



# **INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PRACTICAL GRADE EXAMS IN MARCH- APRIL 2023**

*These instructions apply only to Grades Initial – 8 practical grade exams  
in March - April 2023 in Hong Kong.*

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## Introduction

Due to the ongoing pandemic, we are currently unable to send examiners from the UK to international territories for our long-standing Practical Grade exams, and regrettably the majority of our planned exams have had to be cancelled. We are pleased, however, to be able to offer an opportunity to enter for Practical Grade exams in April - May 2023. The exams will be conducted by an ABRSM-trained local examiner who will deliver the full exam; those in their first session of examining will have live online support from an experienced UK based examiner trainer. Final exam results will go through quality assurance processes prior to release.

## Definitions

In these instructions, the following terms have the meanings given here:

Applicant:	Anyone who is 18 or over and submits a booking for an ABRSM exam (often the school, music teacher, parent of a candidate or the candidate, if he or she is 18 or over).
Candidate:	A learner taking a Grade Initial - 8 Practical Grade exam.
Contact ID:	Everyone using our online booking service is given a unique Contact ID that allows us to identify individuals in our system.
Examiner trainer:	An ABRSM examiner with many years of experience and excellent performance in that role, who trains new examiners.
Local examiner:	A recently-trained ABRSM examiner who will have recently completed an ABRSM examiner training course. They will be a highly qualified, experienced musician.
Pieces:	The Pieces played by candidates in a practical grade exam.
Scales and arpeggios:	The Scales and arpeggios section of a practical grade exam.
Sight reading:	The sight-reading section of a practical grade exam.
Aural tests:	The aural tests section of a practical grade exam.

## **Practical Grade Exams and their assessment – March-April 2023**

### Entry requirements

Candidates should fulfil the normal prerequisites for entry (see [www.abrsm.org/examregulations](http://www.abrsm.org/examregulations)).

### Booking an exam

We have an online booking service for Practical Grade Exams - all exam entries for this session will need to be made through our Online Booking System. Anyone aged 18 or over can book exams on behalf of candidates. This could be a teacher, parent/carer or member of staff at a school or other organisation. Candidates aged 18 and over can book their own exams. The person who books the exam is known as the applicant. Find out more about how to book exams, here: [www.abrsm.org/exam-booking](http://www.abrsm.org/exam-booking).

The first time you book exams using our online service you will need to register and create an account. You do not need to create a new account if you have previously created an account on the Online Booking System for a previous exam booking. Find out more about creating an account, here: [www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/creating-your-account](http://www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/creating-your-account).

Bookings for Practical Grade Exams booked in this session will appear on the online booking service ([www.abrsm.org/account-login](http://www.abrsm.org/account-login)).

Applicants will be asked to choose an exam date at the point of booking. The exam date is the date that the candidate will attend the ABRSM exam venue to take their exam. After the end of the booking period, we will email applicants, and candidates (parents/carers) with an account, to let them know when they can log in to view their confirmed exam appointments, including the time of their exam. This usually happens around two weeks after the booking period has closed. At this point applicants, and candidates (parents/carers) with an account, can log in to change an exam appointment, subject to availability. You can change a practical exam appointment up to 48 hours before the exam date. Find out more about changing an exam appointment at [www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/exam-appointments/](http://www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/exam-appointments/).

### Access (for candidates with specific needs)

When booking a Practical Grade Exam, applicants should request any access requirements or reasonable adjustments required for the candidate. Guidance can be found at [www.abrsm.org/specificneeds](http://www.abrsm.org/specificneeds).

### Late/New entries

Once the booking period has closed and timetables are confirmed, it may be possible to make late bookings if space is available. However, you should not rely on late booking to secure an exam slot. Any available slots are likely to be limited and we cannot guarantee that you will be able to book an exam once the booking periods has closed.

## Health and safety

The safety of candidates, examiners and venue staff is our priority and we will continue to follow any local and government guidance to ensure a safe exam experience for everyone.

