










## GRADE 1

**THREE PIECES:** one chosen by the candidate from each of the three Lists, **A**, **B** and **C**.

Candidates may perform *up to two* of their three pieces accompanied by another guitar where indicated with a  in the Lists. See page 9 for further information.

	COMPOSER	PIECE / WORK / ARRANGER	PUBLICATION (PUBLISHER)
<b>A</b>	1 Trad. Chinese	Jasmine Flower, arr. Batchelar	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	2 Trad. French	Sur le pont d'Avignon, arr. Wright	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	3 Gervaise	Gaillarde Passemaize, arr. Sanderson 	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	4 Le Roy	J'y bien mal choisi, arr. Wright 	One + One, Vol. 1: pupil's part (Chanterelle) <i>and</i> One + One, Vol. 1: teacher's score (Chanterelle)
	5 attrib. Purcell	Riggadoon (from <i>Musick's Handmaid</i> ), arr. Wright 	One + One, Vol. 1: pupil's part (Chanterelle) <i>and</i> One + One, Vol. 1: teacher's score (Chanterelle)
	6 Longworth & Walker	Tudor Dance	Guitar Basics Repertoire (Faber)
	7 Mainerio	Italian Dance, arr. Ansorge & Szordikowski	My First Concert for Guitar (Schott)
	8 J. Playford	Country Dance No. 2 (from <i>The Dancing Master</i> ), arr. Ansorge & Szordikowski	No. 4 from My First Concert for Guitar (Schott)
	9 Trad. Canadian	V'là l'bon vent, arr. Lemay	Répertoire progressif, Vol. 1 (Les Productions d'Oz)
	10 Trad. French	Les Bouffons, arr. Burden	The Young Guitarist's Progress, Repertoire Series Part 1 (Garden Music)
<b>B</b>	1 Carulli	Ecosaise (No. 5 from <i>24 pièces</i> , Op. 121), arr. Wright	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	2 Sor	March (No. 19 from <i>Introduction à l'étude de la guitare</i> , Op. 60), arr. Wright	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	3 Holst	I vow to thee, my country, arr. Mermikides 	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	4 Aguado	Andantino	Romantic Guitar Anthology, Vol. 1 (Schott) <i>or</i> Easy Concert Pieces for Guitar, Vol. 1 (Schott)
	5 Musorgsky	The Old Castle (from <i>Pictures at an Exhibition</i> ), arr. Hegel	Easy Concert Pieces for Guitar, Vol. 1 (Schott) <i>or</i> Classical Music for Children for Guitar (Schott)
	6 Carulli	Waltz in G, arr. Burden	P. 11 from The Young Guitarist's Progress, Repertoire Series Part 1 (Garden Music)
	7 A. E. Müller	Allegretto, arr. Kenyon 	ABC Guitar (Jacaranda Music)
	8 Schubert	Theme (from <i>Rosamunde</i> , D. 797), arr. Wright 	One + One, Vol. 1: pupil's part (Chanterelle) <i>and</i> One + One, Vol. 1: teacher's score (Chanterelle)
	9 Sor	Leçon in C (No. 1 from <i>Introduction à l'étude de la guitare</i> , Op. 60)	Sor: Introductory Studies, Op. 60 (Schott) <i>or</i> No. 16 from Répertoire progressif, Vol. 1 (Les Productions d'Oz) <i>or</i> Sor: The Complete Studies (Chanterelle) <i>or</i> Sor: The Complete Studies, Lessons, and Exercises (Tecla Editions)
	10 Trad. Spiritual	Poor Wayfaring Stranger, arr. Batchelar & Wright	Time Pieces for Guitar, Vol. 1 (ABRSM)
<b>C</b>	1 Longworth & Walker	Spanish Knights	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	2 Gary Ryan	Underground Sound	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	3 C. Carson Parks	Somethin' Stupid, arr. Wright 	Guitar Exam Pieces from 2019, Grade 1 (ABRSM)
	4 L. Bernstein	One Hand, One Heart (from <i>West Side Story</i> ), arr. Batchelar & Wright  <i>observing repeat</i>	Time Pieces for Guitar, Vol. 1 (ABRSM)
	5 Colin Downs	A Little Russian Tale	Solo Now! Preparatory Book (Chanterelle)
	6 Stephen Kenyon	Free-wheeling	ABC Guitar (Jacaranda Music)
	7 Satie	A Tiresome Prank, arr. Kenyon 	ABC Guitar (Jacaranda Music)

