INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING DIPLOMA EXAMS

These instructions apply to DipABRSM, LRSM and FRSM entries made globally, until further notice.
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Introduction

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, some necessary changes have been made to our diploma exam procedures. Before booking a DipABRSM, LRSM or FRSM diploma exam, you should read the following updates to our guidance and terms and conditions. Our existing policies and guidance continue to apply alongside this document.

Booking an exam

Please check www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/exam-dates-and-fees/ to view exam dates and fees in your area.

Entry forms and supporting materials

Exams must be booked using our Diploma Entry form (www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/download-entry-forms/). The entry form may be digitally signed by typing a name into the signature box, or it can be printed, signed by hand, and then scanned or photographed and submitted.

Candidates in the UK will be required to submit entries (including any supporting materials required at the point of entry) electronically using ABRSM’s secure FTP email server.

Candidates outside of the UK and in ROI should contact their local representative who will advise on the best way to submit entries (including any supporting materials required at the point of entry) to the local representative. Where there is no representative, candidates should contact ABRSM at diplomas@abrsm.ac.uk for instructions on making an entry.

Paper entries sent to our office will be destroyed securely to protect personal information in line with our privacy policy (www.abrsm.org/policies/privacy-policy/). For more information on how to submit entries electronically, please visit www.abrsm.org/exam-booking/diploma-exams/.

Candidates are advised of the following in regard to supporting materials;

Please note that the type of submission required is dependant on the level and subject of the exam.

- **Music Performance diplomas:**
  - For DipABRSM and LRSM exams, candidates must bring Programme Notes with them on the day of the exam. Programme Notes must contain details of the editions being used.
  - FRSM candidates must submit a copy of their Written Submission with their entry.

- **Instrumental/Vocal Teaching diplomas:**
  - Candidates must submit a copy of their Written Submission with their entry.
  - Candidates submitting a Case Study Portfolio and a Video of Teaching Practice are required to submit these with 40% of the full LRSM exam fee no later than three months before the published booking period for the exam session in which they wish to sit the face-to-face exam. Video recordings must be in one of the following formats: MP4, WMV, MOV or MPG. The file size must not exceed 2GB.

- **Music Direction diplomas**
  - Candidates must submit a copy of their Arrangement with their entry. The Arrangement must contain one scanned copy of the score, and a recording in one of the following file formats: MP3 or M4A. The file size must not exceed 150Mb.
  - In addition, candidates taking a DipABRSM or LRSM exam must bring Programme Notes with them on the day of the exam. The Programme Notes must contain details of the editions being used. Candidates taking an FRSM exam must submit a copy of their Written Submission with their entry.
Entry fees
Candidates in the UK will be required to make a payment for their entry by BACS. Candidates will receive ABRSM bank details and a unique reference number to use when transferring the payment. Candidates should make payment as soon as requested. If payment is not received at least four weeks before the date of exams (or at an earlier date as specified by ABRSM), the entry will be cancelled. Payments which do not quote the correct reference number will not be successfully linked to the entry.

Candidates outside the UK (including candidates in ROI) will be required to make a payment for their exam at the time of entry to the Local Representative. Please contact the local representative in your area for details of how to do this. Where there is no representative, candidates will be contacted by ABRSM regarding payment of their exam fee.

Exam dates and locations
Some ABRSM public venues for diploma exams may not be available. If diploma exams are not running in a candidate’s preferred venue, the entry will be moved to an alternative venue. Refunds cannot be offered to candidates on the basis that exam venue preferences cannot be accommodated.

Exam Regulations
An addendum has been added to ABRSM’s Exam Regulations, which applies to diploma exams. When the candidate makes an exam booking, the candidate and ABRSM enter into a legally binding contact upon the terms and conditions set out in the syllabus regulations and addendum. The addendum is available at www.abrsm.org/examregulations.

Diploma exams and Covid-19

Please note: Some venues may have additional precautionary measures in place, as required by the property. These measures must be observed as well as those referenced in this guidance.

In addition, it is essential that all government guidelines are observed.

If you develop a temperature, have been told to self-isolate or display any symptoms similar to those of COVID-19, please arrange for a Coronavirus test, and let the Local Representative or ABRSM know and do not attend the exam venue.

In some territories, mandatory vaccinations, or COVID testing may be required for candidates and those escorting them to the exam. Please ensure you understand and comply with the guidelines and legislation in your territory around vaccination and testing, or inform the local representative if you are unable to do so.

Contact tracing
Some venues may require visitors to scan a Track and Trace QR code (UK), or use another contact tracing app or service.

Social distancing
Where possible, social distancing is encouraged at all ABRSM exam venues.

