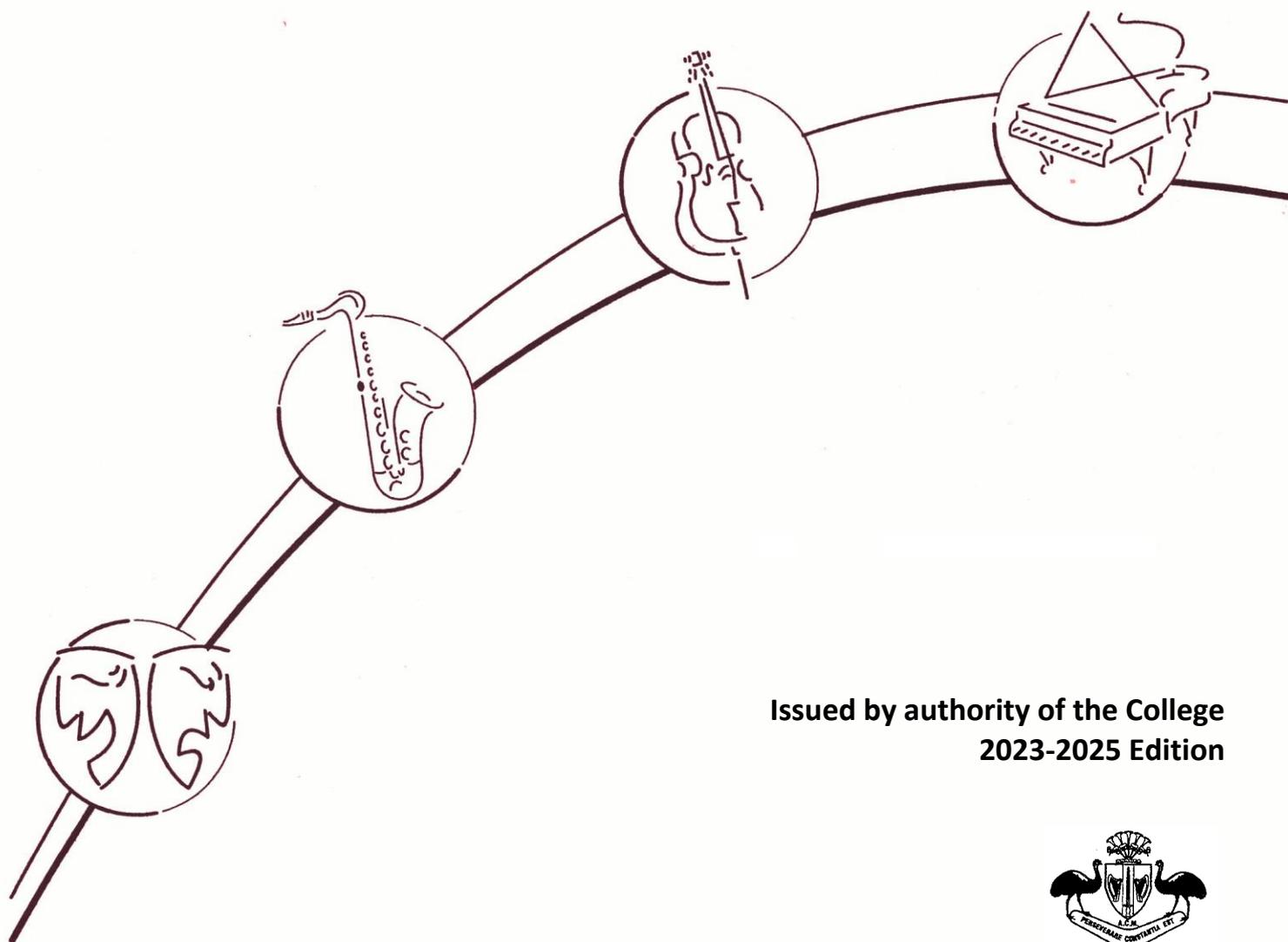


*The Australian College of Music*

# Syllabus

**Modern Piano**



Issued by authority of the College  
2023-2025 Edition





# Modern Piano Syllabus

The College is incorporated as an Examining Body for  
Music and Speech  
without share capital or other commercial attributes.

Its funds and capital are devoted solely to the advancement of  
Music and Speech and Drama.

It is a non-profit organisation.