COMPOSER	PIECE / WORK / ARRANGER	PUBLICATION (PUBLISHER)
8 Longworth & Walker	Havana Good Time	Guitar Basics Repertoire (Faber)
9 Štěpán Rak	Chanson ancienne (from <i>Jeux sur six cordes</i> )	Štěpán Rak: Jeux sur six cordes (Lemoine)
10 Colin Tommis	The Night the Star Lost its Twinkle (No.1 from <i>Crossing the Divide</i> )	Colin Tommis: Crossing the Divide (Les Productions d'Oz)

**SCALES AND ARPEGGIOS:** from memory; played legato and in even notes (except where indicated); for further details (including examples) see pages 10–11 & 14

	RANGE	REQUIREMENTS
<b>SCALES</b>		
G, F majors <i>both starting an octave above lowest tonic</i>	1 oct.	fingers only; tirando or apoyando, at candidate's choice; long tonic
A, E minors (natural or harmonic, at candidate's choice)		thumb only; tirando
<b>ARPEGGIOS</b>		
G major <i>starting an octave above lowest tonic</i>	1 oct.	tirando
E minor <i>starting an octave above lowest tonic</i>		

**SIGHT-READING:** a short piece of previously unseen music; for further details see pages 11–12

**AURAL TESTS:** administered by the examiner from the piano; for further details see pages 32 & 33

## **GUITAR GRADES:** requirements and information

*This syllabus is valid from 2019 until further notice.*

*This section provides a summary of the most important points that teachers and candidates need to know when taking ABRSM graded Guitar exams. Further details, as well as administrative information relating to 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 an exam booking is made.*

### **Entering for an exam**

**Eligibility:** There are eight grades of exam for Guitar and candidates may be entered for any grade irrespective of age and without previously having taken any other grade in Guitar. Candidates for a Grade 6, 7 or 8 exam must already have passed ABRSM Grade 5 (or above) in Music Theory, Practical Musicianship or a solo Jazz instrument; for full details, including a list of accepted alternatives, see [www.abrsm.org/prerequisite](http://www.abrsm.org/prerequisite).

**Access:** ABRSM endeavours to make its exams as accessible as possible to all candidates, regardless of sensory impairments, learning difficulties or particular physical needs. There is a range of alternative tests and formats as well as sets of guidelines for candidates with particular access needs (see [www.abrsm.org/specificneeds](http://www.abrsm.org/specificneeds)). Where a candidate's needs are not covered by the guidelines, each case is considered on an individual basis. Further information is available from the Access Co-ordinator ([accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk](mailto:accesscoordinator@abrsm.ac.uk)).

**Exam booking:** Details of exam dates, locations, fees and how to book an exam are available online at [www.abrsm.org/exambooking](http://www.abrsm.org/exambooking).

### **Instruments**

This syllabus is only appropriate for the standard classical instrument fitted with nylon strings (guitars with a cutaway body are permitted). Candidates may choose to use a capo at the 2nd or 3rd fret for the pieces in Grades 7 and 8 that have an optional F# tuning; no other use of the capo is permitted unless specified by the composer.

