

AURAL TESTS

This section of the exam tests the all-round aural awareness and musicianship skills of the candidate. Practice tests and guidelines are given in the books of aural tests for each instrument published by ABRSM Publishing; the CD for each instrument at each grade also contains exemplars of the tests. The marking scheme and assessment criteria for aural tests are given on p. 51.

For any test which requires a 'sung' response, pitch rather than vocal quality is the object, and candidates may hum or whistle, rather than sing, the response.

GRADE 1

- A1** To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 3 or 4 time played by the examiner. The examiner will commence playing the passage, and the candidate will be expected to join in as soon as possible by clapping the beat.
- A2** To clap on the last beat of each bar while the same passage is played again. The examiner will first state the time and count in the candidate.

- A3** To clap the rhythm of a short extract (from the same passage) played twice by the examiner.
- B** To sing, as an echo, four two-bar phrases limited to a range of a 3rd in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The echoes should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord, or chord on the root, and the starting note will first be sounded and a two-bar count-in given.
- C** To sing or play improvised answering phrases to four two-bar phrases limited to a range of a 4th (though the answers need not be similarly limited) in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The answers should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord or chord on the root will first be named and sounded as appropriate for the candidate's instrument, and the pulse given. The examiner will then play four bars introductory groove, before playing the first phrase to which the candidate should respond; the examiner continues with the groove throughout the test.

GRADE 2

- A1** To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 3 or 4 time played by the examiner. The examiner will commence playing the passage, and the candidate will be expected to join in as soon as possible by clapping the beat.
- A2** To clap on the second or last beat of each bar, as directed by the examiner, while the same passage is played again. The examiner will first state the time and count in the candidate.
- A3** To clap the rhythm of a short extract (from the same passage) played twice by the examiner.
- B** To sing, as an echo, four two-bar phrases limited to a range of a 5th in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The echoes should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord, or chord on the root, and the starting note will first be sounded, and the first beat clearly indicated by the examiner, where necessary, after a two-bar count-in.
- C** To sing or play improvised answering phrases to four two-bar phrases limited to a range of a 6th (though the answers need not be similarly limited) in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The answers should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord or chord on the root will first be named and sounded as appropriate for the candidate's instrument, and the pulse given. The examiner will then play four bars introductory groove, before playing the first phrase to which the candidate should respond; the examiner continues with the groove throughout the test.

GRADE 3

- A1** To clap the pulse of a passage of music in 2, 3 or 4 time played by the examiner. The examiner will commence playing the passage, and the candidate will be expected to join in as soon as possible by clapping the beat.
- A2** To clap on a set beat of each bar, chosen by the examiner, while the same passage is played again. The examiner will first state the time and count in the candidate.
- A3** To clap the rhythm of a short extract (from the same passage) played twice by the examiner.
- B** To sing, as an echo, four two-bar phrases limited to a range of a 6th in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The echoes should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord, or chord on the root, and

the starting note will first be sounded, and the first beat clearly indicated by the examiner, where necessary, after a two-bar count-in.

- C** To sing or play improvised answering phrases to four two-bar phrases in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The answers should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord or chord on the root will first be named and sounded as appropriate for the candidate's instrument, and the pulse given. The examiner will then play four bars introductory groove, before playing the first phrase to which the candidate should respond; the examiner continues with the groove throughout the test.

GRADE 4

- A1** To state the time of a passage of music in 2, 3 or 4 time played by the examiner and to identify the groove as swing, rock or Latin.
- A2** To clap on the fourth or last eighth-note (quaver) of each bar, chosen by the examiner, while the same passage is played again. The examiner will first state the time and count in the candidate.
- A3** To clap the rhythm of a short extract (from the same passage) played twice by the examiner.
- B1** To sing or play improvised answering phrases to four two-bar phrases in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The answers should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord or chord on the root will first be named and sounded as appropriate for the candidate's instrument, and the pulse given. The examiner will then play four bars introductory groove, before playing the first phrase to which the candidate should respond; the examiner continues with the groove throughout the test.
- B2** To sing and identify two melodic intervals limited to a major 2nd, major and minor 3rd, perfect 4th and perfect 5th, as used in the above four short phrases, after the examiner has played them twice.

GRADE 5

- A1** To state the time of a passage of music in 2, 3, 4 or 5 time played by the examiner and to identify the groove as swing, rock or Latin.
- A2** To clap on a set eighth-note (quaver) of each bar, chosen by the examiner, while the same passage is played again. The examiner will first state the time and count in the candidate.
- A3** To clap the rhythm of a short extract (from the same passage) played twice by the examiner.
- B1** To sing or play improvised answering phrases to four two-bar phrases in a major or minor key or mode played by the examiner. The answers should follow each phrase in strict time without an intervening pause. The key-chord or chord on the root will first be named and sounded as appropriate for the candidate's instrument, and the pulse given. The examiner will then play four bars introductory groove, before playing the first phrase to which the candidate should respond; the examiner continues with the groove throughout the test.
- B2** To sing and identify two melodic intervals limited to a major and minor 2nd, major and minor 3rd, perfect 4th, perfect 5th, and major and minor 6th, as used in the above four short phrases, after the examiner has played them twice.