discretion of the Practical Examination Advisory Board (PEAB) and the administrator, entries may be accepted from an area with lesser numbers. In some instances examination areas may be combined.
- The examiner will be looking for a polished performance based on the following categories:

Precision	Character
Security	Musicality
Criteria	Presentation
- It is imperative that you check the requirements from an up-to-date syllabus. NZMSM teachers can access an online syllabus through their area manager.  
Make sure that you have selected the correct combination of pieces.  
Remember: **‘must’** means it is compulsory; **‘may’** is optional and the decision of the candidate. This will avoid confusion and ultimate disappointment.
- A candidate with a disability may request consideration to have the syllabus altered for their needs. A letter with supporting documentation of the disability should be sent to the administrator from the manager twelve months in advance. Such candidates will be assessed accordingly by the examiner.
- Consideration will be given for an independent interpreter. A written request must be attached to the entry form and sent to the administrator.
- Notification of a performance examination must be with the administrator twelve months prior to the PEAB Annual General Meeting.
- It should be noted that once the timetable and schedule has been released, no changes are permitted without the express authority of the administrator.
- If a candidate is unable to attend their examination due to illness, a written request should be made to the administrator from the area manager for an online exam.
- For all work submitted for assessment, a checklist sheet for each candidate must be attached. Copy and fill out the appropriate sections for the grade/level including the theory grade. It is at the discretion of each manager if the work is submitted digitally or posted.
- A copy of the theory result sheet must be sent in with the following entry forms. Criteria are:

Grade 8	- a minimum pass of 130 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
Diploma	- a minimum pass of 170 marks in NZMSM Grade 7 Theory or above
Performance	- a minimum pass of 400 marks in NZMSM Diploma Theory or above

Confirmation of the grade achieved may be requested from the theory examiner for a fee.
- Examination preparation should never be rushed. Allow ample preparation time. Ideally start early in the year. It is recommended that all pieces for the grade should be learned so that the candidate, along with the advice of the teacher, can decide which pieces are the most suitable.
- A metronome/suitable keyboard rhythm is a useful aid when preparing for examinations.
- Make sure the candidate knows what to expect in an examination environment. An understanding of examination room etiquette and general procedure, especially for the first time candidate, would be beneficial and allow the candidate to feel more at ease. Prior to the examination, treat one of their lessons as a mock exam.
- Every candidate must have their own syllabus as a constant reference. This must be brought into the examination room together with the candidate’s music. The syllabus must remain closed unless a piece is being played from it. The examiner may ask to look at the syllabus.
- Photocopied music is **NOT** permitted with the exception of facilitating page turning and the requirement for examiner’s copies.



## GENERAL INFORMATION cont'd

- The candidate is expected to play the music as per the work submitted for assessment. No changes are permitted once this has been sent in.
- The candidate must be in attendance at the examination venue at least fifteen minutes prior to their scheduled time.
- The candidate must check in with the supervisor on arrival at the examination venue. The supervisor will ensure names are spelled correctly and that the grade/level and instrument are correct on the candidate report sheet.
- Before entering the examination room, the guitar or recorder candidate and accompanist must make sure their instrument is tuned and ready to play. The instrument must be clean with all stickers and markings removed from the fretboard/fingerboard.
- It is not acceptable for notes or amended music copies to be handed to the examiner.
- For a quick reference, place a marker at the appropriate page and have the bars numbered from the first full bar. For medleys, the bar numbers should continue throughout the medley as a whole.
- Information about the pieces will give the candidate a greater understanding of their work e.g. genre, style, musical, movie, who made it popular.
- Upon entering the examination room, encourage the candidate to acknowledge the examiner with a greeting or smile and hand him/her their report sheet (*depending on current Health and Safety rulings*). The candidate should then move to their seat and wait for further instruction.
- While the examiner will not give extra marks for appearance, it is important to be neatly dressed with suitable footwear.  
The occasion demands that respect and common courtesy be observed "*feel good, play well*".
- Before commencing to play, the candidate should check the height and position of the stool so that they are comfortable. Check whether a footstool is required.
- A candidate's melody outline, section III arrangement, study and composition remain the property of the candidate and will be returned following the examination. Photocopied pieces will be retained and destroyed by the area manager.
- Candidate report forms and results will be released once the examiner has left the area. Certificates will be issued up to four weeks after the results have been received by the administrator.
- Photography and recordings are not permitted in the examination room unless sanctioned by the PEAB.
- Any correspondence should be addressed to the administrator by the manager.  
In the first instance, teachers should contact their manager.
- In the event of a dispute, a mediation tribunal will be convened. Details of the procedure for this may be obtained from the administrator.