### **Elements of the exam**

All ABRSM graded Guitar exams comprise the following elements: three Pieces; Scales and arpeggios; Sight-reading; and Aural tests. In all grades, marks are allocated as follows:

Pieces: 1	30
2	30
3	30
Scales and arpeggios	21
Sight-reading	21
Aural tests	18
Total	150





**Marking scheme:** 100 marks are required for a Pass, 120 for a Merit and 130 for a Distinction. A Pass in each individual section is not required to pass overall. See pp. 42–43 for the marking criteria used by examiners.

## Pieces

**Programme planning:** Candidates must choose one piece from each of the three lists (A, B and C) in each grade (see also 'Accompaniment' below). In the exam, they should inform the examiner which pieces they are performing, and they are welcome to use the form on p. 45 for this purpose.

Every effort has been made to ensure the syllabus lists feature a broad range of repertoire, with items to suit and appeal to candidates of differing ages, backgrounds and interests. Not every piece will be suitable for every candidate due to technical reasons (e.g. hand size) or wider context (historical, cultural, subject matter of the larger work from which it is drawn, lyrics if an arrangement of a song etc.). It is advised that pieces selected are considered carefully for their appropriateness to each individual, which may require consultation between teachers and parents/guardians. Given the ever-changing nature of the digital world, teachers and parents/guardians should also exercise caution when allowing younger candidates to research items online: [www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/onlinesafety).

**Accompaniment:** In Grades 1-3, candidates may perform *up to two* pieces accompanied by another guitar (or, if necessary, a piano); in Grades 4 and 5, *only one* such piece may be performed. In Grade 8, candidates may perform *one* piece accompanied by piano.

Accompanied pieces are marked with a  or  in the syllabus. None of the pieces marked with a  in Grades 1-5 or a  in Grade 8 may be performed solo. *All other* pieces must be performed solo.

Candidates must provide their own accompanist, who may remain in the exam room only while accompanying. The candidate's teacher may act as accompanist (examiners will not). If necessary, the accompanist may simplify any part of the accompaniment, provided the result is musically satisfactory. Recorded accompaniments are not allowed.

**Exam music & editions:** Wherever the syllabus includes an arrangement or transcription, the edition listed in the syllabus must be used in the exam; in all such cases the abbreviation 'arr.' or 'trans.' appears in the syllabus entry. For all other pieces, the editions quoted in the syllabus are given for guidance only and candidates may use any edition of their choice (in- or out-of-print or downloadable). Information on obtaining exam music is given on p. 13.

**Interpreting the score:** Printed editorial suggestions such as fingering, metronome marks, realization of ornaments etc. need not be strictly observed. Whether the piece contains musical indications or not, candidates are always encouraged to interpret the score in a stylistically appropriate manner. Ultimately, examiners' marking will be determined by consideration of pitch, time, tone, shape and performance, and how control of these contributes to the overall musical outcome.

**Repeats:** All da capo and dal segno indications should be observed but all other repeats (including first-time bars) should be omitted unless they are very brief (i.e. of a few bars) or unless the syllabus specifies otherwise.

**Performing from memory:** Candidates are free to perform any of their pieces from memory; in such cases they must ensure that a copy of the music is available for the examiner to refer to if necessary. No additional marks are awarded for playing from memory.

**Page-turns:** Examiners will be understanding if a page-turn causes a lack of continuity during a piece, and this will not affect the marking. A variety of solutions for awkward page-turns exists, including the use of an additional copy of the music or a photocopy of a section of the piece (but see ‘Photocopies’ below). In cases where candidates at Grades 6–8 believe there is no solution to a particularly awkward page-turn, they may bring a page-turner to the exam (prior permission is not required; the turner may be a candidate’s teacher). Examiners are unable to help with page-turning.

**Photocopies:** Performing from unauthorized photocopies (or other kinds of copies) of copyright editions is not allowed. ABRSM may withhold the exam result where it has evidence of an illegal copy (or copies) being used. 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](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk). In all other cases, application should be made to the copyright holder before any copy is made, and evidence of permission received should be brought to the exam.