Wearing a face covering
Please follow specific local Government guidance on face coverings. Guidance for the UK and ROI can be found here:
England: Face coverings: when to wear one, exemptions, and how to make your own
Scotland: Coronavirus (COVID-19): face coverings
Wales: Face coverings: guidance for public
Northern Ireland: Coronavirus (COVID-19): face coverings
Republic of Ireland: When to wear face coverings and how to make them

Face coverings are not a legal requirement in all territories. However, we ask everyone inside the exam venue over the age of 11 and who are not exempt to wear a face covering when inside the exam venue. If worn, Candidates may be asked to remove their face covering briefly to confirm their identity. Candidates may remove their face covering as appropriate in the warm up room and during the exam. Examiners may also remove their face covering in order to maintain effective communication with candidates.

Whilst safety and minimising risk remains the primary concern, we are mindful of the potential environmental impact of certain types of PPE and the use of plastics. We would encourage you to use recycled or recyclable PPE wherever possible and, where non-recyclable plastic is unavoidable, retain for future use.

It is advised that everybody observes the following key behaviours:

• **HANDS** - Wash your hands regularly and for 20 seconds.

• **FACE** - We advise and encourage everyone over the age of 11, unless exempt, to wear a face covering inside our exam venues.

• **SPACE** – Maintain social distancing.
Arrival and departure from the exam venue

If you are unwell, have tested positive within the last 10 days for COVID-19 or are self-isolating, do not come to the exam venue.

Candidates and those escorting them should arrive no earlier than necessary before the exam start time (while allowing time to warm up). Only one person additional to those taking part in the exam (e.g. the accompanist) should escort the candidate to avoid congestion in addition to an accompanist if required.

Outdoor queue control may be implemented if numbers exceed safety limits inside the exam venue. Please follow any signage on display in accordance with social distancing guidance and adhere to the instructions of exam stewards.

Hand sanitiser/washing facilities will be provided.

All spaces within the exam venue will be well ventilated via windows or ventilation units.

Candidates and those escorting them should leave the venue promptly after the exam has finished.
Inside the Exam Venue

There will be cleaning during the day (using disinfectant spray and/or wipes) of frequently touched surfaces in the exam room, warm-up room, toilets, other public areas etc.

We are advising that social distancing is maintained between all persons outside of your own household and any signage is followed.

The waiting area inside the venue (if provided) will be clearly signposted. Only items that the candidate needs to complete the exam should be brought into the waiting room.

Candidates taking brass or wind exams should bring an adequate supply of tissues/paper towels to empty water keys safely in the warm up area and in the exam room. Used paper towels and tissues should be disposed of after being used once.

People escorting candidates should remain in the waiting room whilst the exam is underway. If a waiting room is not available, you may be asked to wait outside of the venue.

Only one candidate will be allowed in the warm-up room at a time. The steward will admit candidates once the warm-up room is available.

There will be anti-bacterial wipes/hand sanitiser available for candidates/accompanists to use in the warm-up room.

Timetabling and attendance

Due to the additional precautionary measures, such as wiping the piano and moving differently around the venue, it may take longer to complete each exam so please allow for some flexibility if the exam day is running overtime.

Once your exam has been completed, please leave the venue as promptly as possible.

Candidates must verify their attendance at diploma exams. A signature sheet will be provided on the exam day for each individual candidate. Candidates are required to bring their own pen to the exam venue to sign this form.
During the Exam

Only one examiner will be present for all diploma exams. Our quality assurance procedures remain unchanged (details can be found in the relevant syllabus www.abrsm.org/our-exams/diplomas/).

Where possible, the exam room layout will allow all those who are taking part in the exam to maintain social distancing from one another.

There will be anti-bacterial wipes/hand sanitiser available for the examiner and candidate to use throughout the exam.

One music stand, as a minimum, will be provided. A clear wipe down plastic sheet may also be provided when the examiner conducts quick study tests (where applicable). This may not always be available in every venue.

The piano keys and music stand will be cleaned between Candidates. The Examiner will be responsible for this.

Stewards will not enter the exam room during the exam day.

Any appropriate signage and floor markers will be visible at all times in the exam room.

If worn, face coverings should be removed as appropriate during the exam. Examiners may also remove their face covering in order to maintain effective communication with candidates.

Candidates should follow current social distancing and Government Safety Guidance when deciding whether to bring a page-turner for their exam. Candidates should consider if photocopies of individual pages are needed to facilitate page turns during performance.

