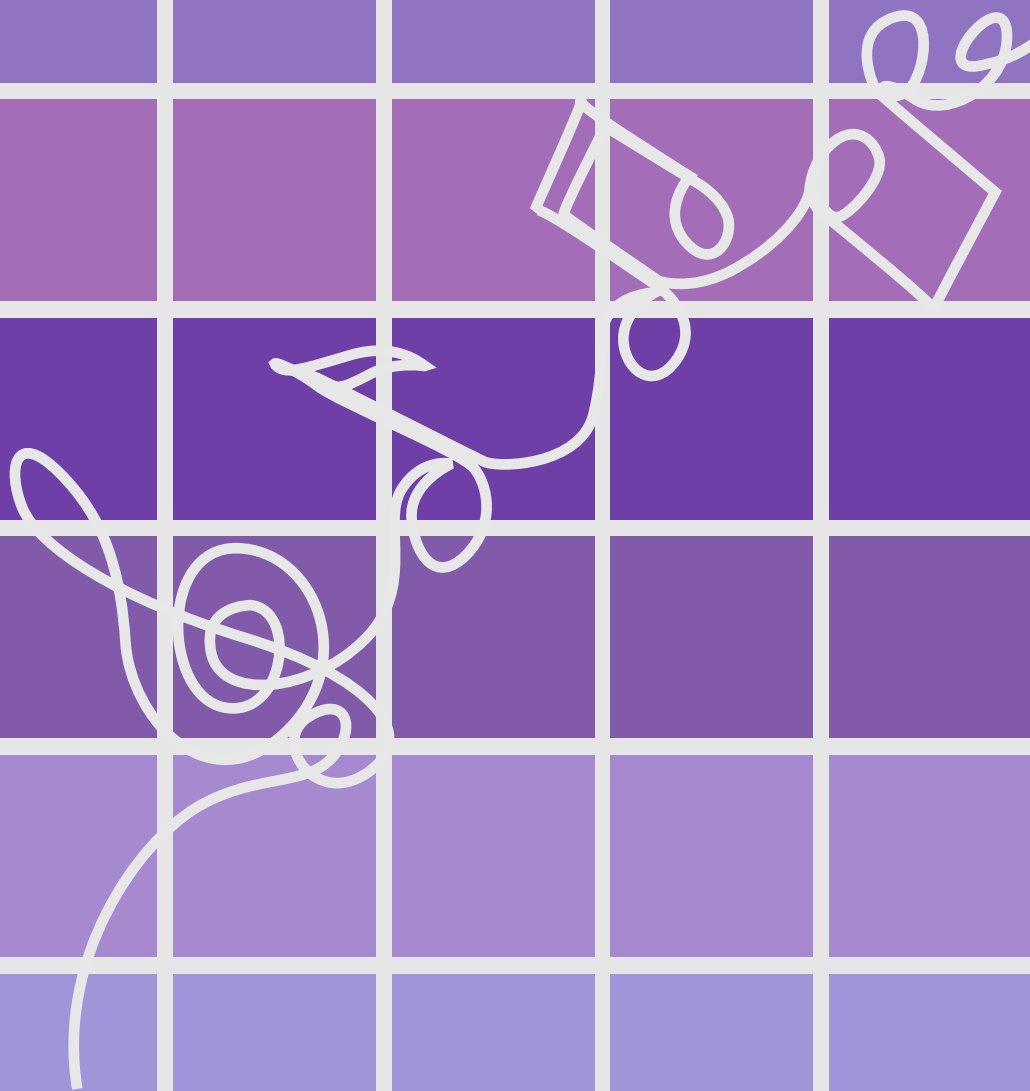




**AUSTRALIAN  
GUILD OF MUSIC  
& SPEECH**

# THEORY OF MUSIC



**2026  
SYLLABUS**

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# AUSTRALIAN GUILD OF MUSIC & SPEECH

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## Theory of Music Syllabus 2026

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## FOREWORD

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We welcome you to join the **Australian Guild of Music and Speech Ltd (AGMS)** family. Founded in 1969, the **AGMS** is a proud Australian, not-for-profit, **education and examination body**.

“ *Empowering your success  
is our passion* ”

The **AGMS** is driven to provide engaging, relevant, high-quality frameworks, to mould solid foundations for the next generations of musicians and speech & drama performers and educators.

The **AGMS** provides examinations for music and speech & drama students from introductory to advanced levels, including Certificate (C.Mus.AGMS), Associate (A.Mus.AGMS), Licentiate (L.Mus.AGMS) and Fellowship (F.Mus.AGMS) diplomas.

Below gives an insight into the values we share with our members:

<b>Music/Speech.</b>	We champion the inherent value of all types of music/speech and its enormous contribution to the emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and physical development and self-esteem of individuals and communities. We leverage our position to spread the love of music/speech and drama.
<b>Kindness.</b>	Our approach is student-centric and, at all times, we are positive, encouraging, friendly and supportive. We assist the learner to recognise and celebrate their achievements.
<b>Service.</b>	We understand the needs of teachers and respond efficiently and flexibly. Our systems and processes are simple and make exam organisation and reporting easy.
<b>Integrity.</b>	Our examination process is academically sound, impartial, transparent and delivers assessments which are consistent with international standards.
<b>Excellence.</b>	We strive for best practice in examinations and only partner with the best examiners and educators.

Via an **Academic Advisory Committee**, the **AGMS** has formulated this syllabus.

We look forward to growing with you on your pathway of excellence.