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## PIANO IN A MODERN STYLE

The aim of this syllabus is to provide a structured series of exams in a more modern style of music. This will allow students who prefer this form to have an exam base and a structured series of work. Australian content will be emphasized where possible.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES

Three pieces required to be performed. One to be selected from each group.

#### LIST A

Own choice. This piece will be written with the tune in the treble staff with chord symbols provided. Students will be able to add the bass using the chord symbols. It is expected that as the grades advance, students will be able to use more varied and complicated bass accompaniments based on the chords or the accompaniments provided. It is the standard of performance, and the level of technical skill showing an understanding of the musical concept of the harmonic bass, that will be examined in this section. Choice of this piece can be taken from popular music sources, musicals, Christmas Carols, folk tunes or nursery rhymes. Own choice should be made according to the level of the grade. Repeats may be played if improvisation is used.

#### LIST B

This piece should have artistic merit, with emphasis on style, form and expression. This piece is selected to allow the student to show technical ability and musical performance for the grade level. Repeats are not played.

#### LIST C

Own choice. This is to be your own choice of a recognised Australian Composer. The piece should be of a standard comparable for this grade. Repeats are not played.

### PLEASE NOTE

Other pieces of your choice can be substituted for the List B pieces. They must conform to the guide lines and be of a suitable standard for this grade. A copy of the substitute piece should accompany the entry form with a brief summary of the reasons for your choice.

### AURAL TESTS OR SIGHT READING

Students will be able to choose to do aural tests **or** sight reading in their exam. The aural tests are shown at the end of each grade list. Sight reading will be in keeping with the relevant standard for the grade. For Grade One only hands separately will be required. For Grade Two, a simple melody in the right hand with chord symbols given for the left hand in the primary chord position, will be given. Similar sight reading of increasing complexity, will be given for further grades.

## MARKING

### GRADES I to VI

Scales .....	15
Arpeggios/Chords .....	10
List A.....	20
List B.....	20
List C.....	20
Aural Skills/Sight Reading .....	5
Viva Voce .....	10
Total:.....	100

## TECHNICAL WORK

### SCALES

GRADE	SCALES				TEMPO	METHOD	SCALES			TEMPO
	MAJOR	MINOR		CHROMATIC			CONTRARY MOTION			
		<i>harmonic</i>	<i>melodic</i>				<i>major</i>	<i>minor</i>	<i>range</i>	
1	C G	C G		C	MM=100 2 notes per beat	2 octaves, Hands sep	C		1 octave	MM=66 2 notes per beat
2	G D F	G D F	G D	F	MM=120 2 notes per beat	2 octaves rh lh tog	G	D	1 octave	MM=80 2 notes per beat
3	A E F	A E F	F A	D	MM=66 4 notes per beat	2 octaves rh lh tog	E	A	2 octaves	MM=80 2 notes per beat
4	E B B <sup>b</sup>	E B B <sup>b</sup>	E B <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup>	MM=70 4 notes per beat	2 octaves rh lh tog	B	E	2 octaves	MM=50 4 notes per beat
5	B B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup>	B B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup>	B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup>	E <sup>b</sup>	MM=84 4 notes per beat	4 octaves rh lh tog	B	B	4 octaves	MM=60 4 notes per beat
6	A <sup>b</sup> C <sup>#</sup> F <sup>#</sup>	A <sup>b</sup> C <sup>#</sup> F <sup>#</sup>	C <sup>#</sup> F <sup>#</sup>	C <sup>#</sup>	MM=90 4 notes per beat	4 octaves rh lh tog	A <sup>b</sup>	C <sup>#</sup>	4 octaves	MM=70 4 notes per beat

### CHORDS AND ARPEGGIOS

For each grade, chords of the scale keys should be known. These include the primary chords for the grade as listed. The progression for the chords are as follows - Tonic (root), sub dominant (2<sup>nd</sup> inversion), tonic (root), dominant 7<sup>th</sup> (1<sup>st</sup> inversion), tonic (root), or 1, IV, I, V7, 1.