# THE EXAMINER

All examiners want each candidate to be at ease and know that the examiner is interested in what has been prepared. They will understand anxiety and know how best to deal with the timid/nervous candidate. Above all, the examiner wants the candidate to enjoy the experience and play to the best of their ability. They prefer to give encouragement and make positive comments. A profile of the examiner appointed to your area is available from the administrator upon written request from the manager.

- All examiners are expected to work to a well-defined timetable and there will be times when they are writing while listening.
- The examiner will generally follow the order set down in the syllabus. Variations may occur and occasionally the candidate will be given the opportunity to choose the order.
- Not all examiners remain seated throughout the examination.
- The examiner may not require the performance of an entire piece once satisfied that the candidate knows their work.
- At times a trainee examiner may be present in an observation capacity. The designated examiner will be the one examining the candidate. In such circumstances the manager will be notified.
- The candidate must never be afraid to ask to have a question or instruction repeated, or draw attention to something that they believe has been overlooked.
- The examiners can only make their assessment on the day's performance.
- The decision of the examiner is final.
- Once the candidate has left the examination room, the examiner must be given time to write the report without disturbance. Please do not interrupt the examiner at this time.
- Examiners are available to hold a post-examination debrief workshop to give advice and generally discuss matters arising from the examinations. Specific details of examination candidates and their work will not be disclosed or discussed.
- The manager may request a debrief by filling out the form and sending it with the entries to the administrator who will endeavour to accommodate the request, subject to travel schedules. Debrief costs are the responsibility of the manager who will pay the examiner directly.

## POSTURE/HAND POSITION

Good posture is important and supports good technique.

- Fingernails should be cut short for ALL instruments.
- For all keyboard instruments, the stool must be at the correct height and distance to facilitate good technique.
- For the younger seated candidate, some form of foot support is necessary for balance and assurance.
- The candidate should sit forward on the stool, upright and with feet firmly on the floor or footstool.
- The forearm, wrist and hands should be in a straight line above the keys with the fingers curved. Thumbs must not hang off the keys.
- To pedal correctly, the candidate needs to be aware that they may need to adjust the stool to accommodate this. The right heel should be on the floor and pedal action should be from the ankle.
- Should the keyboard candidate prefer to stand, it is their responsibility to adjust the height of the keyboard stand with the help of the supervisor.
- Use the sitting/holding position guidelines for a guitar as described in the guitar tutor books.
- If the guitar candidate prefers to stand, they must ensure the guitar is held correctly and supported with a shoulder strap.
- The recorder candidate must stand while playing unless there is a physical reason to be seated.

## TECHNICAL WORK

- Check the relevant syllabus for the tempo of all technical work.
- All technical work must be played from memory except contemporary piano study, levels 4-6.
- Important techniques to encourage include the following:
  - correct fingering to facilitate fluency
  - co-ordination between both hands
  - fluency accomplished with ease
  - correct use of legato and staccato
  - time values relative to each other
- Technical work should develop progressively with some degree of musicality as the candidate moves on through the grades.
- Candidates are encouraged to practise using a metronome.
- All technical work for the keyboard must use piano voicing.
- Piano and keyboard scales are played in quaver values.
- For pregrade piano and keyboard the tempo must be uniform between scales and magic exercises.
- No pedal to be used unless specified in the syllabus.
- Scales should be counted 1+ 2+ 3+ 4+ with an accent placed on the first beat of the bar.
- The start position for piano and keyboard one octave scales is as shown in the scale section of Magic on Piano, Book 1 (to be played as quavers).
- The start position for two octave scales and arpeggios, refer to the NZMSM Comprehensive Book of Scales and Arpeggios.
- The start position for the three octave scales is the same as for two octave scales but played as quaver triplets.
- The start position for four octave scales is one octave lower than that given in the NZMSM Comprehensive Book of Scales and Arpeggios.
- The start position for contrary motion scales is from the key common to both hands (the middle tonic of the similar motion scale).
- Where a chord is required at the end of a scale, the last note will be a crotchet followed by a crotchet rest, then a minim chord.
- Piano and keyboard chords must be released fully before the next chord is played.
- Fingering of inversions should follow through to chord work in the modern pieces as far as is practicable.
- Modern signs required must be played as per the “Hints and Signs” section of the NZMSM Teacher’s Manual.
- For fingering of guitar scales and arpeggios refer to the NZMSM Scales and Arpeggios for Guitar book.
- Arpeggios are to be played as quavers using the tempo one grade below that for the scale work with the exception of grade 1 guitar and recorder.
- For guitar magic exercises, hold the fingers firmly on the strings and stretch to the next fret as each note is picked.
- Guitar and recorder pregrade minimum metronome speeds are to be played in crotchet values.

