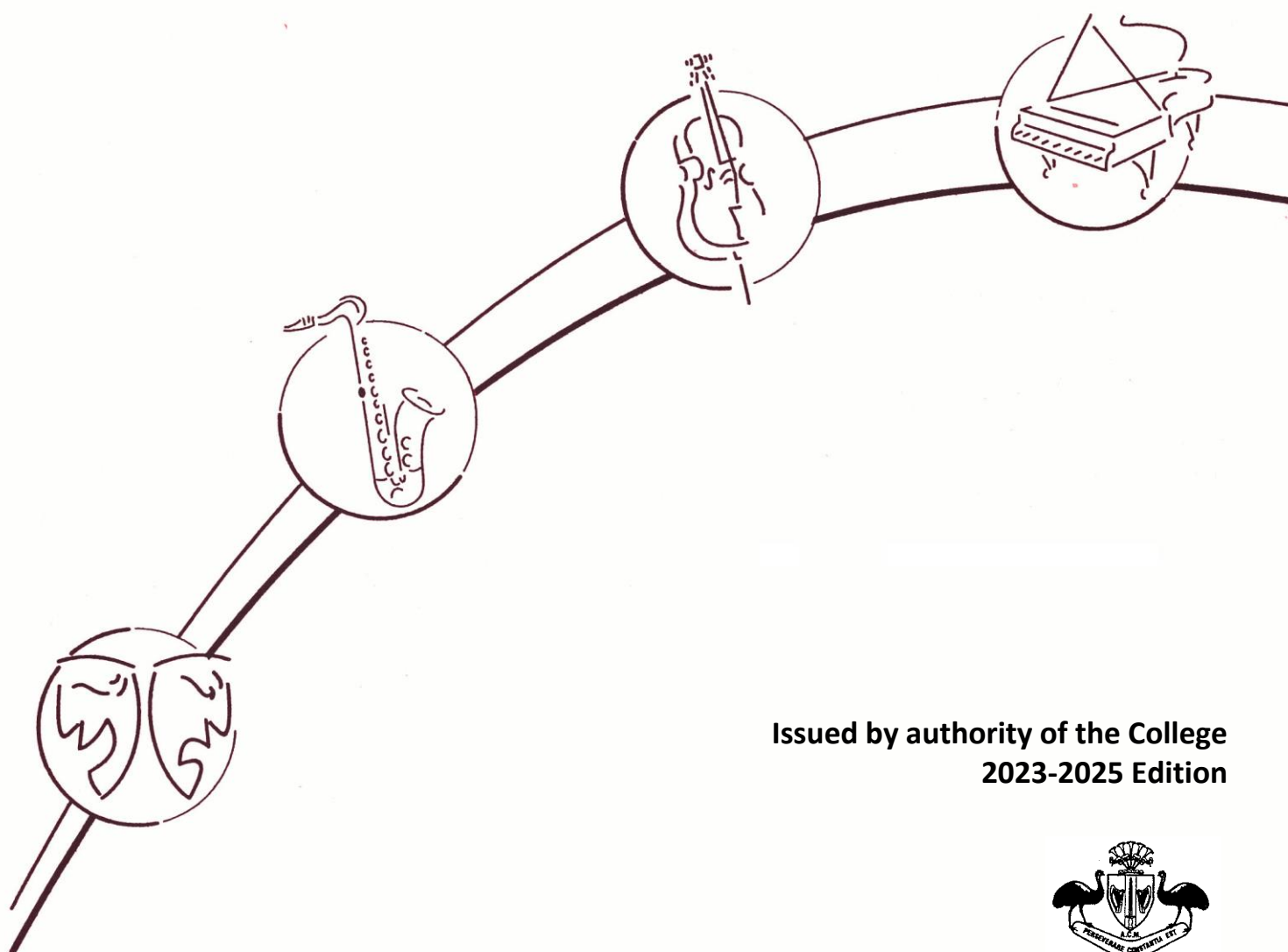


*The Australian College of Music*

# Syllabus

**Theory of Music**



**Issued by authority of the College  
2023-2025 Edition**





# Theory of Music Syllabus

The College is incorporated as an Examining Body for Music and Speech syllabuses without share capital or other commercial attributes. Its funds and capital are devoted solely to the advancement of Music and Speech education. It is a non-profit organisation.