GRADE	PRIMARY CHORDS		ARPEGGIOS		TEMPO
	<i>major</i>	<i>minor</i>	<i>major</i>	<i>minor</i>	
1	C hands sep	G hands sep	G one octave up and down, hands sep	C one octave up and down, hands sep	MM=50 2 notes per beat
2	G hands sep	D hands sep	D one octave up and down, hands sep	G one octave up and down, hands sep	MM=60 2 notes per beat
3	A E hands sep	A F hands sep	F 2 octaves hands sep and tog	A 2 octaves, hands sep and tog	MM=70 2 notes per beat
4	B B <sup>b</sup> hands sep	E B hands sep	B B <sup>b</sup> 2 octs, hands sep and tog	E B 2 octaves, hands sep and tog	MM=76 2 notes per beat
5	B <sup>b</sup> E <sup>b</sup> hands sep	B, B <sup>b</sup> hands sep	E <sup>b</sup> B 4 octs hands tog	E <sup>b</sup> B <sup>b</sup> 4 octaves, hands tog	MM=50 4 notes per beat
6	A <sup>b</sup> C <sup>#</sup> hands sep	A <sup>b</sup> F <sup>#</sup> hands sep	A <sup>b</sup> C <sup>#</sup> 4 octaves, hands tog,	A <sup>b</sup> F <sup>#</sup> 4 octaves, hands tog,.	MM=60 4 notes per beat

## ACM Examination Lists

### GRADE 1

#### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on the scale chart.

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on chord chart.

**PIECES** - Three pieces are required to be performed, one from each of lists A, B, or C.

#### List A

Own choice. Piece to be selected according to the guide lines in the REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. The piece should be of a suitable standard for Grade 1 and contain at least 16 bars, and the primary chords of the key.

Some suggestions

Jeffery Leask - *Popular Recorder Book* - Upbeat  
 The Lion Sleeps Tonight p5  
 Scarborough Fair Part 1 p16  
 Click Go The Shears p37  
 The Water Is Wide p31

#### List B

Margaret Goldston: *Simply Jazzy Book 2* Alfred 18125  
 Juke Box Boogie p4  
 Limousine Rock p2  
 Kowalchyk: *Boogie and Blues Bk 2* Alfred 6677  
 Any one piece  
 Elissa Milne: *More Little Peppers* Pepperbox Music. Sydney  
 Grouch p10  
 Little Peppers  
 Wake Up  
 Bastien Level 2 - Blue book  
 The Entertainer  
 Martha Mier: *Jazz, Rags and Blues Bk 1* Alfred 6642  
 Don't Wanna' Leave You Blues p4  
 Hallelujah p8  
 Denes Agay: *More Classics to Moderns Bk 1*  
 At Play With A Hoop Satie p28  
 Game Kabalevsky p32

#### List C

Own choice Australian Composition from a recognised Australian Composer. The piece chosen should have technical value, and be of a similar standard to other Grade 1 pieces.

#### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Questions based on the music played.

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, signs, any words and their meanings, expression marks and key signatures will be tested.

#### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable to this grade.

Identify the higher or lower of two notes played within an octave.

Sing the notes in the C major triad after the key note has been sounded.

Be able to beat 2/4 time to a tune in this time played by the examiner.

Identify the major or minor chord.

## GRADE II

### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on Scale Chart for grade 2

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on Chord Chart for grade 2

**PIECES** - Three required, one from each of List A, B, and C.

#### List A

*Own choice.* - Chosen according to the guidelines set out in REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. It is expected that for this grade there should be other chords included, as well as the primary chords, be at least 16 bars long and have musical merit. - Some suggestions.

Jeffery Leask: *Popular Recorder Book* Upbeat  
Over The Rainbow p4  
Any Guitar song album eg 101 Tunes for Easy Guitar  
Christmas Carol /nursery rhyme collections  
Any Busking Collection

#### List B

Denes Agay *More Classics to Moderns* Bk 2  
Playful Dialogue - Hummel p21  
Dance With Me - Volkmann p26  
The Chinese Doll - Rebikoff p27

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns* Bk 2  
Clowns - Kabalevsky p32

Christopher Norton: *Microstyles* Book 1  
Fax Blues p9

Christopher Norton: *Microstyles* Book 2  
Foot Tapper p1  
Metal Merchant p5

Martha Mier: *Jazz Rags and Blues* Book 1  
Ol' Rockin' Chair Blues p 10  
Sneaky Business p 16

Elissa Milne: *More Little Peppers*  
Deadline p18  
Bees Knees P16  
Prowler P8

Dietzer *First Impressions* Alfred 14760  
Capriccio p16

Margaret Goldston: *Simply Jazzy* Book 2 Alfred 18125  
The Spirit Song p8  
New Orleans Swing p22

#### List C

Own choice Australian composition from a recognised Australian composer. The piece chosen should have technical value and be of a similar standard to other Grade 2 pieces.

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, expression marks, signs, any words and their meanings and key signatures will be tested.

### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable for this level.

Sing the notes of the C major chord after the key note has been played.

Be able to beat 3/4 time to a tune in this time, played by the examiner.

Identify a major or minor chord.

Sing the tonic at the end of a short passage.

## GRADE III

### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on the scale chart for Grade 3

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on the chord/arpeggio chart for grade 3

**PIECES** - Three pieces required, one from each List A, B and C.

#### List A

*Own Choice* - Piece chosen according to the guidelines as set out in the REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. It is expected that for this grade there should be modulation away from the original key and the left hand accompaniment shows variation from the basic full chord arrangement. This may be written in the music or improvised by the student. - Some Suggestions

Jeffery Leask: *Popular Recorder Book* Upbeat  
I Still Call Australia Home  
101 Tunes For Easy Guitar (any piece)  
Any Busking Collection

#### List B

Christopher Norton: *Microstyles 1*  
Short and Sweet p15  
Heavy Work p11

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns 3*  
Rondo P10  
The mechanical Doll p30  
Bagatelle p 16

Elissa Milne: *More Little Peppers*  
Cloak and Dagger p12

Elissa Milne: *Little Peppers*  
Times Two p6  
Rhyme Time p16

Catherine Rollin: *Spotlight on Jazz Style* Alfred 6509  
Fabulous Fingers p6  
A Little Latin Beat p14

Martha Mier: *The Best of Martha Mier* Alfred 16612  
Indian Serenade p6

Martha Mier: *Jazz, Rags and Blues* Bk 2 Alfred 6643  
Any one piece from this book

Jeno Takacs: *Double Dozen for Small Fingers* (Universal Ed 13030)  
Fandango P12

#### List C

Own choice Australian composition from a recognised Australian composer. The piece chosen should have technical value and be of a similar standard to other Grade 3 pieces.

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, expression marks, signs, any words and their meanings and key signatures will be tested. Form and style of piece will also be tested.

### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable for this level.

Recognise a major or minor triad as played by the examiner.

Sing the notes of a major or minor triad beginning on a given note.

Identify the intervals of a major 3<sup>rd</sup>, a perfect 5<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup>.

Be able to beat in 2/4, 3/4 or 4/4 time to a tune played by the examiner.

## GRADE IV

### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on Scale Chart for Grade 4

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on Chord Chart for Grade 4

**PIECES** - Three required, one from each of List A, B, and C.

#### List A

Own choice. - Chosen according to the guidelines set out in REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. It is expected that for this grade there should be modulation away from the main key and a more involved accompaniment for the left hand showing variations of style. The piece should also be of a reasonable length for this grade, but not done by continuous repetition of sections. Some suggestions – pieces from: Popular music albums, guitar albums, popular group and individual entertainer albums, or sheet music, any Busking Collection

#### List B

Christopher Norton: *Microstyles 2*

Rhapsody p6

A Charmer p8

Elissa Milne: *More Little Peppers*

Brolga Stroll p14

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns Book 3*

Gymnopedie No 1 p26

Norwegian Dance Melody P24

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns Book 4: Sonatina* p30

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns Book 5: About Strange Lands and People* p17

Kiren Bailey: *Jazzin' Around Level 1*

Melinda's Mini March

Kiren Bailey: *Jazzin' Around Level 2*

Little Song

Breezin'

Martha Mier: *The Best of Martha Mier* Alfred 16612

Whistlin' Joe p4

Memories p8

Fountain Of Dreams p14

Martha Mier: *Jazz, Rags and Blues Book 3* Alfred 6643

Persistent Rhythm p2

Pine Cone Rag p6

Taking It Easy p9

Waterfront Jazz p21

#### List C

Own choice Australian composition from a recognised Australian composer. The piece chosen should have technical value and be of a similar standard to other Grade 4 pieces.

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, expression marks, signs, any words and their meanings and key signatures will be tested. Form and style of piece will also be tested, as well as a knowledge of the history of the type of music represented.

### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable to this grade.

Identify the time signature of a short piece in 3/4, 4/4, or 6/8 time.

Sing the middle note of a major triad as played in the root position.

Identify the intervals of a major 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> and perfect 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

Identify if a triad is in root position or an inversion.