Yours in the arts,

**The AGMS Board of Directors.**

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## COURSE RATIONALE

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**For performers** – the aim of the course is to give a guided approach to develop musical theory skills from beginner level through to advanced levels.

This syllabus can be used for students to enter at any stage. It isn't necessary to start from the entry grade and can jump and commence or continue at a level to match your current musical theory development. Your music teacher would be the best guide to select an appropriate grade to start.

The participant will develop an understanding of the fundamentals of music, at various stages of the course, including tonality, form, notation, instrument knowledge, creativity, rhythm, pitch, melody, style and harmony.

Possible pathways after successful completion includes:

- for high school students, as an entry into tertiary music study or further training in a broad spectrum of music related careers.
- Offers student opportunities for personal development and encourages them to make an ongoing contribution to the culture of their community through participation in life-long music making.
- Becoming a music teacher.

## LEARNING GOALS

Each step, grade, and diploma have different learning goals and requirements depending on the level. The aim and objective, ideas and concepts that underpins this course overall, is to create a well-rounded, balanced theoretical musician.

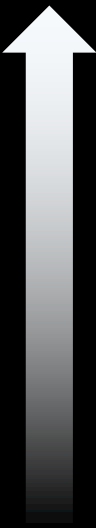
### For Theory of Music

- For **step 1 to 3, grade 1 to grade 8**, the learning objective includes knowledge of intervals, scales, triads/chords, form, notation, transposing, instrument, rhythm and creativity.
- For **associate, licentiate** the learning objectives includes knowledge of harmony, counterpoint, musical form, history of music and orchestration.

### Theory of Music

The **theory of music** subjects outlined in this syllabus are levelled as follows:

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	LEVEL NAME
Diploma	Professional music theory level – a complete mastery of all elements for the theory of music	L.Mus.Th.AGMS (Licentiate of Music)
		A.Mus.Th.AGMS (Associate of Music)
Grades	An advanced comprehension of music theory	Grade Eight (Proficiency Certificate)
		Grade Seven
		Grade Six
	An Intermediate level of music theory	Grade Five
		Grade Four
	Developing level of music theory	Grade Three
		Grade Two
		Grade One
Steps	Beginning elements to set the foundations of success in the rudiments of music theory	Step Three (Preliminary)



## OUTLINE OF ASSESSMENT

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The syllabus contains an outline of all assessment items and is split into different levels/grades presented later in this document.

There is **one** mode of theory examination available.

MODE	DESCRIPTION
In-Person	Under supervision, complete the written examination under standard written exam conditions. This will be at an arranged time scheduled by the AGMS. This is subject to availability of the supervisor and location.

For all written exams, a **condition for examination is only the candidate(s) and the supervisor** to be present in the examination room.

The student may bring the following into the examination room:

- 2 x 2B or 4B pencil
- 2 x blank ink pen
- 1 x unmarked ruler
- 1 x clear pencil case

The only exception to above, is the following.

- The candidate has special needs and has a carer to help.

### THEORY OF MUSIC (Weighting)

Following outlines, the marks (weighting) for each level.

The aim of music theory is to enable the students to understand the structure, form, and meaning behind a musical composition, to recognize patterns in music, to become more fluent readers of notated music, and allows musicians to speak with other musicians in a common language. It allows the student to have the fundamentals so that they can be more creative and also collaborate with other musicians.

There are seven fundamentals or elements that are dealt with in theory levels. They are Melody, Rhythm, Harmony, Timbre, Dynamics, Texture and Form.

Each level (grade) aims to reinforce and build on the concepts from the previous grades.

It is recommended that students study the theory of music alongside the practical aspects. To receive higher grade certificates, students must have also completed the theory requirement as listed in the practical syllabus.



GRADE	Melody	Rhythm	Dynamics	Texture	Harmony	Form	Time Limit
<b>Step Three (Preliminary)</b>	50%	50%					1 hour
<b>Grade One</b>	30%	30%	20%	20%			1 hour
<b>Grade Two</b>	25%	35%	15%	20%	10%		1 ½ hours
<b>Grade Three</b>	25%	25%	10%	20%	20%		2 hours
<b>Grade Four</b>	25%	20%	10%	10%	25%	10%	2 hours
<b>Grade Five</b>	20%	10%	10%	20%	30%	10%	2 ½ hours
<b>Grade Six</b>	20%	10%		20%	40%	10%	3 hours
<b>Grade Seven</b>	25%			25%	30%	20%	3 hours
<b>Grade Eight</b>	20%			25%	35%	20%	3 hours

### Theory of Music

The **theory of music** marking system, awards the following based on the mark received.

Details are below:

LEVEL		Grade Eight (Proficiency) Grade Seven Grade Six Grade Five Grade Four Grade Three Grade Two Grade One Step Three (Preliminary)	L.Mus.Th.AGMS A.Mus.Th.AGMS
MARK	95-100	A+ High Distinction	Award with High Distinction
	90-94	High A Distinction	Award with Distinction
	85-89	A Honours	Award
	80-84	B+ High Credit	
	75-79	B Credit	
	70-74	C+ High Pass	
	65-69	C Pass	NGS (Not Grade Standard)
	0-64	NGS (Not Grade Standard)	

**CERTIFICATE**

Certificates are only issued for **A+ High Distinction, High A Honours, A Honours, B+ High Credit, B Credit, C+ High Pass, C Pass**. No certificate is issued for **Not Grade Standard (NGS)** category. Diplomas are either **Award with High Distinction, Award with Distinction, Award** or **No Award**. Candidates/Teachers should note any pre-requisite requirement that will appear at the top of the page for appropriate grades, certificates and diplomas in the syllabus or in the following section.