Some venues may have additional measures and precautions in place. You must follow these in addition to any government guidance provided at the time.

If you have taken an exam with us and have any concerns, questions of feedback relating to health and safety matters, please get in touch with us via our Contact Us page.

## Marking criteria and result categories

Please refer to the *Practical Music Grades* qualification specification for full information about marking criteria, assessment objectives and result categories: [www.abrsm.org/specifications](http://www.abrsm.org/specifications).

Although the exam will be fully accredited and a certificate sent as normal, results may be released outside of our published deadlines.

## Exam Regulations

When the Applicant makes an exam booking, or when a booking is made on their behalf, at their instruction, the Applicant and ABRSM enter into a legally binding contract upon the terms and conditions set out in the Exam Regulations and addendum. These are available at [www.abrsm.org/examregulations](http://www.abrsm.org/examregulations).

## **Taking a Practical Grade exam**

### Exam date and time

Exam appointments will be scheduled between 09:00 and 19:30 on each exam date.

Candidates (and maximum one chaperone per candidate, and one person playing the accompaniment if applicable) will be expected to arrive at the exam venue to begin their exam at the time and date shown on the online booking system. Candidates at Grades 6–8 are allowed to bring a page-turner into their exam, without needing to ask for permission from ABRSM in advance. Candidates should follow current physical distancing and local Guidance when deciding whether to bring a page-turner for their exam.

Please arrive at the waiting room 30 minutes prior to your exam time and no sooner. If you arrive earlier, please wait outside the exam venue to avoid over-crowding in the waiting room and exam areas.

### Place of exam

All practical grade exams in this session will take place at an exam venue arranged by ABRSM. No practical grade exams can take place at private visits.

### Grades and Instruments

Only grade Initial - 8 exams will be offered. Performance Assessment, Prep Tests, Choral Singing, Ensemble exams, ARSM and other Diploma exams are not offered as part of this exam session.

Most exam subjects will be offered. Harpsichord, Organ, Percussion, Practical Musicianship, Singing for Musical Theatre and Jazz exams are not offered as part of this exam session.

### Interpreters

From 1 January 2023, HKEAA will no longer offer an interpreter service for ABRSM exams or book interpreters for candidates.

Candidates who need an interpreter from January must arrange this themselves, following our Interpreter Guidelines. To support candidates, we have published a list of possible interpreters on our website, available [here](#). Applicants must still tick the 'interpreter' checkbox when making a booking for a candidate who will be bringing an interpreter.

Please note that neither ABRSM nor HKEAA will be involved in any arrangements with interpreters, nor any payment. The list of interpreters and their contact details is available to assist candidates in finding an interpreter, and arrangements thereafter should be made directly between the interpreter and the applicant or candidate.

### Instructions for Candidates

#### *Before the Exam*

All candidates are asked to complete a practical grade exam programme form. This can be found in appendix 1. A printed copy of this form should be completed and brought to the exam room. Alternatively, candidates will be able to complete their programme form at the exam venue, before their exam.

#### *During the Exam*

The local examiner may be supported by an experienced, UK-based ABRSM examiner through a live, on-screen video link on their desk in the exam room. All exams are also audio recorded, so in the unlikely instance of the video link not being active, there will be an audio record to refer to later.

The examiner will invite the candidate to set-up and try a few notes before starting the exam. They will then administer the Pieces, Scales and Arpeggios, Sight reading and Aural Tests sections of the exam in the order which the candidate chooses.

### Exam Timings

Please note that due to the live online support in the room, exam timetables may run slightly behind schedule and some exams may begin slightly late. All candidates will be given the appropriate amount of time to complete their exam.

### Exam Personnel

#### *Role of the local examiner*

The local examiner is responsible for administering all aspects of the practical grade exam including administering the exam tests and marking the exam.

The examiner cannot act as interpreter, accompanist or page turner for any candidate.