All correspondence and enquiries must be addressed to the Administrator of the college.

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## **GRADE I**

### **(2 hours)**

**The Staff:** Treble and Bass clefs. Names of notes, both pitch and value. Use of one ledger line above and below the staff. Recognition and use of Sharp, Flat and Natural.

**Scales: Major** – C, G, D and F. Recognition and writing, with or without key signature, one octave ascending or descending. Mark tones or semitones and write scale degree numbers under notes.

**Shape and relative lengths of notes AND rests:** From Semibreve (whole note) to quaver (eighth note) inclusive. Division of notes and rests into those of lesser value.

**Time Signatures:** Simple Duple, Simple Triple and Simple Quadruple – **crotchet beats only.**

**Intervals:** Recognition and writing of intervals – **by number only.**

**Transposition:** Write a passage one octave higher or lower from Treble to Bass **or** from Bass to Treble.

#### **Words (English meanings and abbreviations) and signs (with explanations):**

Forte (f)

Piano (p)

Crescendo (< cresc.)

Decrescendo (> decresc.)

Diminuendo (> dim.)

Adagio

Andante

Moderato

Allegro

A Tempo

Rallentando (rall.)

Ritardando (ritard.)

Ritenuto (rit.)

Legato

Pause (Fermata)

Bar Line

Double Bar Line

Repeat

Staccato

Whole Bar Rest

Slur

Tie

Semitone

Tone

## **GRADE II**

**(2 hours)**

***As for Grade I, plus the following:***

**The Staff:** Treble and Bass clefs. Names of notes, (pitch and value) including two ledger lines above and below the staff.

**Scales:** **Major** – C, G, D, A, F, Bb and Eb; **Harmonic Minor** – A, E, D and G.

Recognition and writing, with or without key signature, one or two octaves, ascending or descending. Mark tones or semitones and write scale degree numbers under notes.

**Shape and relative lengths of notes AND rests:** From Semibreve (Whole Note) to Semiquaver (sixteenth note) inclusive, dotted or otherwise.

**Time Signatures:** Simple Duple, Simple Triple, Simple Quadruple – **minim, crotchet or quaver beats**. Compound Duple – **dotted crotchet beats only**. Use of Anacrusis.

**Intervals:** Recognition and writing of intervals – number **and** quality. Major, minor and Perfect – in keys specified for grade.

**Tonic Triads:** Recognition and writing of tonic triads in any of the above keys.

**Transposition:** Transpose a four-bar melody into another of the required keys for this grade.

**Verse accentuation:** Show the accents in a given couplet of words.

**Form:** Binary and Ternary – explained and recognized.

**Words and signs:** *As for Grade I, plus the following:*

Mezzo forte (mf)

Mezzo piano (mp)

Pianissimo (pp)

Fortissimo (ff)

Lento

Largo

Allegretto

Vivace

Presto

Accelerando (accel)

Piu mosso

Meno mosso

Sostenuto

Sempre

Poco

Molto

Senza

Maestoso

Cantabile

Leggiero

Repeat Signs – D.C. **and** D.S.

Accents: ^ and >

Tenuto: -

Mezzo staccato

Staccatissimo

Triplet

## GRADE III

(2½ hours)

*As for Grades I and II, plus the following:*

**The Staff:** Treble and Bass Clefs **and** any ledger lines above and below the staff.  
Recognition of Alto and Tenor clefs **plus** writing of notes using these clefs.

**Scales:** **Major** – C, G, D, A, E, B, F, Bb, Eb and Ab.

**Harmonic and Melodic Minor** – A, E, B, D, G, C and F.

Recognition and writing, with or without key signature, one or two octaves, ascending or descending.  
Technical names of scale degrees. Tones and Semitones.

**Shape and relative lengths of all notes AND rests:** From demi-semiquaver to breve inclusive, dotted or otherwise.

**Time Signatures:** Simple Duple, Simple Triple, Simple Quadruple – **minim, crotchet or quaver beats**.  
Compound Duple and Compound Triple – **dotted crotchet beats only**.