## Scales and arpeggios

Examiners will usually ask for at least one of each type of scale/arpeggio etc. required at each grade and will ask for majors followed by minors within each type. In the Grade 5–8 fingers-only scales, they will also ask to hear a balance of the specified strokes. When asking for requirements, examiners will specify:

- the key (including minor form – harmonic *or* melodic – in the Grade 6–8 scales) or the starting note
- the stroke for fingers-only scales (*tirando* or *apoyando*), Grades 5–8
- the form for interval scales (together *or* broken)

All scales and arpeggios should:

- be played from memory
- be played in even notes (except where indicated at Grades 1–5)
- be played from the lowest possible tonic/starting note unless the syllabus indicates otherwise
- ascend and descend according to the specified range (and pattern)
- be played legato

In Grades 1–4, candidates may choose to play ‘fingers-only’ scales either *tirando* (free stroke) or *apoyando* (rest stroke); from Grade 5, these scales must be prepared with *both* right-hand techniques. The *tirando* stroke is expected for all other requirements.

Any combination of alternating right-hand fingers may be used for ‘fingers-only’ scales. Any left-hand fingering may be used, but candidates are expected to observe the requirements regarding over-ringing and non-over-ringing for broken chords and arpeggios from Grade 3.

Arpeggios and dominant sevenths are required in root position only. Scales in thirds and tenths should begin with the tonic as the lower note, while scales in sixths should begin with the tonic as the upper note.

Examples of scale/arpeggio etc. patterns specified in this syllabus are given on pp. 14–15.

Books of the requirements are published for Guitar by ABRSM (for Grades 1–5 and 6–8).

The following speeds are given as a general guide:

	pattern	Grade / Speed							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>Thumb-only scales*</b>		♩ = 96	♩ = 112						
<b>Scales†</b>									
1 & 2 octaves		♩ = 48	♩ = 56	♩ = 66	♩ = 80	♩ = 96			
2 octaves							♩ = 112	♩ = 126	♩ = 144
3 octaves							♩ = 76	♩ = 84	♩ = 96
<b>Chromatic scales</b>									
1 & 2 octaves				♩ = 66	♩ = 80	♩ = 96	♩ = 112		
3 octaves								♩ = 84	♩ = 96
<b>Interval scales</b>				♩ = 60	♩ = 72	♩ = 84	♩ = 96	♩ = 104	♩ = 116
<b>Arpeggios</b>		♩ = 40	♩ = 42	♩ = 44	♩ = 48	♩ = 56	♩ = 63	♩ = 69	♩ = 76
<b>Broken chords</b>				♩ = 54	♩ = 60	♩ = 66	♩ = 72	♩ = 80	♩ = 88
<b>Dom. &amp; Dim. 7ths‡</b>					♩ = 72	♩ = 84	♩ = 96	♩ = 104	♩ = 116

\* Including chromatic scale at Grade 2

† Fingers-only & thumb and fingers combined

‡ Dim. 7ths from Grade 5

## Sight-reading

Candidates will be asked to play a short unaccompanied piece of music which they have not previously seen. They will be given half a minute in which to look though and, if they wish, try out all or any part of the test before they are required to play it for assessment. The table on p. 12 shows the introduction of elements at each grade. Please note that these parameters are presented cumulatively, i.e. once introduced they apply for all subsequent grades (albeit within a logical progression of difficulty).

For practice purposes, a book of sample sight-reading tests is published for Guitar by ABRSM.

