

The ABRSM logo consists of two orange circles of different sizes, with the text 'ABRSM' in white capital letters inside the larger circle.

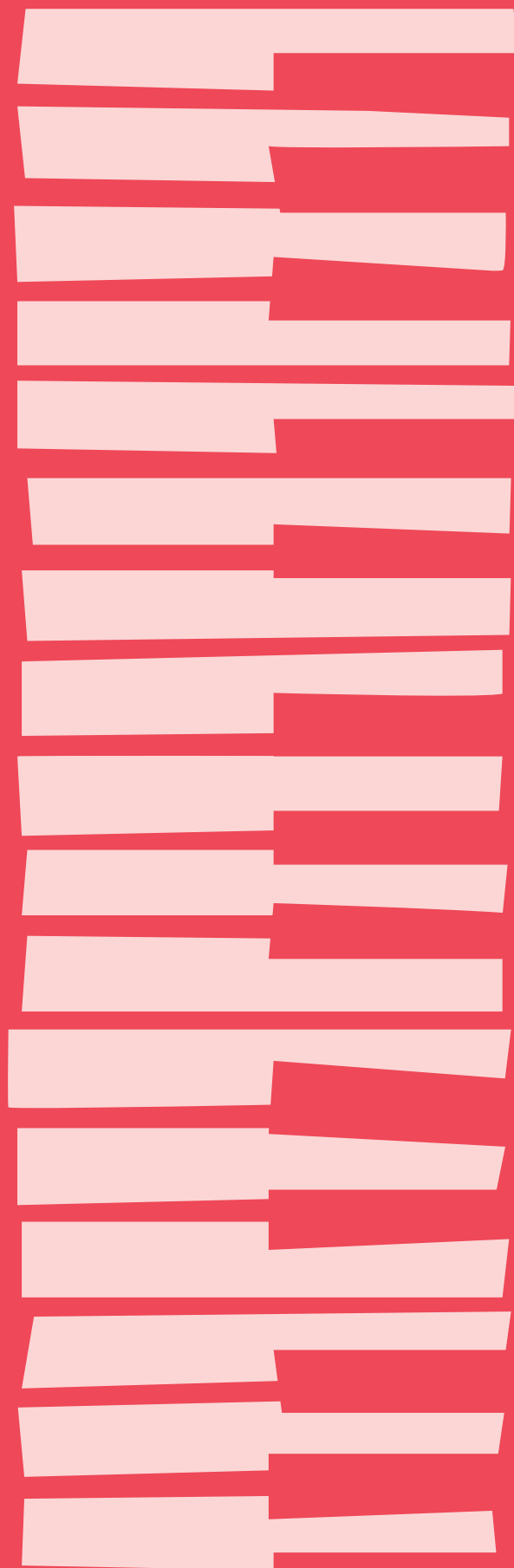
ABRSM

# MUSIC PERFORMANCE GRADES

A graphic for 'Jazz Piano' featuring several vertical orange bars of varying heights and widths, creating a stylized piano keyboard effect.

# JAZZ PIANO

Syllabus (Section 3)  
from 2024



This syllabus is specific to Jazz Piano and is part of the main *Qualification Specification: Music Performance Grades in Jazz*, which provides other relevant information for those preparing for an assessment. Please see [www.abrsm.org/performancegrades](http://www.abrsm.org/performancegrades).

October 2023

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# 3. Jazz Piano

## Performance Grades syllabus

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### Introducing the qualification

Jazz Performance Grades, introduced by ABRSM in 2024, run alongside and provide an alternative pathway to our long-standing Practical Grades. They allow learners to focus on and showcase their performance skills if that is their preference. This additional suite of qualifications has been designed to allow learners to play to their strengths and interests and still have their level of achievement formally recognised with a regulated qualification. Jazz Performance Grades are accessible exams given their sole focus on performance, without the assessment of any supporting tests. Instead they encourage the selection of appropriate repertoire to be delivered in a sustained performance, even at the earliest levels.

Musicians learn to play an instrument to explore and perform repertoire, which is why pieces, and the way they can be combined to create a convincing and sustained performance, are the focus of the exam. For Jazz Performance Grades, candidates are asked to present four pieces at each grade.