# SIGHT READING

Sight reading is an indispensable asset for all musicians. It leads to quick learning, independence and confidence in reading music at sight.

Use the NZMSM Sight Reading book to assist the candidate to prepare for the examination.

- ‘Shadow playing’ is not permitted for any instrument.  
NB: *Shadow playing is defined as the silent fingering of the melody notes and/or the chord shapes on the keys or strings while viewing the sight reading test piece.*
- It is important that the candidate sets a slower tempo for this section.
- Modern piano grades must be pedalled.
- For the keyboard candidate, piano voicing must be used.
- Keyboard work from grade 5 upwards may be pedalled.
- For keyboard preliminary and preparatory, the sight reading will depend on whether they choose option A or B for their examination.
- For keyboard preliminary and preparatory examinations B option, the chords should be sustained for the bar and resounded on the first beat of each bar.  
This is not necessary in the subsequent grades where the auto accompaniment is used.
- For keyboard instruments, if one hand commences before the other, both hands should be on the keys before starting.
- The contemporary piano candidate is permitted to practise any two bars once only and should indicate to the examiner which two bars will be practised. The examiner will instruct the candidate when to commence the test.  
These two practice bars do not necessarily have to be consecutive bars.
- The guitar candidate must set their instrument aside, preferably on a guitar stand while studying this test. The examiner will instruct the candidate when to pick up the instrument and commence.
- The recorder candidate must put their recorder down while studying this test. The examiner will instruct the candidate when to pick up the instrument and commence.

# AURAL

Good aural training is a fundamental aspect of a musician's training. It develops the ability to listen and hear, pitch and memorise music. Responses to these tests depend on regular training to cultivate perceptive and auditory skills and in turn, a good examination result. Beyond the examination, aural skills are a pathway to developing improvisational ability.

Use the NZMSM Aural Example book to assist the candidate to prepare for the examination.

- Aural tests for all instruments will be conducted at a piano or keyboard by the examiner.
- All aural tests will be played twice by the examiner.
- The range for pitching voice will be selected to suit the candidate by the examiner.
- The examiner will direct the candidate where to stand and give instructions for all exercises.
- Clapping should be clear and precise, with one hand clapping firmly into the palm of the other. Rests should be shown by moving palms apart.
- Shadow clapping is not permitted when clapping from the card.
- Intervals may be identified using a degree, letter name or tonic solfa where applicable.
- Recognition of intervals by association with a well known tune can be helpful. Instructions are given in every syllabus on how the candidate will be expected to recognise pitch.

<b>Minor 2nd</b>	Jaws Theme tune/The Pink Panther
<b>Major 2nd</b>	Happy Birthday/Chopsticks/Do-Re-Mi/Silent Night
<b>Minor 3rd</b>	Greensleeves/Bright Eyes (chorus)/Mad World/Rue's Whistle tune (The Hunger Games)/Axel F
<b>Major 3rd</b>	O When the Saints/Morning has Broken/Havana
<b>Perfect 4th</b>	Away in a Manger/Amazing Grace/We Wish You a Merry Christmas/Love Me Tender/Mamma Mia/Summer Nights (bass line)
<b>Perfect 5th</b>	Twinkle, Twinkle/Star Wars/Chim Chim Cheree/Can't Help Falling in Love
<b>Minor 6th</b>	The Entertainer/Love Story
<b>Major 6th</b>	Pokarekare Ana/The Unicorn/Hey Soul Sister/Arrivederci Roma
<b>Minor 7th</b>	Star Trek Theme/Somewhere (Westside Story)
<b>Major 7th</b>	Bali Ha'i (South Pacific)/Don't Know Why/Take on Me
<b>Octave</b>	Over the Rainbow/Summer Holiday/Bring Him Home

- Guideline for humming or singing chord notes:  
**Major chord** - hum, or sing Lah Lah Lah  
**Minor chord** - hum, or sing Lah Lur Lah  
**Diminished chord** - hum, or sing Lah Lur Lur  
**Augmented chord** - hum, or sing Lah Lah Lee

# VIVA VOCE

*By The Living Voice* is that aspect of an examination which tests the candidate's musical knowledge.

