

## ORGAN (Subject Code: 02): Syllabus requirements

### Syllabus validity and grades

This syllabus is valid from 2011 until further notice. From 2011, with the addition of Grade 1, all eight grades are available.

### Venues

Organ exams are held at Visits, i.e. premises provided by the Applicant and visited by the examiner. They may be held independently of other exams or as part of a larger Visit that includes other subjects/grades. For full details about Visits, see Reg. 7 in the *Examination Information & Regulations*, in particular the requirements to:

- arrange for a steward to be present
- provide a suitable piano for the Aural tests
- provide transport for the examiner, if requested (without cost to ABRSM)

### Instruments

Aside from the Grades 1–3 exceptions described below, the instrument used for the exam should be a pipe (or electronic) organ with:

- an orthodox console having at least two manuals covering a minimum range of  $C-f'''$
- a pedal-board covering a minimum range of  $C-f'$
- a swell pedal (if essential for the pieces chosen)
- the usual couplers

$C$  two octaves below middle  $C$

$f' / f'''$  a fourth/two octaves and a fourth above middle  $C$  (*pieces with a range extending above  $f'''$  are indicated in the syllabus by the symbol §*)

In Grades 1–3, the scale and sight-reading requirements as well as the majority of the pieces are for manuals only (although pedalling is introduced, as an option, in the Grade 3 scale requirements). Therefore, in Grades 1–3, the exam may be taken on an instrument without pedals (*pieces in these grades requiring pedals, or where pedalling is optional, are indicated in the syllabus by the symbols † and ‡, respectively*). In addition, in Grades 1 and 2, the exam may be taken on an instrument with only one manual. Consequently, in Grades 1–3, some notes may be transposed or omitted, provided the result is musically satisfactory.

### 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). Candidates should ensure, especially in Grades 6–8, that the instrument is equal to the demands of the chosen programme.

### Ornaments and editions

Only essential ornaments, such as cadential trills, in the pieces set for Grades 1–4 should be regarded as obligatory; all other ornaments in these grades may be regarded as optional. A small number of editions for keyboard instruments other than organ are listed in the lower grades; candidates are free to adapt or disregard any indications such as dynamics or articulation in these editions which are not suitable for organ. The series *Oxford Service Music for Organ* (OUP), featured in Grades 1–8, will be available in December 2010.

### **Registration**

Registration is left to the candidate's discretion for all elements of the exam. Candidates at any grade may bring a registrant for the three pieces; the registrant may also act as page-turner.

### **Page-turner**

Candidates at any grade may bring a page-turner for the three pieces (prior permission is not required); the page-turner may also act as registrant.

### **Scales, arpeggios and exercises**

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

All scales, arpeggios and broken chords should:

- be played from memory
- be prepared legato (or, if preferred, *détaché*: a singing, nearly-legato touch)
- ascend and descend according to the specified range (and pattern)
- be played without breaks in the flow and at a pace that is consistent with accuracy and distinctness

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. Arpeggios are required in root position only. Scales a third or a tenth apart should begin with the tonic in the lower voice, while scales a sixth apart should begin with the tonic in the upper voice.

For the pedal solos and left-hand-and-pedal studies, candidates may play from the printed music (if choosing to play them from memory, candidates must bring a copy to the exam in case the examiner wishes to refer to it).

Recommended minimum speeds are given in *Organ Scales, Arpeggios & Exercises*, published by ABRSM.

Any practical and systematic fingering/footing that produces a good result will be accepted.

### **Sight-reading (and transposition)**

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. A little extra time will be allowed for registration choice (a suggested registration is printed for all tests but candidates are free to choose their own if they prefer). For the transposition test (Grades 6–8), candidates will also 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.

The main parameters for the sight-reading tests (all grades) and transposition tests (Grades 6–8) are outlined on pp. 23–37. Once introduced, the sight-reading parameters apply for all subsequent grades (albeit with a logical progression of difficulty). Pedals are featured in the sight-reading tests from Grade 4, and no more than two manuals are required. Use of the swell pedal is not included at any grade. A book of specimen sight-reading (and transposition) tests for organ is published by ABRSM.

*(continued overleaf)*

## 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 control of touch and phrasing, articulation, suitable choice of tempo, and control of the swell pedal (where used). Any practical and systematic fingering/footing 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](http://www.abrsm.org/exams).

## Marking scheme

Schedule of maximum marks for Grades:	<b>1–5</b>	<b>6–8</b>	
Scales, arpeggios and exercises	21	21	
Pieces: 1	30	30	
2	30	30	
3	30	30	
Sight-reading	21	12	} <i>one combined mark will be recorded</i>
Transposition	–	9	
Aural tests	<u>18</u>	<u>18</u>	
Total	150	150	