ABRSM Jazz Performance Grades draw on the same repertoire set for our Practical Grades. This syllabus repertoire is organised into lists, which explore different traditions and styles from Blues and Standards through to Contemporary Jazz. Choosing repertoire from different lists gives candidates the opportunity to perform a balanced selection and demonstrate a range of skills.

Since Jazz Performance Grades focus on performance alone, the choice of repertoire is important, and attention should be given to the way pieces are contrasted, the order in which they are presented, and the different moods and characters they inhabit. This will enable candidates to demonstrate their ability to deliver a coherent and convincing performance event, not just a series of individual pieces. Credit for this is given through the performance as a whole assessment criteria that are applied.

# Jazz Performance Grades: requirements and information

**The syllabus repertoire is valid from 1 January 2024 until further notice.**

This section provides a summary of the most important points that teachers and candidates need to know when taking Performance Grades for Jazz Piano. Further details, as well as administrative information about the exams, are given in ABRSM's Exam Regulations (available at [www.abrsm.org/examregulations](http://www.abrsm.org/examregulations)) which should be read before booking an exam.

## Instruments

A suitable piano should be used so that the repertoire chosen can be realised in full. This can be upright, grand or digital. A digital piano should have a clearly recognisable piano tone (a single piano 'voice' should be used throughout), a touch-sensitive keyboard with full-size weighted keys, and an action, range and facilities that match those of a conventional acoustic piano, including pedals where needed for the chosen repertoire. Tunes may not be altered to suit an instrument, e.g. a reduced-sized keyboard, and care should be taken in choosing repertoire as certain effects cannot be achieved on all digital pianos. While examiners may be aware of particular attributes of the instrument itself, the exam assessment will be based on the overall musical outcome, according to the marking criteria that take into account control of pitch, time, tone, shape and performance.

## Performance as a whole

Performance skills are at the heart of Performance Grades, and go beyond the preparation of individual Tunes. Designing programmes that play to learners' strengths as performers, and then delivering them with a real sense of musical intent and communication, is central to musical development. This also builds stamina, and embeds the technical control required to play a whole programme through, including managing the transitions from one Tune to another. Finding ways to put across the mood and character, and really get inside the style of different types of repertoire, as well as arranging Tunes into coherent and compelling programmes will in turn increase learners' knowledge and understanding of music more broadly.

For full details of how the performance as a whole component of the exam is assessed, see Section 4 of the *Qualification Specification: Music Performance Grades in Jazz*.

## Selecting repertoire

### Number of Tunes

Candidates present four Tunes in one continuous performance (without a break). They choose at least one Tune from each of the three lists (Blues, Standards and Contemporary Jazz). The fourth Tune must be selected from any of the three repertoire lists. The Tunes can be performed in any order.

### Programme times

The overall performance, including transitions between Tunes, should not exceed the maximum programme time set for the grade, as shown in the following table. The programme time is the duration from the first note of the performance to the last. The examiner may stop listening to the recording if the candidate's performance goes over the maximum programme time.

	Grade				
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Maximum programme time</b> (minutes)	9	10	11	13	15

### Repertoire lists

Every effort has been made to feature a broad range of repertoire to suit and appeal to candidates of different ages, backgrounds and interests. Certain Tunes may not be suitable for every candidate for technical reasons, e.g. hand size, or effects that cannot be realised on a digital piano. Other Tunes may not be suitable because of wider context (historical, cultural, subject matter, lyrics if an arrangement of a song, etc.). Tunes should be considered carefully for their appropriateness to each individual, which may need consultation between teachers and parents/carers. Teachers and parents/carers should also exercise caution when allowing younger candidates to research Tunes online: [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety).

The repertoire lists are the same as our Jazz Practical Grades. Candidates intending on taking both qualifications at the same grade may find their musical development benefits from preparing different Tunes for each.

### Exam music & editions

All repertoire is published by ABRSM and can be found in *Jazz Piano Pieces*. Candidates must not use any other versions or arrangements of these works.

### Pedalling

Pedalling is welcome at all Grades, but not expected until Grade 5.

## Hand stretch

Candidates should choose the most suitable Tunes for their hand size from the repertoire lists. If necessary, they may occasionally adapt the music by 'spreading' chords or omitting notes at wide stretches, provided the result is musical.

## Repeats

All repeats must be followed, including the improvisation/solo sections.