## GRADE V

### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on Scale Chart for Grade 5

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on Chord Chart for Grade 5

**Pieces** - Three required, one from each of List A, B, and C.

#### List A

*Own choice.* - Chosen according to the guidelines set out in REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. It is expected that for this grade there should be modulation away from the main key and an involved accompaniment for the left hand showing variations of style. The piece should also be of a reasonable length for this grade, but not done by continuous repetition of sections. It may include improvisation by the student.

Some suggestions – pieces from: Popular music albums, guitar albums, popular group and individual entertainer albums, or sheet music, any Busking Collection

#### List B

Bonsor/ Russell-Smith: *Jazzy Piano 2*

Wistful Prelude p1

Girl on a Cat-walk p4

Kiren Bailey: *Jazzin' Around Level 2*

Bop a Beatin' Boogie p12

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns Book 4*

Reverie p22

Denes Agay: *Classics to Moderns Bk 5*

The Horsemen by Kabalevsky p30

Kabalevsky: *Fifteen Children's Pieces Op. 27 No3*

Etude (no. 8)

Goldston: Sonatina In Blues Style Alfred 14297, Any one movement

*Applause!* Book One Alfred 2537

Sonatina in A Minor by Benda p10

Allegro by W F Bach p12

Beethoven: Fur Elise

#### List C

Own choice Australian composition from a recognised Australian composer. The piece chosen should have technical value and be of a similar standard to other Grade 5 pieces.

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, expression marks, signs, any words and their meanings and key signatures will be tested. Form and style of piece will also be tested, as well as a knowledge of the history of the type of music represented.

### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable for this grade

Name any interval in the major scale as played by the examiner.

Identify the position of a triad in root, 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> inversions.

Be able to sing all three notes, ascending or descending, of a major or minor triad in root position or inversions, as played by the examiner.

## GRADE VI

### TECHNICAL WORK

**Scales** - As shown on Scale Chart for Grade 6

**Chords / Arpeggios** - As shown on Chord Chart for Grade 6

**PIECES** - Three required, one from each of List A, B, and C.

#### List A

Own choice. Chosen according to the guidelines set out in REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GRADES. It is expected that for this grade there should be modulation away from the main key and an involved accompaniment for the left hand showing variations of style. The piece should also be of a reasonable length for this grade, but not done by continuous repetition of sections. It may include improvisation by the student.

Some suggestions – pieces from: Popular music albums, guitar albums, popular group and individual entertainer albums, or sheet music, any Busking Collection.

#### List B

Debussy in <i>Classics to Moderns</i> Book 4	Debussy, Le Petit Negre
Debussy in <i>Classics to Moderns</i> Book 5	The Girl with the Flaxen Hair p28
Debussy from <i>Children's Corner Suite</i>	The Little Shepherd
Bonsor/Russell-Smith: <i>Jazzy Piano 2</i>	Feelin Good, Willie Wagglestick's Walkabout, Dreamy
Christopher Norton: <i>Latin Preludes</i> (B & H)	No 1,2,3,4 or 5
Christopher Norton: <i>Rock Preludes</i>	No 2 or 4
Peters Ragtime Preludes (B & H)	Wheeler Dealer, Reflections
Greig, E	Nocturne No 4, Op 54
Hutchins	Nocturne
D. Kabalevsky	Etude Op 27 No. 8
F. Burgmeller	The Storm or L'Orage Op 109 No 13
C. Gurlitt	Scherzo in D minor
S. Heller	Tarantella - Etude in E min Op 46 No 7 Op 45 No. 20, 21 or 23 Op 46 No. 7, 18, 21, 24 or 26
Brian Bonsor/ Geoffrey Russell Smith	From Jazzy Piano 2 - Feelin' Good
F. Chopin	Mazurka Op 7 in B flat Mazurka Op 2 - No. 1 or 3
C. Debussy	La Petit Negre - or the little Negro - Getting to Grade 5 and Applause Bk 1
S. Joplin	Maple Leaf Rag

#### List C

Own choice Australian composition from a recognised Australian composer. The piece chosen should have technical value and be of a similar standard to other Grade 6 pieces.

### GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge of clefs, notes, time values and signatures, expression marks, signs, any words and their meanings and key signatures will be tested. Form and style of piece will also be tested, as well as a knowledge of the history of the type of music represented.

### AURAL TESTS (OR SIGHT READING)

Clap a rhythm suitable for this grade

Name any interval in the major scale.

Identify if a piece is in 2/4, 3/4, 4/4, 5/4, 6/8, or 9/8 time

Be able to sing the middle note of a major or minor triad in root position or inversions, as played by the examiner.