- Questions will be asked about the technical work and the pieces performed.
- These questions are designed to test that the candidate has an understanding of their work (i.e. recognition of time values, key and time signatures, chords, expression marks and signs, parts of the instrument and pitch/note names).
- Information about the pieces will give the candidate a greater understanding of their work e.g. genre, style, musical, movie, who made it popular.
- Compulsory questions will be asked, and these will be clearly stated in the relevant syllabus.
- The examiner may phrase the question on a particular subject in different ways to facilitate the candidate achieving the correct answer, e.g.

Key/Key Signature:      What does this sign mean?  
                                    What is the name of the key?  
                                    What key does the key signature mean this piece is written in?

- Encourage the candidate to ask the examiner to repeat or rephrase the question if they are uncertain of what is required.
- Modern piano candidates are expected to understand any modern signs used.
- Guitar candidates are expected to understand methods used to tune the guitar and be familiar with the various parts as outlined in the NZMSM guitar tutor books.
- Keyboard candidates are expected to have an understanding of the instrument families/groupings and the rhythmic styles of the keyboard.
- Responses need to be clear, short and concise, and given in good time.

## PIECES ~ GENERAL

- Section I – restricted section which must only be played as per criteria (i.e. no extras).  
Section II – less restricted, may include some extras in conjunction with the criteria.  
Section III – can showcase the candidate’s capabilities while being mindful of the criteria.

- The candidate must have their own syllabus and books for examination preparation.
- Take only the syllabus, examination book/s, and any original copies required by the syllabus into the examination room. All sheet music must be secured firmly.
- Photocopied music is **NOT** permitted with the exception of facilitating page turning and the requirement for examiner's copies.
- For any online music, the teacher will provide the online music link for the candidate, to be purchased by the candidate/guardian.
- All markings must be removed from the candidate’s music other than tidy fingering, expression, dynamic marks, phrasing slurs, notational requirements, keyboard registrations and guitar positional changes.
- The appropriate checklist sheet must be copied and included with each candidate’s work. Ensure the theory grade is noted on the checklist sheet.
- Where required, a copy of all work for assessment must be forwarded to the manager **21 days prior to the examination period commencement date.**
- Do not commence playing straight away – take a moment to think through the opening bars.
- A candidate who does not fulfil the requirements of the criteria can expect to receive a lower mark for that section of the examination.
- All own choice pieces must be chosen from the NZMSM repertoire unless otherwise stated.
- All examination material must have the bars numbered where none are given. Number from the first full bar of the written music and straight through repeat bars to the end.
- Pregrade pieces with cut time must not be altered.
- All pieces of eight bars’ duration must be repeated, regardless of the instrument.
- Da Capo and Dal Segno directions must be observed. For other repeat signs refer to the individual syllabus.
- All submitted work must have the candidate’s name, area, grade and section on each page of the copies. Pieces with multiple pages must be numbered, e.g. p 1/4, 2/4, 3/4, 4/4.
- For a medley, number straight through the whole piece and give this work a composite title.
- The piece from each section should be played at a tempo that allows for phrasing, expression and dynamics. The candidate should be able to demonstrate confidence in playing and an understanding of the mood and style of that piece within the criteria for the section.
- Phrasing, dynamics, expression marks and/or signs as appropriate to the pieces must be added and noted on the music by the candidate.
- Modern signs required in examination pieces must be played as per the “Hints and Signs” section of the NZMSM Teacher’s Manual.
- From grade 4 upwards all pieces for all instruments must have an introduction and ending where none is given.
- The melody outline, arrangement of section III, study or composition remain the property of the candidate and will be returned to the candidate after the examination. Photocopied pieces will be retained and destroyed.