The **AGMS** admin automatically issues the appropriate certificate in keeping with the pre-requisites. The Grade 8 (Proficiency), and all Diplomas are presented to successful candidate at the annual Graduation towards the start of each year in Australia.

**THEORY PREREQUISITE FOR PRACTICAL SUBJECTS**

Below outlines the **AGMS theory prerequisites**. The **AGMS theory examination** can be completed any time. Once a minimum of a **pass** in both the **AGMS practical grade** and the prerequisite **AGMS theory grade** (or above grade) is completed – the **AGMS practical certificate** will be issued.

PRACTICAL GRADE	THEORY GRADE PREREQUISITE (required)	THEORY GRADE (suggested)
Grade Three		Preliminary
Grade Four		Grade One
Grade Five		Grade Two
Grade Six		Grade Three
Grade Seven	Grade Four	
Grade Eight	Grade Five	
Certificate C.Mus.AGMS	Grade Five	
Associate A.Mus.AGMS	Grade Six	
Licentiate L.Mus.AGMS	Grade Seven	

**VALIDITY POLICY**

Randomised sets of examinations papers are generated each year. The paper is only to be opened and presented to the candidate, following strict instructions from the **AGMS**.

**APPLICATION and EXAMINATION ENTRY**

All entries can only be made online, via the **agms.edu.au** site. Examinations are held at centres where a suitable supervisor can be available to monitor the conditions of the written examination. If the **AGMS** finds it necessary to cancel an examination at a centre the candidate may then be directed to the nearest centre. Fees will be refunded if the **AGMS** cannot service the examination centre or the alternative offered. Ensure the candidate's name is correct when placing the entry. Once the certificate has been printed and posted, there will a AU\$20.00 fee to replace the certificate with the corrected name.

## **FEES, REFUNDS, TRANSFER**

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### **FEE LIST**

A complete list of fees is published on the **agms.edu.au** website. All fees are paid online using the secure online credit card payment system.

### **FEE REFUND**

Fees cannot be refunded. But in exceptional circumstances, an application can be made to the **AGMS admin** for consideration for a fee refund. When the **AGMS** receives an application for an examination refund and it is accepted, a AU\$50.00 admin fee will be deducted from the refunded amount. In the case the **AGMS** is not able to service the examination centre for various reasons – for example, remote location, a full refund will be offered.

### **EXAMINATION RE-ENTRY**

No fee concession is provided in the regulations for a repeat examination entry subsequent to failure to pass (NGS – not grade standard) the examination. The full fee prescribed in the current fee list for the particular Step, Grade, Certificate or Diploma must be paid in full when making another examination entry.

### **CONCESSIONAL RE-ENTRY**

This type of examination entry concerns a candidate who misses an examination because of medical or other reasons. A new entry must be completed. Attach a copy of the doctor's certificate or appropriate letter and enclose the necessary half fee(s) based on the current Fee List. This concession must be taken within 6-months of the original date of entry, otherwise it lapses, and any fees held in credit will then be forfeited. This procedure also applies to any examination for which a new time and date is requested by the candidate. When making this application, a candidate has the right to make a concessional re-entry at a higher Grade level. But payment for the balance of the half fee is necessary. All applications for concessional re-entry must be made through the **AGMS** admin.

### **TRANSFER OF FEES**

Fees may **not** be transferred to the credit of another candidate - except in cases of hardship or similar circumstances within the family. Such a concession must be approved by the **Board of Directors** of the **AGMS** after an application in writing has been made.

## **ATTENDANCE AT EXAMINATIONS, ABSENT**

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Candidates may **not** interchange examination time periods without prior permission from the **AGMS** admin or the **examiner**. Candidates are required to attend the examination location fifteen minutes before the appointed time.

### **ABSENT CANDIDATES**

Candidates absenting themselves from an examination to which they have been called and notified, will forfeit the fees paid. The only exceptions to this rule are in the event of a death in the family, illness or accident, school examinations being scheduled for the same date, or for religious purposes. An appropriate certificate or letter should be obtained and a copy attached to any future examination entry at half fee to be taken within six months of the original examination.

## **EXAMINATION PROCEDURE & OTHER ATTRIBUTES**

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### **IN-PERSON EXAMINATION**

At an in-person examination, you will be allocated a venue and a time by the AGMS admin. Please arrive 15 minutes before the allotted examination time and wait outside the examination room. Only the candidate or exceptions listed in **Outline of Assessments** is permitted in the examination room.

### **NATIONAL AWARDS & SPECIAL CERTIFICATES**

**National Awards and Special Certificates** are awarded every year. Many donations are received on a regular basis for the **Annual AGMS Award and Concert Presentation** from supportive teachers and others as well as from businesses. The **AGMS** is grateful on behalf of all candidates for this valued support, as is it devoted wholly to the many successful examination candidates who have endeavoured and achieved in the preceding year. Candidates with 90 marks and above from their examination are put forward for consideration to be invited to receive a national award. There are also opportunities to receive **scholarships**, and **prizes** at this **Award and Concert Presentation**.

## **ACCESSIBILITY POLICY**

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The **AGMS** works to provide flexibility and opportunities for students who have either physical or mental disabilities. The **AGMS** can accept entries from candidates who are physically handicapped or who are blind. Details of the disability should be quoted at the time of entry so that examiners can be alerted to any unusual set of circumstances which may arise. Examination requirements can be varied in accordance with the **AGMS** philosophy of rewarding disciplined endeavour and skill and supporting self-esteem. Contact the **AGMS** admin about this matter.

