

Special COVID-19 arrangements for accompaniment in practical face-to-face exams

Practical Grades, Prep Test, Performance Assessment, ARSM

Live accompaniment, as detailed in the relevant syllabuses, is normally required. However, while social-distancing requirements are in place, we are offering flexibility to singers and instrumentalists who must usually have an accompanist (or duet partner) on the day of their exam. We will accept unaccompanied performances in face-to-face exams until at least **31 March 2021**. Arrangements beyond that are subject to review.

Option	Guidance
Live accompaniment*	<p>This is the recommended option if there is someone available to provide accompaniment.</p> <p>Accompaniments may also be adapted for a different instrument (e.g. guitar instead of piano). Some pieces/songs may be published with accompaniments for alternative instruments.</p> <p>Pieces that are required to be played as duets may also have the second part adapted for a different instrument (e.g. viola instead of violin).</p>
Unaccompanied performances	Short rests should be 'played' as written; several consecutive bars' rest should be shortened.
A mix of the above approaches	Depending on the chosen pieces/songs and what is possible for the candidate.

**Please note that examiners will not be able to act as accompanist, including in Prep Tests.*

Please note that backing tracks will not be permitted in face-to-face exams (except for Jazz exams, where that provision is already standard practice).

Exceptionally, singers will also be allowed to accompany themselves. If choosing this option, singers will still be assessed against the usual criteria; marking allowances cannot be made for the fact that they are also undertaking the accompanist role.

Examiners will be understanding of the impact of any current restrictions and will focus on the candidates' performances. All candidates will be assessed equally according to how well they perform their three pieces, irrespective of the form of accompaniment (or none) used. There is no advantage to be gained by taking any one or more of the above options over another.

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