# Preparing for the exam

## Programme form & pre-performance procedures

Candidates should provide their programme information online when uploading their video. The information required should be given in the order the Tunes will be performed.

Candidates should announce themselves and their Tunes before beginning their performance.

If preferred, a Responsible Adult present may make the introductory announcement, as this does not form part of the performance. The assessment of the performance begins on the first note of music played.

More information on all of the above is given in the Guidance for Music Performance Grades available at [www.abrsm.org/performancegrades](http://www.abrsm.org/performancegrades).

## Interpreting the score

Please refer to specific guidance in the publications.

## Performing from memory

There is no requirement to perform from memory although candidates are encouraged to do so, if they believe it will enhance their performance. No extra marks are directly awarded for performing from memory.

## Page-turns

Candidates need to manage page-turns appropriately to avoid any adverse effect on the performance as a whole, which examiners will be assessing. Candidates may use an extra copy of the music or a photocopy of a section of the Tune (but see 'Copyright') to help with page-turns. They may also use a page-turner (prior permission is not required; the turner may be the teacher).

## Copyright

Performing from unauthorised photocopies (or other kinds of copies) or illegal downloads of copyright music is not allowed. In the UK, copies may be used in certain limited circumstances – for full details, see the MPA's Code of Fair Practice at [www.mpaonline.org.uk/mpa-guidelines](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk/mpa-guidelines). In all other cases, application should be made to the copyright holder before any copy is made.

Candidates and Applicants are expected to act within the law with regard to copyright. ABRSM may withhold the exam result where we have evidence that this is not the case.

## Sourcing exam music

Exam books are available from music retailers and online, including at the ABRSM music shop: [shop.abrsm.org](http://shop.abrsm.org).

# Jazz Piano

## Grade 1

**Four Tunes:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three lists, *Blues*, *Standards* and *Contemporary Jazz*, and a fourth Tune from any of the three lists, all published by ABRSM in *Jazz Piano Pieces, Grade 1*. For further programming requirements, see page 5.

	Tune	Composer/Arranger
<i>Blues</i>	1 Bedford Square Blues	Richard Michael
	2 Oh Lord, Don't Let Them Drop That Atomic Bomb On Me	Charles Mingus, arr. Nikki Iles
	3 Bags' Groove	Milt Jackson, arr. Richard Michael
	4 Slinky Thing	Simon Whiteside
	5 Prove You Groove	Phil Peskett
<i>Standards</i>	1 Perdido	Juan Tizol, arr. Richard Michael
	2 Inchworm	Frank Loesser, arr. Nikki Iles
	3 Jean Pierre	Miles Davis, arr. Charles Beale
	4 (Old Man From) The Old Country	Nat Adderley & Curtis R. Lewis, arr. Phil Peskett
	5 Is You Is, Or Is You Ain't (Ma' Baby)?	Billy Austin & Louis Jordan, arr. Eddie Harvey
<i>Contemporary Jazz</i>	1 Bottle Junction	Nikki Iles
	2 Blue Autumn	Eddie Harvey
	3 He Is Sadly Melting	Phil Peskett
	4 Here We Go Again	Michael Garrick
	5 Yokate	Huw Warren



# Jazz Piano

## Grade 2

**Four Tunes:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three lists, *Blues*, *Standards* and *Contemporary Jazz*, and a fourth Tune from any of the three lists, all published by ABRSM in *Jazz Piano Pieces, Grade 2*. For further programming requirements, see page 5.

	Tune	Composer/Arranger
<i>Blues</i>	1 C-Jam Blues	Duke Ellington, arr. Richard Michael
	2 On-Off Boogie	Tim Richards
	3 Blue Lullaby	Pete Churchill
	4 Good Time Blues	Eddie Harvey
	5 Now's The Time	Charlie Parker, arr. Richard Michael
<i>Standards</i>	1 Softly As In A Morning Sunrise	Sigmund Romberg, arr. Malcolm Miles
	2 St. Thomas	Sonny Rollins, arr. Lewis Riley
	3 Contemplation	McCoy Tyner, arr. Nikki Iles
	4 Moanin'	Bobby Timmons, arr. Pete Churchill
	5 The Big Noise From Winnetka	Bob Haggart & Ray Bauduc, arr. Eddie Harvey
<i>Contemporary Jazz</i>	1 Becky's Song	Martin Speake
	2 Swing It And C	Michael Garrick
	3 The Firefly	Nikki Iles
	4 The Orchard	Pete Churchill
	5 Hard Science	Phil Peskett

# Jazz Piano

## Grade 3

**Four Tunes:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three lists, *Blues*, *Standards* and *Contemporary Jazz*, and a fourth Tune from any of the three lists, all published by ABRSM in *Jazz Piano Pieces, Grade 3*. For further programming requirements, see page 5.

