

BOWED STRINGS SYLLABUS REQUIREMENTS

Instruments

Candidates are required to perform on acoustic instruments (electric instruments are not permitted).

Programme planning

Candidates should use their discretion in their choice of three pieces to present a contrasted and balanced programme. One piece must be chosen from each of the three lists in each grade (A, B and C).

Tuning-up

In Grades 1–5 the teacher or accompanist may tune the candidate's instrument (or advise on tuning) before the exam begins. The examiner will not do so. In Grades 6–8 candidates must tune their instrument themselves.

Music stands and stools

All ABRSM Centres provide a music stand, but candidates are welcome to bring their own if they prefer. Candidates should provide their own stool if required.

Accompaniment

A live piano accompaniment is required for all pieces, except those which are published as studies or unaccompanied works and those Double Bass List C pieces marked 'solo'. Candidates must provide their own accompanist, who may remain in the examination room *only* while engaged in accompanying. The candidate's teacher may act as accompanist; under no circumstances will the examiner do so.

Tuttis

Accompanists should make cuts to extensive orchestral tuttis in concerto (or similar) movements.

Cadenzas

Cadenzas should not be played unless specified in the syllabus.

Fingering and bowing

Candidates are not compelled to adhere to the fingering or bowing marks indicated in the music: any good practical fingering and bowing will be accepted. In Violin and Viola Grades 1 and 2, candidates are not expected to play in any but the first position, except in the scales and arpeggios where necessary; Cello and Double Bass pieces in these grades may include very simple changes of position. By Grade 4, candidates are expected to have begun exploring position changes matching the demands and style of the music.

Vibrato

Candidates should have acquired some skill in vibrato by Grade 5.

Scales and arpeggios

Examiners will usually ask for at least one type of scale/arpeggio required at each grade.

All scales and arpeggios should:

- be played from memory
- ascend and descend according to the specified range and pattern

Bowing will dictate the tempi of slurred scales and arpeggios. Separately bowed requirements should be played briskly, using no more than half the bow length. Books of scale requirements are published for all bowed strings by ABRSM.

Sight-reading

The sight-reading tests are without accompaniment. Candidates will be given a short interval of up to half a minute in which to look through and, if they wish, try out any part of the test before they are required to perform it for assessment. Books of specimen sight-reading tests are published for all bowed strings by ABRSM.

Performance and assessment

When marking, examiners will be assessing not only the accuracy of notes and rhythm, but also other elements inherent in a good performance, including intonation, production and quality of tone, bowing and finger action, posture, suitable choice of tempo, and expression and phrasing. Further details of assessment criteria are given in *These Music Exams*, available free of charge from music retailers and from www.abrsm.org/exams.

Marking scheme

Schedule of maximum marks for all grades:

Pieces: 1	30
2	30
3	30
Scales and arpeggios	21
Sight-reading	21
Aural tests	18
Total	<hr/> 150