# MODERN PIANO

- Modern signs required for the purposes of examination work must be played as per the “Hints and Signs” section of the NZMSM Teacher’s Manual.
- For any online music, the teacher will provide the online music link to the candidate to be purchased by the candidate/guardian. All sheet music must be secured firmly.
- All markings must be removed from the candidate’s music other than tidy fingering, expression, dynamic marks, phrasing slurs and notational requirements.
- All work submitted for assessment must be accompanied by a checklist sheet.
- Pieces must be played as set out in the appropriate syllabus.
- Where pieces in the grades use cut time they may be changed to 4/4 time and must be noted on the candidate’s music.
- Introductions and endings must be used for all pieces from grade 4 upwards where none is given.
- Where the XH for the right hand commences on an anacrusis, the left hand should be rested for that beat. For the right hand 8va higher this may be played as either octaves or single notes.
- Where a standard waltz is required, a counterbass should be encouraged where the same chord is repeated in the following bar. Either an octave or a single note may be used on the first beat.
- Where a 4/4 stride is required, a counterbass must be used on the third beat unless otherwise specified in the syllabus. A minim stride may be used as an alternative bass pattern.
- Tenth rolls are to be played in the position outlined in the Magic for Modern book. B $\flat$  and B tenths should be played an octave lower than written in the book.
- Pedal work must be suitable for the individual piece and should not be held across a chord change. Pedal heel must remain on the floor at all times.
- Rhythmic pedalling for modern pieces should be used. Pedalling for arpeggio style bass must be used to produce a legato effect.
- Section I is a restricted section which must only be played as per criteria (i.e. no extras).
- Criteria from previous modern grades may be added to section II and/or section III pieces.
- Section III arrangements must be written by the candidate including the bass patterns used and have any alterations marked on the music by the candidate.
- Full chords for the right hand are acceptable.

## CONTEMPORARY PIANO

Introductory pages for levels 1-4 and levels 5-6 contain important information for these examinations. Carefully study these for the relevant syllabus.

For level 6, a copy of the appropriate theory level result must accompany the entry form and be noted on the checklist sheet along with the work submitted for assessment.

- Contemporary style music is any music composed in or after 1900.
- Bars must be numbered for all pieces, including the study.
- Levels 1-4 study must not be pedalled. For levels 5-6 the pedal must be used where indicated.
- For levels 5-6, D1/D2 section, a written presentation is required and must include a bibliography of any source material used.
- All submitted work must be the candidate's own work and have the candidate's name, area, level and section on each page of each copy. Include the candidate's age if under 13yrs. This work must be accompanied by a checklist sheet. The theory grade must be noted on the checklist sheet.
- Appropriate level theory book must be completed by exam entry due date. The theory book may be requested by the manager along with the candidate entry form.
- Additional expression marks/signs may be added for the pieces but these must be noted on the candidate's music. For sections C and D this would include modern signs and a bass example.
- Levels 1-3, section C may include an introduction and ending. Levels 4-6, section D must include an introduction and ending.
- Contemporary pieces, study, composition (all levels), essay copy and bibliography (levels 5-6 only) must be submitted for assessment.

## RECITAL PIANO

Inaugural – suggested for use after pregrade level.

Junior – suggested for use after grade 1/2.

These examinations are of a performance based standard.

There is no technical, aural, sight reading or viva voce.

- For introductions and endings refer to the criteria.
- Pieces must be played as set out in the relevant syllabus.
- On the checklist sheet the names of the separate melodies used in the medley must be provided to allow the examiner to check the material content.
- Expression and dynamics must be included in the performance.
- Modern signs must be played as per the "Hints and Signs" section of the NZMSM Teacher's Manual.
- Must - means compulsory. May - means optional.

# KEYBOARD

A digital piano may be used, provided all functions are available for the examination being sat.

- The candidate must be familiar with the keyboard being used, know how to set it up unassisted, and be familiar with the basic workings of the keyboard (e.g. voicing, rhythms, sync start).
- Ideally all keyboards should have a music rest. If this is not available a music stand must be used.
- A keyboard sustain pedal is required from the preparatory pregrade.
- It is recommended that the candidate brings a set of batteries for back-up.
- If a candidate prefers to stand, it is their responsibility to adjust the keyboard stand to a suitable height with the help of the supervisor.
- The candidate should be encouraged to experiment with voicing from an early stage. A different voice should be used for each piece, and within the piece where appropriate.
- The number and name of the voice, style and tempo settings for the pieces must be written on the music by the candidate.
- The volume between the voice and beat/style must be balanced.
- Rhythm is playing with the beat only while playing with auto accompaniment refers to fingered chords with a rhythmic style.
- For preliminary and preparatory grades, the candidate must choose either option A sight reading and pieces, *or* option B sight reading and pieces. The option chosen should be continued throughout the syllabus and cannot be interchanged.
- Technical work, aural and sight reading must be played on the piano voice setting.
- All aural tests will be conducted at the keyboard.
- All pieces of eight bars' duration must be repeated.
- Pregrade pieces with cut time must not be altered.
- Where pieces in the grades use cut time, this may be changed to 4/4 time and must be noted on the candidate's music.
- Where a fermata sign is indicated, the sync stop/start function may be used to pause the rhythm.
- From initial to grade 4, if the sync start is unavailable a two bar introduction will be acceptable.
- From grade 5 upwards, five octaves with piano sized keys is essential and must include the following functions: sync start, touch response and auto introduction/ending. The use of additional technology is acceptable.
- Where a piece commences on an anacrusis, the sync start function must be used. If this is not available, a two bar introduction will be permitted.
- Auto introduction and ending functions must be used where specified.
- Manual or auto introductions and endings must be used for all pieces from grade 4 upwards where none is given.
- Expression is expected if using a keyboard with the touch sense function and noted on the candidate's music. This is to be encouraged from pregrade level.

