

## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE TESTS

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### Guidelines for Levels 1 and 2

For candidates in practical examinations.

Candidates can expect to be asked:

- At least one question about each List piece presented;
- Between 6 and 10 questions in total;
- In Level 1, examinations on solo instruments and voice, questions will be asked from the candidate's part (not the accompaniment part)
- In Level 2, examinations on solo instruments and voice, questions will be asked from the accompaniment part (not the candidate's part)

From Grade 7 and above, candidates will be asked about the composer; candidates should interpret 'period' as an historical time frame; 'style' as the features, attributes and characteristics of the music or period (for example texture, phrasing, articulation, use of dynamics, motif, harmony, ornamentation, tempo, agogic accentuation etc.).

Candidates presenting in Musical Theatre should also consult the General Knowledge requirements in this syllabus as they contain certain requirements specific to the syllabus.

General Knowledge questions will not be asked about Extra List pieces.

### LEVEL 1

#### Preliminary and Grade 1 Exams

By referring to the score of each List piece (and Canon at Piano Grade 1), candidates can be asked to:

- (i) Name and/or explain any notes, rests, signs, terms, its title and its key/tonality.

#### Grades 2, 3 and 4

By referring to the score of each List piece, candidates can be asked to:

- (i) Name and/or explain any notes, rests, signs, terms, its title and its key/tonality; and
- (ii) Identify key changes (on the appropriate score) at obvious and clear-cut places only, preferably at the beginnings or ends of marked sections and not in transitory passages.

### LEVEL 2

#### Grades 5 and 6

By referring to the score of each List piece candidates can be asked to:

- (i) Name and/or explain any notes, rests, signs, terms, its title and its key/tonality;
- (ii) Identify key changes (on the appropriate score) at obvious and clear-cut places, and not in transitory passages;
- (iii) Explain form, only if the piece represents one of the following: Binary, Ternary, Rondo, Theme and Variation types, First Movement (Sonata), Fugue, Minuet (Scherzo) and Trio, Through Composed; for singing – for example, strophic, Lied, chanson, mélodie, art song, recitative (secco and stromentato/accompagnato), aria (all forms), madrigal, vocalise, opera, oratorio, mass, motet, cantata, ballad;
- (iv) Name the period from which the piece comes and state the time frame of that period; and
- (v) Discuss style by showing how the piece exemplifies typical features of its period.

#### Grades 7 and 8

By referring to the score of each List piece, candidates can be asked to:

- (i) Name and/or explain any notes, rests, signs, terms, its title and its key/tonality;
- (ii) Identify (on the appropriate score) any key changes that occur, or explain other type(s) of tonal organisation(s) e.g. atonal, pentatonic, whole tone where applicable; and

- (iii) Explain form, through a detailed structural analysis. Where the piece is a movement from a larger work, brief knowledge of its relationship to the other movements in the work is expected.

Either from the List piece score, or by reference to general characteristics not apparent on the score itself, candidates can be asked about:

- (i) Period and style appropriate to the piece. In addition, knowledge of the composer, his/her influences and some other works is expected. Knowledge of other genres typical of the period but not necessarily instrument-specific is also expected e.g. orchestral music, choral music.

### Certificate of Performance

By referring to the score of each piece, candidates can be asked to:

- (i) Name and/or explain any notes, rests, signs, terms, the title of the work or its key/tonality;
- (ii) Identify (on the appropriate score) any key changes that occur, or explain other type(s) of tonal organisation(s) e.g. atonal, pentatonic, whole tone where applicable; and
- (iii) Explain form, through a detailed structural analysis. Where a piece is a movement from a larger work, knowledge of its relationship to the other movements in the work, including a description of the other movements, is required.

Either from the score of each piece, or by reference to general characteristics not apparent on the score itself, candidates can be asked to demonstrate:

- (i) Knowledge of the period and style appropriate to the piece;
- (ii) Knowledge of other genres typical of the period but not necessarily instrument-specific is also expected, e.g. orchestral music, choral music; and
- (iii) Knowledge of the composers of each of the pieces being presented, in particular relating to their works and musical influences, is expected.

### Guidelines for Level 3

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Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a mature understanding of the structure, style and historical background of the repertoire that is performed and to use this as a basis for discussing the interpretive choices that they make.

Questions, which will be asked from the full piano score, will focus on the following areas:

- Terminology, including the significance of titles and the meaning of all markings contained in the score.
- Composers: relevant biographical information, sources of influence, impact upon later generations of composers and repertoire output (both in the discipline being examined and more broadly).
- Historical and stylistic context: how each work relates to the period from which it arises, considering both its compositional style and the performance conventions of the time.
- Structure: formal layout, keys, melodic/harmonic language and the identification of climax points.
- For instrumentalists, the construction and development of the instrument, with special consideration given to any implications this may have upon the repertoire that is performed.

Candidates must provide the examiners with clear, unmarked copies of all scores, including the piano part

In addition to the guidelines above, Level 3 candidates in Woodwind, Percussion, Band, Musical Theatre and Singing must consult the General Knowledge requirements in these syllabuses as they contain certain requirements specific to these syllabuses.

### Level 3 examinations

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New guidelines regarding General Knowledge and Repeats for Level 3 (Associate and Licentiate) diploma exams have been included in every applicable syllabus. Please refer to Level 3 and Associate and Licentiate descriptions in each instrument or voice syllabus for further details.