**Intervals:** Recognition and writing of intervals – **number and quality**. Major, Minor and Perfect – in keys specified for grade.

**Harmony:** Write and recognize Primary Triads (Tonic, Sub-Dominant and Dominant Chords) in 4 part Vocal Style and Pianoforte Style – root position only.

**Transposition:** Transpose a melody into one of the required keys for the grade. Simple accidentals may be involved.

**Verse Accentuation:** Write a rhythm suitable for a given couplet of words.

**Melody:** Write a four (4) bar melody to a given rhythm, in the key of C, G or F major only.

**Form:** Binary, Ternary and Rondo form – explained and recognized.

**Vocal Range:** Name and give the ranges for the four singing voices – Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass.

**Instruments:** Name and give a brief description (appearance, construction, sound production) of the most common keyboard instruments. (Piano, electronic keyboard/organ, harpsichord and pipe organ.)

**Words and signs:** *as for previous grades, plus the following:*

Allargando	Dolce
Con moto	Senza
Largamente	Sempre
Larghetto	Ad libitum (ad lib.)
Forte-piano (fp)	Rubato
Calando	Opus
Morendo	Loco
Agitato	Duplet
Attacca	8va higher / lower

### **Keyboard terms**

Main droit (M.D.)

Main gauche (M.G.)

Una corda

Tre corde

## GRADE IV

(3 hours)

*As for previous grades, plus the following:*

**Scales:** All Major scales – sharps and flats. All Harmonic and Melodic Minor scales – sharps and flats. Using Treble, Bass, Alto or Tenor clefs. One or two octaves ascending or descending. Use of double sharps and double flats, technical names of scale degrees and tones and semitones.

**Time Signatures:** All Simple and Compound Time Signatures – regular grouping and syncopation.

**Intervals:** Recognition and writing of Major, Minor, Perfect, Augmented and Diminished Intervals – above or below a given note.

**Diatonic and Chromatic semitones:** Recognize and write.

**Cadences:** All four main cadences – Perfect, Plagal, Interrupted or Imperfect (I – V), in major or minor keys.

**Harmony:** Naming of chords used in a simple worked harmony of four bars including: Tonic, Super-Tonic, Sub-Dominant, Dominant, Sub-Mediant – in root position or 1<sup>st</sup> Inversion. 2<sup>nd</sup> Inversion of Tonic or Dominant chords may be used.

**Transposition:** Transpose a melody up or down a Perfect 4<sup>th</sup> or Perfect 5<sup>th</sup> – using Treble, Bass, Alto or Tenor Clefs.

**Natural Modulation:** Given a melody, name the key and the keys to which it modulates or given a major or minor key studied for this examination, name the Attendant or Related Keys of this given key.

**Melody:** Write a melody, using keys up to two flats and two sharps (major keys only) – to a couplet of words or to a given rhythm.

**Form:** Knowledge of the Classical Suite – Allemande, Courante, Sarabande and Gigue and optional dances.

**Instruments of the Orchestra:** Name and give a brief description (appearance, construction, sound production) of the principal String and Percussion instruments of the Orchestra.

**Define:** Syncopation; Diatonic and Chromatic – as in scales and intervals.

**Words and signs:** as for previous grades, plus the following:

Andantino	Morendo
Prestissimo	Grave
Vivace	Sostenuto
Animato	Poco a poco
L'istesso Tempo	Dolce
Stringendo	Risoluta
Perdendosi	Con anima
Calcando	Ben marcato
Smorzando	Tenuto
Scherzando	Assai

### String terms

Sul ponticello  
Sul tasto  
Tremolo  
Pizzicato (pizz)  
Arco



## **GRADE V**

**(3 hours)**

**As for previous grades, plus the following:**

**Intervals:** Diatonic and Chromatic intervals, simple and compound and their inversions.

**Cadences:** Exercises in writing the Four main cadence types – Perfect, Plagal, Interrupted and Imperfect using all its forms (I-V; II-V; IV-V commonly known as Mixed Cadence, and VI-V).