## KEYBOARD cont'd

- Phrasing, dynamic marks and/or modern signs as appropriate to the piece must also be noted on the candidate's music.
- It is permissible to add a bar between a verse and chorus in order to change the voicing. Inform the examiner prior to playing the piece.
- Changes of registrations/settings must be made with the left hand for the right hand may be required to sustain the melody note.
- For notated pieces, where the left hand bass notes are outside the lower range of the keyboard, the note/s may be played one octave higher. Where this causes conflict with the right hand, the lowest note only may be played.
- When using the accompaniment function, the candidate must change the setting onto the fingered chord mode.
- If the keyboard being used does not have the required style, the examiner must be informed. Any changes should be noted on the music.
- For specific grades, boogie woogie may be played manually if the candidate prefers this option. Check the relevant syllabus.
- Section I is a restricted section which must only be played as per criteria (i.e. no extras).
- For section II and III pieces, auto or manual fill-ins may be used where appropriate. The rhythm style may be altered within the piece.
- From grade 5 upwards, all submitted work must be accompanied with a checklist sheet.

# GUITAR

- Ensure the guitar is tuned correctly prior to the examination. If an accompanist is an instrumentalist, ensure the instrument is tuned before entering the examination room. The examiner will not be expected to tune the instruments.
- The candidate may use an electric guitar but must provide their own amplification.
- Write '*electric*' on the entry form if using an electric guitar.
- A music stand must be used. Use of a footstool is optional.
- If the guitar candidate prefers to stand, they must make sure the guitar is held correctly and supported with a shoulder strap.
- It is recommended that the candidate carry a separate set of strings.
- Fingernails should be cut short so that the fingertips on the frets produce good clarity of sound.
- Use of a pick (plectrum) for all work becomes optional from grade 2.
- Barre chords are optional from grade 3 for pieces only, and from grade 5 for all work.
- Use of an effect pedal for section III may be used from grade 3.
- For the appropriate minimum tempi refer to the syllabus.

<b>Scales</b>	i.m. fingering must be used, rest stroke.
<b>Arpeggios</b>	p.i.m.a. fingering must be used, free stroke.
<b>Magic exercises</b>	to be played using rest stroke with the thumb resting on the top string. The required technique is to hold the fingers down and stretch to the next fret as each note is picked.

- For the pieces use i.m.(a) fingering on the treble strings and use the thumb (p) to play the bass strings.
- The hand/thumb over the sound hole must not rest on the body of the guitar.
- The thumb should be positioned at the back of the guitar neck when using frets.
- All aural tests will be conducted at a piano or keyboard by the examiner.
- The candidate must set the guitar aside, preferably on a guitar stand, for aural tests and sight reading. The examiner will instruct the candidate when to pick up the instrument and commence.
- The candidate needs to know all methods used to tune the guitar and be familiar with the various parts of the guitar as outlined in the NZMSM guitar tutor books.
- Pregrade pieces with cut time must not be altered.
- Where pieces in the grades use cut time, this may be changed to 4/4 time and must be noted on the candidate's music.
- All pieces of eight bars' duration must be repeated.
- Introductions and endings must be added for all pieces from grade 4 upwards where none is given.
- For dual playing, the tied note is picked if the chord is the same, i.e. ignore the tie and pick the melody note. When the tied note is on a chord change, the note is not picked but the new chord must be strummed.
- Where rests appear in the melody line in dual play, these should be strummed.
- Picking and chord changing need to be fluent.

## **GUITAR cont'd**

- When singing it is permissible to strum a chord or pick the melody note before commencing to enable the voice to be pitched correctly.
- From grade 1 using a capo is optional for the singing only section.
- From grade 5 upwards, all submitted work must be accompanied with a checklist sheet.