(continued overleaf)

Guitar grades: requirements and information

	Length (bars)	Time	Keys	Other features that may be included
Grade 1	4	4/4 3/4	C, G, F majors A, E minors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ♩, ♪, ♫, ♬ note values; ♯ rests</li> <li>• 1st position</li> <li>• accidentals (within minor keys only)</li> <li>• single-line texture</li> <li>• passages for thumb alone</li> <li>• <b>f</b> and <b>p</b></li> <li>• <i>cresc.</i> and <i>dim.</i> hairpins</li> </ul>
	6	2/4		
Grade 2			D minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ♪♪♪♪ and ♩. ♪ patterns</li> <li>• staccato</li> <li>• <b>mp</b> and <b>mf</b></li> </ul>
Grade 3	up to 8	3/8	D major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ♮ rests</li> <li>• 2nd position</li> <li>• integration of thumb and fingers into simple broken-chord patterns</li> <li>• accents</li> <li>• slurs</li> <li>• <b>pp</b></li> </ul>
Grade 4	c. 8	6/8	A major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple semiquaver patterns</li> <li>• tied notes</li> <li>• chromatic notes</li> <li>• simple two-part writing (mostly open strings in one or other voice)</li> <li>• pause sign</li> <li>• tenuto</li> </ul>
Grade 5	c. 8–12		B minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• anacrusis</li> <li>• simple syncopation</li> <li>• use of fingerboard up to 5th position</li> <li>• simple two-note chords within a single voice</li> <li>• slowing of tempo at end</li> <li>• <b>ff</b></li> </ul>
Grade 6		9/8 5/8 5/4	B♭ major F♯ minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• triplet patterns</li> <li>• use of fingerboard above 5th position</li> <li>• three-note chords within a single voice</li> <li>• easily prepared partial barrés</li> </ul>
Grade 7	c. 12–16	7/8 7/4	E major G minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• simple use of 12th-fret harmonics</li> <li>• four-note chords</li> <li>• slowing of tempo followed by <i>a tempo</i></li> </ul>
Grade 8	c. 16–20	12/8	C minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• full barrés</li> <li>• acceleration of tempo</li> <li>• simple ornaments</li> </ul>

### Aural tests

The requirements are the same for all subjects. Full details of the Aural tests are given on pp. 32–37.

## **In the exam**

**Examiners:** Generally, there will be one examiner in the exam room; however, for training and quality assurance purposes, a second examiner may sometimes be present. Examiners may ask to look at the music before or after the performance of a piece (a separate copy is not required: the candidate's copy will suffice). Examiners may stop the performance of a piece when they have heard enough to form a judgment. They will not issue or discuss a candidate's result; instead, the mark form (and certificate for successful candidates) will be issued by ABRSM after the exam.

**Order of the exam:** The individual sections of the exam may be taken in any order, at the candidate's choice, although it is preferable for accompanied pieces (see 'Accompaniment' on p. 9) to be performed consecutively and at the beginning of the exam.

**Tuning:** The guitar should be tuned before entering the exam room, but in cases at Grades 1–5 where the candidate is playing with a piano accompaniment the teacher or accompanist may tune the candidate's instrument to the piano (or advise on tuning) before the exam begins. In Grades 6–8, candidates must tune their instrument themselves. Examiners are unable to help with tuning.

**Footstools:** Candidates should provide their own footstool (or other form of guitar support) if required.

**Music stands:** All ABRSM public venues provide a music stand, but candidates are welcome to bring their own if they prefer. The examiner will be happy to help adjust the height or position of the stand.

## **Assessment**

The tables on pp. 42–43 show the marking criteria used by examiners. In each element of the exam, ABRSM operates the principle of marking from the required pass mark positively or negatively, rather than awarding marks by deduction from the maximum or addition from zero. In awarding marks, examiners balance the extent to which the qualities and skills listed on pp. 42–43 (broadly categorized by pitch, time, tone, shape and performance) are demonstrated and contribute towards the overall musical outcome.

## **Obtaining exam music**

Exam music is available from music retailers as well as online, including at the ABRSM music shop: [www.abrsm.org/shop](http://www.abrsm.org/shop). Every effort has been made to ensure that all the publications listed will remain available for the duration of the syllabus. Candidates are advised to obtain their music well in advance of the exam in case of any delays with items not kept in stock by retailers. Apart from queries relating to exams, all enquiries about the music (e.g. editorial, availability) should be addressed to the relevant publisher: contact details are listed at [www.abrsm.org/publishers](http://www.abrsm.org/publishers).