## **EXAMINER**

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### **EXAMINER'S DECISION & APPEALS PROCESS**

The examiner's decision is final. However, it is possible to appeal this. This appeal must be instigated within two-weeks of receiving the results by addressing such to the **AGMS Board of Directors**. Should there be sufficient evidence for the appeal to be successful, then the candidate will be offered the opportunity to resit the examination at a mutually convenient time with a different examiner.

### **EXAMINER REQUIREMENTS & RELIABILITY POLICY**

All **AGMS** examiners are professionals in their field and undergo a period of supervised training to be appointed as an **AGMS** examiner. This ensures **AGMS** examiners are highly aware of the syllabus criteria and marking scheme. The **AGMS** has an examiner training courses at different levels. Periodically, all examiners attend a moderation session to ensure a consistent mark between the examiners. All examiners and staff hold current working with children check, blue card or equivalent



## **MUSIC THEORY EXAMINATIONS**

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### **MUSIC, THEORY REQUIREMENTS, PRELIMINARY, GRADES and DIPLOMAS**

#### **NOTE:**

- Theory paper answers should be written neatly in either clear sharp pencil or ink/biro.
- The student should carefully read the instructions at the beginning of every examination paper.
- Examiner's report summaries are sent to all candidates.
- The English meanings given for the Italian Terms in the various Grades are considered to be satisfactory equivalents.

Refer to the AGMS Website for all information for entry closing dates & current fees.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

#### **HARMONY REQUIREMENTS Grade 4 onwards**

Harmony written in pianoforte style is an option for each candidate. This is similar to four-part, except that the top 3 parts are placed in the treble clef in a close chordal format and with a bass part in the bass clef. Generally, the rules for 4 part vocal are applied in the same manner but variations are accepted within reason. The 2 or 3 remaining voices are closely placed, just under the melodic line, as if someone were playing a chordal pattern on the piano. However, a more advanced chordal spread over the 2 clefs is acceptable, particularly at grade 7 and 8 examinations, but this is not mandatory.


## **THEORY: STEP THREE (PRELIMINARY)**

Time Allowed: 1 hour

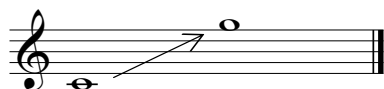
Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as Grade Three Practical examination. This will allow the student to keep pace for the required prerequisites necessary for each practical examination.

### **NOTATION**

 The Treble or G Clef

The notes in the Treble Stave – from Middle C, up to Top G above the staff:



 The Bass or F Clef

The notes in the Bass Stave – from Middle C down to Low F below the staff:



The Staff or Stave

The Musical Alphabet (A, B, C, D, E, F, G)

Sharps #, Flats ♭, and Natural ♮ signs and their use

Recognition and writing of tones and semitones as found in the C Major scale

Adding stems correctly to notes within the given range

The writing of single notes an octave above and below a given note in either the Treble or Bass Clefs

### **SIGNS**

Bar lines

Double Bar lines

Simple Duple Time  $\frac{2}{4}$

Simple Quadruple Time  $\frac{4}{4}$  or C = Common Time



## **RHYTHM**

- ♩ - Semibreve or Whole Note rest
- ♪ - Minim or Half Note and rest
- ♫ - Crotchet or Quarter Note and rest

Adding bar lines and time signatures to a given rhythm. Four (4) bars maximum

Completing bars by adding a note or notes as required. Four (4) bars maximum

Regular note grouping only

No syncopation

## **MUSIC COPYING**

To neatly and exactly copy a given short melody using the above knowledge only.

## THEORY: GRADE ONE

Time Allowed: 1 hour 15 Minutes.

Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as Grade Four Practical examination. This will allow the student to keep pace for the required prerequisites necessary for each practical examination.

### MUSIC TERMS



English meanings of the terms listed below.

A knowledge of the abbreviations where applicable.

Adagio		Slowly
Lento		Slowly
Allegro		Fast and Lively
Andante		At an easy walking pace
Moderato		At a moderate speed
Rallentando	<i>(Rall.)</i>	Gradually becoming slower
Ritardando	<i>(Rit./Ritard.)</i>	Gradually becoming slower
Ritenuto	<i>(Rit.)</i>	Held back. Immediately slower
Crescendo	<i>(Cresc.)</i>	Gradually becoming louder
Decrescendo	<i>(Decresc.)</i>	Gradually becoming softer
Diminuendo	<i>(Dim.)</i>	Gradually becoming softer
Forte	<i>f</i>	Loud
Mezzo Forte	<i>mf</i>	Moderately loud
Piano	<i>p</i>	Soft
Mezzo Piano	<i>mp</i>	Moderately soft
Dolce		Sweetly
Legato		Smoothly. Well connected
Staccato		Short, detached
Da capo al fine		From beginning to the word fine

### NOTATION

The Staff or Stave

 Treble or G Clef and  Bass or F Clef

Letter names including ONE ledger line above and below each staff or stave

Sharps #, Flats b, and Natural ♮ signs and their use

The name, shape and relative length of the semibreve , minim , crotchet, and quaver  

**RESTS**

Semibreve  $\text{—}$ , minim  $\text{—}$ , crotchet  $\text{♩}$ , and quaver  $\text{♪}$  (Shape and value)

Regular grouping of rests (and notes) to show beat divisions

Adding ONE rest to complete a bar or bars of simple time

**SCALES**

The writing and recognition of major scales and their key signatures up to 2 sharps and 2 flats.

