

GUITAR (Subject Code: 07): Syllabus requirements

Syllabus validity

This syllabus is valid from 2009 until further notice.

Instruments

This syllabus is only appropriate for the standard classical instrument fitted with nylon strings. Candidates may use a capo at the 2nd or 3rd fret for the pieces in Grades 7 and 8 that require F# tuning; no other use of the capo is permitted.

Tuning-up

Candidates in all grades must tune their own instrument. The examiner will not do so.

Music stands and footstools

All ABRSM Centres provide a music stand, but candidates are welcome to bring their own if they prefer. Candidates should provide their own footstool (or other form of guitar support) if required.

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).

Accompanied pieces

In Grades 1 and 2, candidates may perform *up to two* pieces accompanied by another guitar (or, if necessary, a piano). These pieces are marked † in the syllabus. In Grade 3, *only one* such piece may be performed. Candidates must provide their own accompanist, who may remain in the exam room *only* while engaged in accompanying. The candidate's teacher may act as accompanist; under no circumstances will the examiner do so.

Vibrato

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

Scales and arpeggios

Examiners will usually ask for at least one of each type of requirement set at each grade.

All scales and arpeggios should:

- be played from memory
- ascend and descend according to the specified range (and pattern)
- be played legato
- be played at a pace that achieves a clean, uniform tone and a rhythmic flow without undue accentuation

Recommended minimum speeds are given in the books of guitar scale requirements published by ABRSM (for Grades 1–5 and 6–8).

In Grades 1–4, candidates may choose to play 'fingers-only' scales either *tirando* (free stroke) or *apoyando* (rest stroke); from Grade 5, these scales must be prepared with *both* right-hand techniques. The *tirando* stroke is expected for all other requirements.

Any combination of alternating right-hand fingers may be used for ‘fingers-only’ scales; those involving the ring finger are no longer compulsory. Any practical and systematic left-hand fingering will be accepted, but candidates are expected to observe the requirements regarding over-ringing and non-over-ringing for broken chords and arpeggios from Grade 3.

Sight-reading

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 sight-reading test before they are required to perform it for assessment. The main parameters for the sight-reading tests for each grade are outlined on pp. 41–55; once introduced, they apply for all subsequent grades (albeit with a logical progression of difficulty). A book of specimen sight-reading tests for guitar is published 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 quality and projection of tone, tuning, articulation, posture and hand positions. Any practical and systematic fingering that produces a good result will be accepted. 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:

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