### *Role of the Examiner Trainer, on live video link*

The examiner trainer will be a member of the team that has trained the local examiner, and will observe the local examiner's work remotely, live, during the exam. They will not take direct part in administering any element of the exam, and will only be involved audibly in exceptional circumstances. They will provide feedback and support to the local examiner at points throughout the day.

### Copies of the music

Candidates do not need to bring an additional copy of their music to their exam for the examiner.

All standard arrangements for page-turns and photocopies apply to these exams. Please see the exam syllabus for further information ([www.abrsm.org/our-exams](http://www.abrsm.org/our-exams)).

Candidates should follow current physical distancing and Government Safety Guidance when deciding whether to bring a page-turner for their exam.

### Exam Recordings

#### *General recording information*

For Practical Grade Exams, an audio recording is made using bespoke software on the examiner's ABRSM iPad. The iPad automatically initiates each recording, which cannot be accessed by the examiner, and which is submitted digitally to ABRSM, together with the corresponding comments and marks.

Candidates will not receive a copy of their exam recording under any circumstances, and should not attempt to make their own recording of the exam. Any candidates suspected of recording their exam will be investigated in accordance with the ABRSM Malpractice and Maladministration policy ([www.abrsm.org/malpractice-and-maladministration-policy](http://www.abrsm.org/malpractice-and-maladministration-policy)).

#### *Sharing and storage of recordings*

The recording of the exam is made for the sole purpose of ABRSM's assessment and it will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

Recordings of practical exams will be kept by ABRSM for 90 days after the result is issued, and then destroyed.

### *Status of the recording (for data protection purposes)*

A recording of an exam has the status of an examination script and is therefore exempt from subject access requests made under data protection law. Candidates are, however, permitted to request other information about themselves and how ABRSM uses their personal data in accordance with our Privacy Policy ([www.abrsm.org/privacypolicy](http://www.abrsm.org/privacypolicy)).

### Malpractice and Maladministration

Failure to comply with ABRSM's Exam Regulations ([www.abrsm.org/examregulations](http://www.abrsm.org/examregulations)) or these Instructions for Completing Practical Grade Exams may be considered malpractice. Incidents of suspected malpractice will be investigated in line with ABRSM's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy ([www.abrsm.org/policies](http://www.abrsm.org/policies)). If malpractice is found to have been committed, the candidate may be disqualified.

### Results and certificates

All candidates receive a mark form giving a breakdown of the marks awarded for each section of the exam along with comments from the local examiner. Candidates who pass their exam also receive a certificate.

We will email applicants, and candidates (parents/carers) who have an account, when their results and mark forms are available to view online.

- For applicants, this will likely be within 2 weeks of the exam, subject to our quality assurance checks.
- For candidates (parents/carers) with an account, this will be seven days after we have released results to the applicant.
- Applicants also have the option to release an earlier email to candidates to tell them that their results are ready to view.

Sometimes we carry out additional checks which may delay the release of results. This is an important part of our quality assurance process and may take up to four weeks. We aim to issue all results as quickly as we can, while providing the highest standards of assessment.

Certificates will be posted to the applicant, usually within four months of releasing results.

It is the applicant's responsibility to pass mark forms and certificates to the candidate.

### Exam feedback

We welcome feedback about our exams. All feedback is logged and plays a valuable part in our quality assurance procedures. For further information on our processes and deadlines for submitting feedback, please visit [www.abrm.org/send-exam-feedback](http://www.abrm.org/send-exam-feedback).

## Exam programme & running order



Candidate name \_\_\_\_\_  
Candidate Contact ID \_\_\_\_\_  
Subject \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to start your exam with scales or pieces?

Scales

Pieces

Please write details of the items you are performing in your exam in the order you are playing them.  
Best wishes for an enjoyable and successful exam!

Year of syllabus \_\_\_\_\_

List	Number	Composer	Title

**Singers only:** unaccompanied traditional song: \_\_\_\_\_