Ascending and descending, with the positioning of tones and semitones. ONE octave only.

The writing of scale degree numbers under the notes of a melody using the keys specified for this grade.

**TIME SIGNATURES**

Simple Duple Time  $\frac{2}{2}$   $\frac{2}{4}$   $\text{C}$  Cut Common Time/Alla Breve

Simple Triple Time  $\frac{3}{2}$   $\frac{3}{4}$

Simple Quadruple Time  $\frac{4}{2}$   $\frac{4}{4}$  or  $\text{C}$  Common Time

Adding bar lines and a time signature to a given rhythm. Four (4) bars maximum.

**SIGNS**

Bracket, bar lines, double bar lines, slurs.

**CHORDS**

Writing in root position any of the following chords in the treble clef only.

**C G F**

## THEORY: GRADE TWO

Time Allowed: 1 hour 30 Minutes.

Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as Grade Five Practical examination. This will allow the student to keep pace for the required prerequisites necessary for each practical examination.



### MUSIC TERMS

English meanings of the terms listed below. A knowledge of the abbreviations where applicable.

A Tempo		Return to former speed
Allegretto		Moderately fast
Andantino		Faster or slower than Andante, A walking pace
Animato		Animated, Lively
Largo		Very slow and broad
Meno Mosso		Less movement
Presto		Very fast
Vivace		Lively, spirited
Vivo		Lively, spirited
Fortissimo	<i>ff</i>	Very loud
Pianissimo	<i>pp</i>	Very soft
Sforzando	<i>sf</i> or <i>sfz</i>	Increased accent on a single note or chord.
Cantabile		In a singing style
Giocoso		Merrily, Joyfully
Marcato		Marked
Mezzo Staccato		Moderately short and detached
Molto		Much, Very
Perdendosi		Dying away
Poco		Little
Scherzando		In a light playful manner
Semplice		Simply
Sempre		Always
Senza		Without
Dal Segno		From the sign

**NOTATION**

The Staff or Stave

 Treble or G Clef and  Bass or F Clef

Letter names including TWO Ledger lines above and below each staff or stave.

**NOTES AND RESTS**

As for Grade One but also including semiquaver and demisemiquaver notes   and rests 

The meaning of a dot after a note

Dotted notes and rests

**SCALES**

The writing and recognition of major scales and their key signatures up to 3 sharps and 3 flats

The writing and recognition of the harmonic minor scales of A, E, and D


The writing of scale degree numbers under the notes of a melody in the keys specified for the grade


All scales ascending and descending.

ONE or TWO octaves with tones and/or semitones to be marked as required

**TIME SIGNATURES**

As for Grade One with the addition of:

Simple Triple Time  3 quaver beats.

Compound Duple Time  2 dotted beats.

**RHYTHM**

Regular grouping of notes to show beat divisions.

Adding rests to complete a bar or bars of simple time. Correct grouping expected.

Adding bar lines and a time signature to a given rhythm. Four (4) bars maximum.

**SIGNS**

As for Grade One: bracket, bar lines, double bar lines, slurs.

PLUS:

Signs for loudness, softness, gradation, repeat marks, triplet, ties, pause and accent marks.

**TRANSCRIPTION**

Transcription of a melody from Treble to Bass or from Bass to Treble at the same pitch.

**INTERVALS**

Writing of intervals above the tonic note of the keys listed for this Grade.  
Naming intervals – the NUMBER of the interval is required, NOT quality.

**CHORDS**

Writing in root position any of the following chords in the treble clef only.  
Accidentals may need to be included. Chords from Grade 1 may be requested.

**C   G   D   F   B $\flat$    C7   G7   F7   Am   Dm   Em**

## THEORY: GRADE THREE

Time Allowed: 2 hours

Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as Grade Six Practical examination. This will allow the student to keep pace for the required prerequisites necessary for each practical examination.

### MUSIC TERMS

English meanings of the terms listed below. A knowledge of the abbreviations where applicable.

Accelerando	(Accel.)	Gradually faster
Con Moto		With movement
Prestissimo		As fast as possible
Tempo Commodo		At a comfortable speed
Allargando		Becoming broader
Larghetto		Slow and broad
Calando		Getting softer and slower
Morendo		Dying away
Forte Piano	( <i>fp</i> )	Loud, then immediately soft
Rinforzando	( <i>rfz / rinf.</i> )	Reinforcing the tone
Staccatissimo		Very short and detached
Agitato		Agitated
Ad Libitum	( <i>ad. lib.</i> )	At liberty, At pleasure, Freely
Con anima		With animation, With spirit
Grazioso		Gracefully
Leggiero		Lightly
Loco		At normal pitch after 8va sign
Main droite	( <i>M.D.</i> )	Right hand
Main gauche	( <i>M.G.</i> )	Left hand
Maestoso		Majestically
Risoluto		Resolute, Firmly
Tranquillo		Tranquil, Calmly
Tre corde	( <i>T.C.</i> )	Release the soft pedal
Una corde	( <i>U.C.</i> )	Use soft pedal

**NOTATION**

The Staff or Stave

♪ Treble or G Clef and ♭ Bass or F Clef (As in Grade Two)

In addition:

Letter names including ANY ledger line above or below each stave or staff

The recognition, meaning and use of a double sharp and a double flat

**SCALES**

The writing and recognition of major scales and their key signatures up to 4 sharps and 4 flats

