

Our service to you

The Associated Board is committed to offering you a high standard of service at the exam centre and during the exam.

We monitor our exams closely to ensure consistency, fairness and efficiency. If you have any concerns about the conduct or conditions of an exam please contact us.

Our offices are open on weekdays from 8am to 5.30pm. You can also get information from the website (www.abrsm.org) or from your Honorary Local Representative.



Contact us

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Special Visits

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Diplomas

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Theory Exams

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Music Medals

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Copies of this leaflet are also available to download from www.abrsm.org/downloads



Royal Academy of Music
Royal College of Music
Royal Northern College of Music
Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama

**ASSOCIATED BOARD
OF THE ROYAL SCHOOLS OF MUSIC**

My turn next!

Hints and tips for exam candidates



The Associated Board understands that the last few moments before an exam are an important time for candidates.

We aim to handle this time sensitively, whatever the candidate's instrument, grade and experience.

In this leaflet we offer information and guidance on what to expect on the day of the exam and on how to handle those pre-exam moments.

Arriving at the exam centre

We ask candidates to arrive 10 minutes before the exam. This helps to ensure that the day runs as smoothly as possible for everyone involved. A steward will welcome and note the arrival of each candidate.

Every exam centre has a waiting room/area. Candidates can use their time in the waiting room to:

- get out their music
- assemble and prepare their instrument
- decide their preferred order for pieces/songs
- write down their pieces/songs and chosen order for the examiner
- sit quietly and prepare by thinking calmly through the music

Warming up

Final practice and run-throughs will have happened in the time leading up to the exam. Where possible, we suggest candidates have a thorough warm-up session before leaving home or school to attend the exam.

Once at the exam centre, there is still much that candidates can do in the few minutes before their exam to warm up and prepare.

Warming up silently

At exam centres without a separate warm-up room candidates can:

- loosen and exercise fingers
- prepare mentally, perhaps by thinking through their pieces/songs
- blow silently through wind instruments to bring them up to temperature
- warm up their embouchure and mouthpiece
- quietly hum a few scales if they are a singer

If there is a warm-up room

Some centres offer a separate warm-up room, sometimes with a piano. Please remember:

- this is a brief chance to warm up aloud, not a final practice session
- each candidate who would like to use the warm-up room will be given a turn
- the steward will tell the candidate how long is allowed – this is limited to just a few minutes
- use these few minutes wisely – there will not be time for a complete run-through
- return to the waiting room in good time for the exam itself

The exam

Before the exams begin, the examiner will have tried out the piano and so will be familiar with its tone quality and touch. Many examiners have taken graded exams themselves and so understand that candidates may feel nervous and take a few moments to settle.

At the start of the exam, examiners will encourage each candidate to:

- take a few moments to get comfortable
The examiner or steward will be happy to help with adjusting the height of the piano stool or music stand
- play or sing a few notes before the exam begins
Pianists can try the piano and instrumentalists and singers can warm up for a moment or two
- do the exam in any order they choose
Instrumentalists normally play their pieces first, but if they prefer to begin with scales, they should let the steward know so that the accompanist can be shown in at the right time

Remind your candidate that the examiner is looking forward to hearing them perform and wants them to do well.