### **Accompanied Pieces**

- The examiner may wish to hear the accompanied piece at the beginning of the examination.
- For the accompanied piece, the candidate must count in for the accompanist.
- An accompanying guitarist must bring their own footstool if required, as well as an extra set of strings.
- This section may have any lyrics sung by a vocalist or accompanied by another instrumentalist.
- If the candidate is picking the lead, then the accompanist must play an alternative part.

### **Guitar Performance**

- If two or more candidates sit this exam they cannot combine section IV.  
The candidates can accompany each other or play as backing instrumentalists.
- Music downloads from the internet are permitted provided they have been legally obtained.  
Proof of this should be on the music score.
- Live backing or recorded backing is permitted providing it is within copyright parameters.

## **RECITAL GUITAR**

Inaugural - suggested for use after pregrade level.  
Junior - suggested for use after grades 1/2.

These examinations are of a performance based standard.  
There is no technical, aural, sight reading or viva voce.

- For introduction and endings refer to the criteria.
- Pieces must be played as set out in the appropriate syllabus.
- On the checklist sheet the names of the separate melodies used in the medley must be provided to allow the examiner to check the material content.
- Use of a capo is acceptable for section IB only.
- Expression and dynamics must be included in the performance.

# RECORDER

The recorder examinations are designed for the descant (soprano) and tenor recorder. Both of these instruments range from middle C chromatically to D (15ma).

- Ensure the recorder is tuned correctly prior to the examination. If an accompanist is an instrumentalist, ensure the instrument is tuned before entering the examination room. The examiner will not be expected to tune the instruments.
- The recorder candidate must stand while playing unless there is a physical reason to be seated.
- A music stand is essential.
- The candidate must know how to care for their recorder, be able to name the parts and be familiar with all aspects of the instrument.
- Good breathing and tonguing techniques must be apparent.
- Tone quality should be clear and melodic.
- Scales for pregrades must be played as crotchet values, and from grade 1 upwards as quavers at the appropriate minimum tempo.
- Initial arpeggios are played as minims values, preliminary to grade 1 as crotchet values and from grade 2 upwards as quaver values.
- Aural tests will be conducted at a piano or keyboard.
- All pieces of eight bars' duration must be repeated.
- Pieces must be phrased and breath marks may be written in where none are given.

## Accompanied Pieces

- The examiner may wish to hear the piece for this section at the beginning of the examination.
- For the accompanied piece, the candidate must count in for the accompanist.
- This section may have any lyrics sung by a vocalist or accompanied by another instrumentalist playing an alternative part.
- If accompanied by the piano or keyboard, both treble and bass may be played. Auto accompaniment is NOT to be used unless specified in the syllabus. The accompanying treble may be harmonised or a secondo treble part played.

## MELODY OUTLINE

- Check the criteria for the relevant grade carefully.
- Two-part outlines should be developed within the criteria to make a complete piece.
- Phrasing, dynamics, expression marks and/or signs as appropriate for the melody outline along with notational requirements, keyboard registrations and any guitar positional changes must be noted on the music by the candidate. Tidy fingering may be added.
- Title must reflect the mood and the style of the piece.
- The final outline must be neatly handwritten by the candidate in black or blue pen to ensure the copy for the examiner is clear. Alternatively from grade 6 to performance (all instruments) it is optional for the outline to be computer written.
- The candidate is expected to play the music as per the work submitted. No changes are permitted once the melody outline has been submitted.
- The candidate needs to understand how a melody outline is constructed and be familiar with the process as outlined in the NZMSM Melody Outline book.
- The candidate will be expected to discuss their melody outline with the examiner.
- The melody outline remains the property of the candidate and will be returned to the candidate after the examination.
- A copy of all work for assessment must be forwarded to the manager **21 days prior to the examination period commencement date**. Must be clearly labelled as per syllabus requirements.

## COMPOSITION

- Check the criteria for the relevant level carefully.
- The candidate will be expected to discuss their composition with the examiner.
- The final composition must be either computer written, or handwritten in black or blue pen by the candidate.
- The candidate must perform from the original work.
- The candidate is expected to play the music as per the work submitted. No changes are permitted once the composition has been submitted.
- The composition remains the property of the candidate and will be returned to the candidate after the examination.
- A copy of all work for assessment accompanied with a checklist sheet must be forwarded to the manager **21 days prior to the examination period commencement date**. Must be clearly labelled as per syllabus requirements.



# IMPROVISATION \* EXTEMPORISATION \* ARRANGEMENT

**Improvisation:** (improve on) has to do with the performer's interpretation of a piece/song at the instrument.

*Quote: "Many people wonder when improvisation becomes composition. The answer is it doesn't."  
from, "Composition" by Paul Harris.*

While your ideas and responses to a topic may be different than another musician's, generally speaking nothing can be wrong in an improvisation. Through experimenting in different ways, you will become more versatile.