On any occasion where a candidate brings a copy or section of music to their exam, candidates must;
- have already purchased their own copies of the works,
- checked that the copyright owners of the works have agreed to the MPA code of fair practice (list of such copyright owners can be found www.mpaonline.org.uk),
- make sure that the first page of any photocopy shows the copyright line (e.g. © Copyright 1992 by XYZ Music Co Ltd London) that appears at the beginning of the work. This information should be written by hand if necessary on the original from which the copy is made, and,
- Mark all photocopies as follows: ‘Examiner copy. Destroy after use.’

Copies of music in the exam room

On the day of the exam, candidates will need to provide the examiners with copies of all the music they are performing, ideally in the same editions as those being performed (for pieces which are accompanied by piano, a copy of the piano score should be supplied). (If photocopies are to be used for this purpose, it is your responsibility to obtain written permission from the publisher/copyright holder. In the UK, certain publishers allow photocopies to be made for the examiners’ use – for full details, see the MPA’s Code of Fair Practice at www.mpaonline.org.uk.)
Exam venues

The safety of our candidates, examiners and exam personnel is paramount and safety guidelines will be implemented at all Public Venues. Visit Organisers must make sure the following guidelines are implemented at their venue. We realise that this may be challenging in private homes, however an ABRSM examiner will not attend unless the conditions outlined below are met.

This venue guidance is based on UK legislation and best practice, and is applicable to exams globally. This venue guidance is subject to change at any time in accordance with updated UK Government guidance. Venues must also comply with any additional local legislation and inform ABRSM or our local representatives immediately of any regional changes that will affect the delivery of diploma exams.

Venues in Scotland, Ireland, Wales and International centres are reminded that they must ensure that they are also compliant with any additional or alternative government guidance.

Warm up room
The warm up room should be big enough to accommodate a candidate, accompanist and possible chaperone.

The piano/keyboard should be wiped between each candidate. It is the responsibility of the steward to wipe the piano/keyboard between each candidate.

Exam Room
Where possible, the room layout should allow all those taking part in the exam to maintain social distancing from one another. See Guidance for Performing Arts and Government guidelines on Singing and Wind/Brass instruments performing.

Anti-bacterial wipes/hand sanitiser should be available for the examiner and candidate to use throughout the exam.

At least one music stand must be provided in the exam room. A second music stand should be provided where possible.

A clear wipe down should be provided for the examiner to conduct quick study tests.

Any appropriate signage and floor markers should be displayed in the exam room.

Ventilation
All spaces should be well ventilated via windows or ventilation units.

Cleaning and facilities
The venue should be thoroughly cleaned. Any surfaces that candidates are touching (e.g. chairs, doors, light switches, etc.) should be cleaned during the course of the day.

Handwashing facilities must be available. Hand sanitiser should be provided for candidates/carers/accompanists, when entering the venue or waiting room.

Facilities
‘Please do not use’ signage can be displayed on non-exam related furniture.
Lidded bins must be provided in key locations around the venue for the disposal of tissues and any other waste.

Prevent the sharing of stationery by removing it from the waiting and warm up rooms.

**Parking**
If possible, adequate parking should be made available to allow parents/guardians, who do not need to enter the exam venue, to remain in their vehicles to avoid having to wait inside the venue.

**Outdoor waiting**
There must be sufficient space outside the venue for people to queue if required. Appropriate signage and floor markers should be displayed.

**Indoor waiting**
Congestion and contact between candidates, accompanists and chaperones must be minimised by implementing a queue management or one-way flow through the venue, where possible. Appropriate signage and floor markers should be displayed at all times.

**Handwashing facilities and cleaning materials**
Sufficient handwashing facilities, with multiple soap dispensers, must be available. Cleaning hands more often than usual should be promoted, and hand sanitiser and antibacterial cleaning wipes must be provided for the examiner at the venue.

**Additional mandatory guidance**
Visit organisers in the UK should review the [Guidance for Performing Arts](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-performing-arts), especially in relation to singing, wind and brass instruments.

In addition, in the UK it is essential that all government guidelines are observed for Educational Settings. Please find more information on these UK Government websites:

- England Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance for educational settings
- Scotland guidance for educational settings
- Wales guidance for educational settings - [https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus](https://gov.wales/education-coronavirus)
- Northern Ireland guidance for education settings
- UK Education and childcare during coronavirus
- Face coverings: guidance and exemptions

**Other requests**
Candidates who wish to make any adjustments to the syllabus ([www.abrsm.org/our-exams/diplomas/](http://www.abrsm.org/our-exams/diplomas/)) which are not listed in this document, and which do not have prior written agreement with ABRSM which can be evidenced, are advised to contact syllabus@abrsm.ac.uk.