**Harmony:** **Add** Alto and Tenor parts to a given treble and bass, which may or may not be figured. Harmony could involve use of unaccented Passing notes and Auxiliary notes. Passing and Cadential six four chords, VIIb and use of Tierce de Picardie – V7 in root position. Chord II (root position in Major keys only and 1<sup>st</sup> Inversion in Major or Minor keys) may be used.

**Transposition:** Transpose a melody **from** Treble or Bass **into** Alto or Tenor, **or** vice versa, at any interval up or down.

**Melody:** Write a melody to a four-line stanza of poetry **or** a given rhythm. Modulation is optional. Up to three sharps or three flats.

**Ornaments:** Recognition and writing of signs indicating the Mordent (upper or lower), turn or inverted turn (over or after a note), appoggiatura, acciaccatura, trill and arpeggio (spreading of chord).

**Form:** Air with Variations, Minuet and trio and Scherzo.

**Voices:** Simple question on the names and characteristics of singing voices.

**Instruments of the Orchestra:** Name and give a brief description (appearance, construction, sound production) of the Woodwind and Brass Instruments used in the Symphony Orchestra.

**Words and signs:** *As for previous grades, plus the following:*

A Capriccio	
A Piacere	Tempo giusto
Sotto voce	Leggiero
Dolente	Con moto
Espressivo	Con anima
Giocosso	Con brio
Quasi	Con calore
Subito (sub)	Con forza
Delicato	Grazioso
Doloroso	Lacrimoso
Furioso	Lamentavole

### **Wind Articulations**

Slurring

Double tonguing

Triple tonguing

## **GRADE VI**

**(3 hours)**

*As for previous grades, plus the following:*

**Clefs:** Writing a piece from open score to short score **or** vice versa. Vocal or Instrumental Score will be required as requested.

**Key and Time Signatures:** Adding Key and Time signatures to an unbarred melody, with correct grouping of notes and rests.

**Intervals:** Diatonic and Chromatic intervals, simple and compound and their inversions.

**Harmony:** Exercises in writing common chords and their inversions as in Grade V, with the addition of Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> in root position and its inversions. Chord III (root position in Major keys only and 1<sup>st</sup> Inversion in Major and Minor keys) may be used. Simple harmonization over a given bass – figured or unfigured.

**Transposition:** Transposition of a passage in four parts in a major or minor key by any interval above or below.

**Melody:** Writing a melody to a stanza of poetry **or** a given rhythm. AT LEAST **one modulation** is required to a Related Key. Up to four sharps or four flats.

**Ornaments:** Recognize and write in full the following ornaments:- Mordent (upper or lower), Turn or Inverted Turn (over or after a note), Appoggiatura, Acciaccatura, Trill and Arpeggio (spreading of chord).

### **Form:**

**Instrumentalists:-** Old Rondo, Rondo-Sonata and Sonata form must be studied. The first movement of a selected sonata and a symphony are to be studied. Knowledge of composers of set works will be expected.

**Singers:-** Simple questions on musical forms as found in Folk songs, Lieder, Ballads and Art songs. A study of one of these forms will be made in detail.

**Selected sonata and symphony. These works will be changed bi-annually.**

*Names of works can be obtained from the Administrator.*

## **GRADE VII**

**(3 hours)**

*As for previous grades, plus the following:*

**Harmony:** Exercises in four parts to include Major and Minor triads and inversions.

Diminished triad and its 1<sup>st</sup> Inversion. Augmented triad and its 1<sup>st</sup> inversion.

Dominant 7<sup>th</sup> and its inversions. Secondary 7ths.

Suspensions, passing notes and auxiliary notes may be used.

**Simple two and three part Harmony is required for this grade.**

**Melody:** Completing an eight-bar melody of which the opening phrase is given **OR**  
writing a melody to given words. **Modulation is essential.**

**History:- Questions on:** Opera and Oratorio (singers),  
Concerto and Suite (pianists and instrumentalists)  
Important composers of the above forms. Style and form must be discussed.

**Works for detailed study in this area will be set bi-annually.**

*Names of works can be obtained from the Administrator.*