**Extemporisation:** (interchangeable with improvisation) is to play around with musical sound. It is at once an art and a skill used to make music spontaneously without the need to refer to the printed music.

This allows the imagination and ideas for creative work to be unlocked and freely expressed.

**The arrangement** is more of a permanent change to alter the piece, and generally requires some experimentation and preparation prior to deciding on the finished piece.

An arrangement of a piece may consist of:

- Altering or substituting chords.
- Adding an introduction/ending where none is given.
- Other embellishments additional to the criteria.
- Changing the rhythmic pattern by e.g. playing with a latin feel instead of a ballad feel or syncopating the melody line.
- Introducing a key change (transposition) or a time signature change within a piece.
- Variation of tempo.
- Chord voicing.
- Alternative accenting patterns.
- The guitar candidate can alter the tuning, harmonics or muting styles.

**CHECKLIST FOR PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS (ONE PER CANDIDATE)**

*(Note: Grade 8 all instruments: a copy of the theory result sheet must be attached with the examination entry form.)*

NAME ..... AGE (IF UNDER 13 YRS) .....

AREA .....

INSTRUMENT: (*circle one*) CP MP RP KB G RG GRADE/LEVEL .....

CP-Contemporary Piano, MP-Modern Piano, RP-Recital Piano, KB-Keyboard, G-Guitar, RG-Recital Guitar

**CONTEMPORARY PIANO**

Theory Grade Achieved..... Level 6 - theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
<b>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</b>		
A		
B		
C1 / C2 ( <i>circle one</i> )		
D1 / D2 ( <i>circle one</i> )		
Study		
Written Presentation and Bibliography		

**MODERN PIANO**

<b>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</b>	Grade 8 - theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Grade 4-8 - Melody Outline			
Grade 6 - Own Choice (Section III)			
Grade 7 - Own Choice/Composition (Section IV A or B)			
Grade 8 - La Paloma (Section I)			
- Notated Piece (Section IIIA)			
- Own Composition (Section IIIB)			
- Medley (Section IV)			

**KEYBOARD**

<b>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</b>	Grade 8 - theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Grade 5-8 - Melody Outline			
Grade 6 - Own Choice (Section III)			
Grade 7 - Free Choice (Section IV)			
Grade 8 - Musicianship - Medley			
- Notated Modern (Section II)			
<b>Circle one group for each scale:</b>	Major I or II		
	Harmonic Minor I or II		
	Melodic Minor I or II		

**GUITAR**

<b>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</b>	Grade 8 - theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Grade 5-8 - Melody Outline			
Grade 6 - Own Choice (Section III)			
Grade 7 - Free Choice (Section IV)			
Grade 8 - Medley (Section II)			

**RECITAL PIANO OR GUITAR**

<b>Fill in the titles for the following</b>	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Own Choice		
Themed Medley ( <i>all pieces</i> )		

**CHECKLIST FOR DIPLOMA OR PERFORMANCE PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS**

*(Note: For all instruments: a copy of the theory result sheet must be attached with the examination entry form.)*

NAME.....

AREA.....

**DIPLOMA PIANO**

<i>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</i>	Theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Melody Outline			
Notated Piece			
Section I (Busker's Book)			
Section II (Boogie Woogie)			
Section III (Medley)			

**DIPLOMA KEYBOARD**

<i>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</i>	Theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Melody Outline			
Notated Piece			
Section I (Busker's Book)			
Section II (Boogie/Rock/Ragtime)			
Section III (Medley)			

**PERFORMANCE PIANO**

<i>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</i>	Theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Composition			
Notated Twentieth Century Piece			
Analysis			
Lead an Audience			
Film/Show			
Jazz/Blues			
Latin American/Boogie Woogie (original and candidate copies)			

**PERFORMANCE KEYBOARD**

<i>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</i>	Theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Melody Outline			
Notated Piece			
Lead an Audience			
Film/Show			
Jazz/Blues			
Latin American/Boogie Woogie (original and candidate copies)			

**PERFORMANCE GUITAR**

<i>Fill in the title for ALL pieces that apply</i>	Theory pass mark.....	Received Manager	Received Examiner
Composition			
Notated Twentieth Century Piece			
Analysis			
Lead an Audience			
Section II			
Jazz/Blues			
Section IV (Medley) Solo, Duo, Group (circle one)			

# NOTES