The writing and recognition of the harmonic minor scales of A, E, D, G, and B

The writing of scale degree numbers under the notes of a melody in the keys specified for the grade

All scales ascending and descending

ONE or TWO octaves with tones and/or semitones marked as required

**TIME SIGNATURES**

As for Grades One and Two with the addition of:

Compound Triple Time	$\frac{9}{8}$	Three dotted crotchet beats
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Compound Quadruple Time	$\frac{12}{8}$	Four dotted crotchet beats
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**RHYTHM**

Regular grouping of notes to show beat divisions

Adding rests to complete bars of simple time (Correct grouping expected)

Adding bar lines and a time signature to a given rhythm – Four (4) bars maximum

The semibreve rest as a full bar of silence

Recognition of an anacrusis

Understanding of whole bar reset

**SIGNS**

As for Grade One and Grade Two: Bracket, bar lines, double bar lines, slurs.

Signs for loudness, softness, gradation marks, repeat marks, triplet, ties, pause and accent marks.

PLUS:

Signs for Tenuto, Duplet, 8va, 8va bassa and M.M.



**TRANSCRIPTION**

Transcription of a melody from Treble to Bass, or from Bass to Treble, one octave higher or lower.

**INTERVALS**

Recognition and the writing of Major, Minor, and Perfect intervals in the keys specified for this grade.  
(See under 'Scales' above)

**CHORDS**

Writing in root position any of the following chords in the treble clef.  
Accidentals may need to be included. Chords from previous grades may be requested.

A   E $\flat$    Em   Cm   Fm   Gm   D7   Dm7   A7   Am7

**WORD ACCENTING**

To divide a couplet of words into measured beats by means of an upright line placed before the strong beat(s).

## THEORY: GRADE FOUR

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Time Allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as Grade Seven Practical examination.

### MUSIC TERMS

In addition to Grades One, Two and Three Music Terms, the English meanings of the terms listed below, with knowledge of the abbreviations where applicable.

Allegro non troppo	Fast, but not too fast
Attacca	Go on at once
Grave	Very slow, solemn, or serious
Largamente	Broadly
L'istesso tempo	At the same speed
Stringendo	Pressing on faster
Stretto	Drawn together, tempo increase
Volante	Flying
A Piacere	At the pleasure of the performer
Assai	Very
Cantando	In a singing style
Piacevole	Pleasant, agreeable
Pesante	Heavy, Ponderous, Solid
Quasi	Almost, as if
Smorzando	Dying away
Sotto voce	In an undertone, quietly
Subito	Suddenly
Arco ( <i>Strings</i> )	With the Bow
Pizzicato ( <i>Strings</i> )	Pluck the string with the finger
Coda	A passage ending a section or movement
Opus	A work or group of works

### ORNAMENTS

Recognition and drawing only.

**Acciaccaturas** – crushing notes

**Appoggiaturas** – leaning notes

**Mordents** – upper and lower

**Trills**

**Turns** – normal and inverted

### SCALES

The writing and recognition of major scales and their key signatures up to 5 sharps and 5 flats

Harmonic minor scales up to 4 sharps and 4 flats

Melodic minor scales up to 3 sharps and 3 flats

Placement of semitones and/or tones as required.

Up to TWO octaves will be required. Knowledge of the technical scale degree names.

### **CHORDS**

Writing and recognition in root position any of the following chords in the treble and bass clef. Accidentals may need to be included. Chords from previous grades may be requested.

**E<sup>b</sup> B<sup>b</sup>7 Cm7 Gm7 C6 G6 F6 B<sup>b</sup>6**

### **HARMONY**

Writing and recognition of perfect and plagal cadences in four-part Vocal style.

### **INTERVALS**

The writing of simple diatonic or chromatic intervals including perfect, major, minor, diminished, and augmented.

### **TIME SIGNATURES**

All simple time signatures with top figures 2, 3, 4

All compound time signatures with top figures 6, 9, 12

### **RHYTHM**

Adding bar lines and time signatures to a given rhythm.

Adding rests to incomplete bars.

The use of simple syncopation.

Correct grouping of notes and rests is expected.

Adding bar lines and a time signature to a given rhythm. Four (4) bars maximum.

### **MELODY WRITING**

To write a melody of four bars in a major key up to TWO sharps or TWO flats to a given rhythmic pattern. Suggested chords will be listed to form your melody upon if you wish to use them.

These chords will not be taken into account in the assessment of your completed melody.

### **TRANSPOSITION**

The transposition of a melody to one of the keys specified for the Grade. (See under 'Scales' above)

### **GENERAL MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE**

To recognise or describe: Binary Form, Ternary Form.

To write the approximate compass for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass voices.

To show a general knowledge of the Pianoforte. Simple questions only will be asked.

## **THEORY: GRADE FIVE**

Time Allowed: 2 hours 30 minutes

Minimum pass mark 65%

It is recommended that this examination is taken at the same time as the Grade Eight Practical examination. This will allow the student to keep pace for the required prerequisites necessary for each practical examination.

### **SCALES**

The writing and recognition of all major and minor scales (harmonic and melodic), either using their key signatures or accidentals.

In addition to the Treble and Bass clefs, the C Alto clef and the C Tenor clef will also be used.

A knowledge of enharmonic change.

### **INTERVALS**

The writing of simple diatonic, chromatic, and compound intervals.

A knowledge of enharmonic change.

### **MELODY WRITING**

To write a melody of four bars in a major or minor key up to 3 sharps or 3 flats. The opening notes of the melody will be given. Suggested chords will be listed to form your melody upon if you wish to use them. These chords will not be taken into account in the assessment of your completed melody.