## SCALE AND ARPEGGIO PATTERNS

The examples below clarify patterns found in this syllabus. Reference should be made to the appropriate syllabus pages for the full requirements.

### SCALES

long-tonic pattern



thumb and fingers combined (thumb for lower octave, fingers for upper octave)



### CHROMATIC SCALES

thumb and fingers combined (thumb for lower octave, fingers for upper octave)



### BROKEN CHORDS

one octave (and similarly, two octaves)



### DOMINANT SEVENTHS (resolving on tonic)

one octave (and similarly, two or three octaves)



## **AURAL TESTS:** included in the Practical exams for all subjects

Listening lies at the heart of all good music-making. Developing aural awareness is fundamental to musical training because having a ‘musical ear’ impacts on all aspects of musicianship. Singing, both silently in the head and out loud, is one of the best ways to develop the ‘musical ear’. It connects the internal imagining of sound, the ‘inner ear’, with the external creation of it, without the necessity of mechanically having to ‘find the note’ on an instrument (important though that connection is). By integrating aural activities in imaginative ways in the lesson, preparation for the aural tests within an exam will be a natural extension of what is already an essential part of the learning experience.

### **In the exam**

Aural tests are an integral part of all Practical graded exams.

The tests are administered by the examiner from the piano. For any test that requires a sung response, pitch rather than vocal quality is being assessed. The examiner will be happy to adapt to the vocal range of the candidate, whose responses may be sung to any vowel (or consonant followed by a vowel), hummed or whistled (and at a different octave, if appropriate).

### **Assessment**

Some tests allow for a second attempt or for an additional playing by the examiner, if necessary. The examiner will also be ready to prompt, where helpful, although this may affect the assessment.

Marks are not awarded for each individual test or deducted for mistakes; instead they reflect the candidate’s overall response in this section. The marking criteria for the aural tests are given on p. 43.

### **Specimen tests**

Examples of the tests are given in *Specimen Aural Tests* and *Aural Training in Practice* (from 2011), available for purchase from music retailers and from [www.abrsm.org/shop](http://www.abrsm.org/shop).

### **Deaf or hearing-impaired candidates**

Deaf or hearing-impaired candidates may choose alternative tests in place of the standard tests, if requested at the time of entry. Further information, including the syllabus for the alternative tests, is available at [www.abrsm.org/specificneeds](http://www.abrsm.org/specificneeds).

## Aural Tests GRADE 1

- A To clap the pulse of a piece played by the examiner, and to identify whether it is in two time or three time.** The examiner will start playing the passage, and the candidate should join in as soon as possible, clapping in time and giving a louder clap on the strong beats. The examiner will then ask whether the music is in two time or three time. The candidate is *not* required to state the time signature.
- B To sing as 'echoes' three phrases played by the examiner.** The phrases will be two bars long, in a major key, and within the range of tonic–mediant. First the examiner will play the key-chord and the starting note (the tonic) and then count in two bars. After the examiner has played each phrase, the candidate should sing back the echo without a pause, keeping in time.
- C To identify where a change in pitch occurs during a phrase played by the examiner.** The phrase will be two bars long, in a major key, and the change will affect only one of the notes. First the examiner will play the key-chord and the tonic and then count in two bars. The examiner will play the phrase twice, making the change in the second playing, after which the candidate should state whether the change was near the beginning or near the end. If necessary, the examiner will play both versions of the phrase again (although this may affect the assessment).
- D To answer questions about two features of a piece played by the examiner.** Before playing, the examiner will tell the candidate which two features the questions will be about. The first will be: dynamics (loud/quiet, or sudden/gradual changes); the second will be articulation (smooth/detached).