	Tune	Composer/Arranger
<i>Blues</i>	1 Barrelhouse Blues	Tim Richards
	2 Walking Blues	John Myhill
	3 Birks Works	Dizzy Gillespie, arr. Pete Churchill
	4 Blues For Tom	Charles Beale
	5 Allfarthing Blues	Julian Joseph
<i>Standards</i>	1 I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel To Be Free	Billy Taylor, arr. Liam Noble
	2 Fly Me To The Moon	Bart Howard, arr. Pete Churchill
	3 Sombrero Sam	Charles Lloyd, arr. Will Michael
	4 A Smooth One	Benny Goodman, arr. Pete Churchill
	5 The Peanut Vendor (El Manisero)	Moises Simons, arr. Roland Perrin
<i>Contemporary Jazz</i>	1 Swing Fun	Huw Warren
	2 Neat Feet	Michael Garrick
	3 Spanish Sketch	Terry Seabrook
	4 Sails	Nikki Iles
	5 Saturday	Roland Perrin

# Jazz Piano

## Grade 4

**Four Tunes:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three lists, *Blues*, *Standards* and *Contemporary Jazz*, and a fourth Tune from any of the three lists, all published by ABRSM in *Jazz Piano Pieces, Grade 4*. For further programming requirements, see page 5.

	Tune	Composer/Arranger
<i>Blues</i>	1 Blue Monk	Thelonious Monk, arr. Richard Michael
	2 Three-Four Blues	Bill Kinghorn
	3 Oscar's Boogaloo	Charles Beale
	4 Freddie Freeloader	Miles Davis, arr. Richard Michael
	5 Footprints	Wayne Shorter, arr. Eddie Harvey
<i>Standards</i>	1 I'm Beginning To See The Light	Harry James, Duke Ellington, Johnny Hodges & Don George, arr. Michael Garrick
	2 Lazy River	Hoagy Carmichael & Sidney Arodin, arr. John Myhill
	3 Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen	Trad., arr. Liam Noble
	4 Undecided	Charlie Shavers, arr. Simon Woolf
	5 Original Rags	Scott Joplin, arr. Brian Priestley
<i>Contemporary Jazz</i>	1 Shh!	Charles Beale
	2 In A Different Light	Phil Peskett
	3 Heading Home	Chris Batchelor
	4 Blues For Pete Johnson	Liam Noble
	5 Ikon (Memories Of Ike)	John Myhill

# Jazz Piano

## Grade 5

**Four Tunes:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three lists, *Blues*, *Standards* and *Contemporary Jazz*, and a fourth Tune from any of the three lists, all published by ABRSM in *Jazz Piano Pieces, Grade 5*. For further programming requirements, see page 5.

		Tune	Composer/Arranger
<i>Blues</i>	1	All Blues	Miles Davis, arr. Richard Michael
	2	Crossover Blues	Pete Saberton
	3	Lemon Cornette	Nikki Iles
	4	That Monday Morning Feeling	Roland Perrin
	5	Jamming With Jools	Brian Priestley
<i>Standards</i>	1	Christopher Columbus	Leon Berry, arr. Martin Litton
	2	Blue Bossa	Kenny Dorham, arr. Eddie Harvey
	3	Oleo	Sonny Rollins, arr. Phil Peskett
	4	34skidoo	Bill Evans, arr. Nikki Iles
	5	Take The 'A' Train	Billy Strayhorn, arr. Eddie Harvey & Nikki Iles
<i>Contemporary Jazz</i>	1	An Oscar For Oscar	Richard Michael
	2	So Long	Chris Batchelor
	3	Mambo Country	Terry Seabrook
	4	Waltz For Autumn	Terry Seabrook
	5	Chops	Chris Batchelor