### **HARMONY**

Writing and recognition of the four principal cadences in four part Vocal or Pianoforte style.

Adding two inner parts, Alto and Tenor, to a given Treble voice and figured Bass, with chord indications above the treble.

To show a knowledge of root position and 1st inversion of major and minor chords and cadential 6/4 chords.

### **TRANSCRIPTION**

The transcription of a melody from Treble or Bass clef to Alto or Tenor clef, either at the same pitch or up or down an octave.

### **CHORDS**

Writing in root position any of the following chords in the treble and bass clef.

Accidentals may need to be included. Previous grades chords may be requested.

**A<sup>b</sup> D<sup>6</sup> E<sup>6</sup> A<sup>6</sup> B<sup>6</sup> B<sup>b6</sup> A<sup>b6</sup> C<sup>dim</sup> G<sup>dim</sup> D<sup>dim</sup> D<sup>aug</sup> A<sup>aug</sup> F<sup>aug</sup>**

Diminished (*dim*) chords can also be identified by a ( o )

Augmented (*aug*) chords can also be identified by a ( + )

**GENERAL MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE**

- Questions on the form, time and character of the dance movements of the **Baroque Suite** (Allemande, Courante, Sarabande, Minuet and Gigue), give a description of counterpoint, and identify the main composers of Baroque Suites.
- **Stringed instruments:** violin, viola, violoncello, and double bass. General information including tuning the open strings and ranges using appropriate clefs, how these instruments are played, naming the various parts of the instruments, technical terms and signs for string music (e.g. arco, pizzicato).
- Stringed instruments of the **string quartet** and their ranges and tunings using the correct clefs.
- Recognise Tonal and Real **Sequences**.

## **THEORY: GRADE SIX**

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Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 65%

This examination is a prerequisite for the A.Mus.AGMS examination.

### **SCALES**

The writing and recognition of all major and harmonic and melodic minor scales.  
Enharmonic keys also to be known. The C Alto Clef and the C Tenor Clef may be used.

### **INTERVALS**

The writing of any simple or compound interval, inverted interval, either diatonic or chromatic.

### **HARMONY**

To harmonise a figured bass in four part Vocal or Pianoforte style. Chord indications will be inserted above the Soprano line.

The vocabulary to be used includes: root position and 1st inversion of major and minor triads, cadential 6/4 chords, passing 6/4 chords, dominant 7th progressions in root position and inversions, suspended 4ths, and unaccented passing notes.

### **MELODY WRITING**

**EITHER:** Write an eight-bar melody in any major or minor key. The opening notes will be given. Modulation to related keys is expected.

**OR:** To write an eight-bar melodic line in any major or minor key to a given chord progression. The opening notes will be given.

**OR:** To write a melody to a given four-line verse. Modulation to related keys is expected.

### **TRANSPOSITION and/or TRANSCRIPTION**

To Transpose a passage of your harmony question to a different key.

Also, you may be asked to Transcribe the passage from short score to open score using all four clefs: Treble clef, Bass clef and both the C clefs, Alto and Tenor.

### **MODULATIONS**

Recognition in melodies of modulations to the dominant, sub-dominant or to the relative major or minor (Related Keys).

**CHORDS**

Writing in root position any of the following chords in the treble or bass clef.  
Accidentals may need to be included. Previous grades chords can be requested.

ALL Major and Minor chords.

**Cmaj7 Gmaj7 Dmaj7 E7 Eb7 Ab7 Em7 Bm7 Fm7 Bbm7**

**GENERAL MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE**

To show a general knowledge of the **Woodwind instruments** of the symphony orchestra:  
Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Cor Anglais, Bassoon, Contra Bassoon, write their ranges using appropriate clefs, Simple information on how these instruments are played, and name the main parts of the instruments including reeds.

Simple questions on **form** as found in the **Sonata**:

Sonata or 1st movement form, Rondo, Variations, Scherzo, Minuet and Trio and Fugue.

Some knowledge of the composers of such works is expected.

## **THEORY: GRADE SEVEN**

Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 65%

This examination is a prerequisite for the L.Mus.AGMS practical examination.

### **SCALES, INTERVALS and RUDIMENTS**

Questions as for previous Grades, but of a more advanced character.

### **HARMONY**

To harmonise a melody or a given un-figured bass in four part Vocal or Pianoforte style. The vocabulary must include major and minor triads and their inversions, cadential and passing 6/4s, diminished triad in the 1st inversion, augmented triad, resolution, and use of the dominant 7th in root and all inversions, single suspensions, unaccented passing notes and modulation to related and nearly related keys.

### **FREE COUNTERPOINT**

Two-part counterpoint: The addition of a simple melodious part to a given treble or to a bass. Imitation, and contrapuntal style will be expected.

### **MELODY WRITING**

#### **EITHER:**

Write an eight-bar melody in any major or minor key without a given opening. Modulation to related keys is expected.

#### **OR:**

Write an eight-bar melodic line in any major or minor key to a given chord progression.

#### **OR:**

Write a melody to a given four-line verse. Modulation to related keys is expected.

### **GENERAL MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE**

#### **a) ORCHESTRA**

To show a general knowledge of the Brass instruments of the symphony orchestra: French Horn, Trumpet, Trombone, Tuba. Write their ranges using appropriate clefs, basic information about how these instruments are played and name the various parts of the instruments.

#### **b) OPERA AND ORATORIO.**

Questions of a general nature including the most important works and composers in these art forms.



## **THEORY: GRADE EIGHT**

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Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 65%

### **HARMONY**

To harmonise a melody or a given un-figured bass in four Vocal or Pianoforte style.

The vocabulary to include the requirements as detailed for Grade Seven, plus the dominant 9th and the diminished 7th deriving from it, the dominant 11th and 13th, secondary 7ths, accented and unaccented passing notes, auxiliary notes, single and double suspensions, modulation to related and nearly related keys, tonal and real sequences.

### **FREE COUNTERPOINT**

To add a flowing and rhythmic independent melodic part above or below a given part in the style of the opening provided.

### **MELODY WRITING**

To complete a four-phrase vocal or instrumental melody of which the first phrase will be given.

Maximum of 16 bars. Modulations to be included.

**OR:**

Using the given chord progression, complete a four-phrase vocal or instrumental melody, of which the first phrase is given.

**OR:**

To write a melody to a given four-line verse. Modulation to related keys is expected.

### **TRANSPOSITION**

The transposition of a melody to a nominated orchestral transposing instrument.

Clarinet, Cor Anglais, Trumpet, French Horn, Tenor Trombone.

### **GENERAL MUSICAL KNOWLEDGE**

#### **a) MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS:**

**Harp, Percussion** instruments and all **Saxophones**.

The candidate should display a knowledge of these instruments including ranges using appropriate clefs, how these instruments are played and name the various parts of the instruments including reeds.

#### **b) SYMPHONY**

Questions of a general nature including **symphony form**, including **important works** and **composers**.

## **ASSOCIATE DIPLOMA IN MUSIC THEORY A.Mus.Th.AGMS**

Two papers of 3 hours each

Minimum pass mark 70%

The pre-requisite for this examination is Grade Eight Theory of Music.

Minimum Pass mark for each paper is 70 marks.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

- The examination consists of TWO papers of THREE Hours each.
- Both papers must be attempted at the first entry.
- Candidates who are successful in only one of these two papers need not sit for that paper. again, if the re-entry is made within a 12-month period.
- Both papers must be taken again if the 12-month period elapses.
- Strict counterpoint is not required.

### **FIRST PAPER**

Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 70%

#### **HARMONY**

To harmonize a passage up to four parts, including the harmonisation for voice, strings or pianoforte of:

- a) An un-figured bass
- b) A melody

**NOTE:** Upon application to the AGMS, permission *may* be granted to the candidate to submit a folio of compositions as an alternative to the first paper.

The folio should consist of varying styles and for a variety of media.

Total performing time of the submitted compositions must be a minimum of one and half hours. Video or audio recordings of the works may accompany the submission of the written compositions. An affidavit testifying that the compositions are the sole work of the candidate must be given to the AGMS Committee at the time of submission.

**SECOND PAPER**

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Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 70%

**COUNTERPOINT**

Two questions will be set.

Two and three part free counterpoint in imitative style for voices or instruments.

One of the extreme parts will be given, and an opening indicated.

**MUSICAL FORM**

Analysis of an unseen composition.

A copy will be supplied to the candidate.

**HISTORY OF MUSIC**

A short essay of music from any of the following traditional periods of music.

Baroque and Classical periods.

**OR**

Any of the of the Contemporary Modern styles such as the Jazz, Blues eras may be chosen.

In-depth study will be expected for the periods between 1900 to 1950 or 1950 onwards.

Only one period or era needs to be chosen.

## **LICENTiate DIPLOMA IN MUSIC THEORY L.Mus.Th.AGMS**

Two papers of 3 hours each

Minimum pass mark 70%

The pre-requisite for this examination is the Associate Theory of Music examination.

Minimum Pass mark for each paper is 70 marks.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

- The examination consists of TWO papers of THREE Hours each.
- Both papers must be attempted at the first entry.
- Candidates who are successful in only one of these two papers need not sit for that paper. again, if the re-entry is made within a 12-month period.
- Both papers must be taken again if the 12-month period elapses.
- Strict counterpoint is not required.

### **FIRST PAPER**

Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 70%

#### **HARMONY**

To harmonise a passage up to five parts, including the harmonization for voice, strings or pianoforte of:

a) An un-figured bass                      **OR**                      b) A melody

#### **COUNTERPOINT**

Up to four-part free counterpoint in imitative style for voices or instruments.

One of the extreme parts will be given and an opening suggested.

**NOTE:** Upon application to the AGMS, permission *may* be granted to the candidate to submit a folio of compositions as an alternative to the first paper.

The folio should consist of varying styles and for a variety of media.

Total performing time of the submitted compositions must be a minimum of one and half hours.

Video or audio recordings of the works may accompany the submission of the written compositions.

An affidavit testifying that the compositions are the sole work of the candidate must be given to the AGMS Committee at the time of submission.

**SECOND PAPER**

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Time Allowed: 3 hours

Minimum pass mark 70%

**FUGUE**

Writing an exposition in three or four parts on a given subject, for voice, strings, or piano.

**ORCHESTRATION**

Scoring a passage in closed score for a small combination of string and wind instruments.

**HISTORY OF MUSIC**

A short essay of music from any of the following traditional periods of music.

Baroque, Classical, Romantic and 20th century periods.

**OR**

Any of the of the Contemporary Modern styles such as the Rock eras may be chosen.

In-depth study will be expected for the periods between 1900 to 1950 or 1950 onwards.

Only one period or era needs to be chosen.



# AUSTRALIAN GUILD OF MUSIC & SPEECH