

Teacher Guidelines

Online Theory of Music, Musicianship and Music Craft Syllabuses

These guidelines are intended to provide general guidance to teachers when preparing candidates for AMEB online theory exams. They have been devised in response to requests from teachers and candidates. Importantly, these guidelines are not provided as an aid to teaching or learning; comprehensive guidance for how to address the content of exams is provided in other publications (specifically, in AMEB's Theory of Music Integrated Course and Workbooks, Theory of Music Online Courses, Music Craft Student Workbooks, and Music Craft Teacher's Guides). Rather, these guidelines provide general advice concerning how examiners approach assessment. They should not be considered as assessment criteria, but we hope that the information will assist in understanding examiner expectations and marking rationale.

General Notes

Teachers and candidates should be aware that examiners can only mark what they see on the screen not what the candidate meant to write, even though it may be obvious what was intended. This applies to all three syllabuses. Take care with placing notes in a space or on a line, as a misplaced note will mean a loss of a mark.

A comment from the examiner does not necessarily mean a loss of marks. For instance, in many question types spelling errors do not incur a loss of marks but an examiner may comment on this. Candidates should take care when reproducing text.

Listed below are some suggestions of 'what the examiner is looking for' and also 'deductions will occur if...'. Please note that deductions may occur for other errors and mistakes not listed, including not meeting the requirements of 'what the examiner is looking for'. We hope that we have provided some insight into the more common deduction areas.

For all question types, it is possible to receive full marks for a well-constructed response with no significant errors. Errors that have incurred a penalty will be indicated, though these errors may be described in general terms rather than specifically. For example, the examiner may refer to the types of errors that occur, each of which may occur multiple times, rather than specific, comprehensive details such as the bar and beat number of each individual error.

Except where it specifically contradicts a given question instruction, the use of vocabulary from higher grades (e.g. more advanced chords) is permitted. It should,

however, be noted that the use of more advanced devices will not result in any 'bonus marks', and any incorrect treatment of the device in question will incur a penalty. Generally speaking, it is recommended that a candidate stay within the appropriate resources of the grade.

1. Musical Setting of a Given Text

Examiners are looking for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a coherent setting that is text-relevant (i.e. that reflects the mood, character, or content of the given text) • words of more than one syllable to be hyphenated • words or syllables using more than one note to include melisma slurs • given words should not be changed and care taken with spelling and punctuation of the given text • text and notes to be vertically aligned
Deductions will occur if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text is omitted in melody writing and rhythm writing questions • words are changed • there are misplaced accents or there is incorrect scansion • the setting repeats the same rhythm for every bar (please note that some rhythmic variety is expected) • incorrect groupings are used

2. Melody Writing

Examiners are looking for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a tonally secure structure with defined cadential areas • a coherent shape and contour with a sense of direction and phrasing • correct phrasing • melodic fluency and interest • a balance of steps and skips, possibly an occasional leap • the melody to be placed within a standard range as appropriate to the voice/instrument • avoidance of augmented/diminished intervals (especially in minor keys) and other awkward melodic motion (which may large and/or dissonant leaps, e.g. 7ths) • appropriate treatment of the leading note • rhythmic balance • coherent overall style with melodic fluency and interest • correct and secure modulation if required • overall balance in the melody and cadential areas
Deductions will occur if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the specified key is not used • phrasing is required but omitted

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a rhythm has been given for the first 4 bars and the candidate has composed a response that is highly inconsistent with that rhythm
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3. Cadences

Deductions will occur if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chords are misspelt e.g. if CEG was clearly intended but CFG was written • chords are placed in the reverse order e.g. I-IV instead of IV-I • raised leading notes omitted or accidentals on the wrong note • for grades 5 and 6 - unnecessary inversion (e.g. V-Ib) • incorrect note values when these have been specified • incorrect stem directions or misaligned notes • more than an octave between tenor and alto or alto and soprano • consecutive or exposed 5ths and 8ves • single notes used instead of chords • voices out of normal choral range (this is a common error in the bass) • non-standard doublings • in questions requiring writing cadences in pianoforte style, 50% of the possible mark will be lost if four-part vocal style is used or vice versa
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4. Grouping of Notes and Rests

<p>Questions requiring completing a bar with a specified number of notes and/or rests, and in a specific order, are marked as either full or 0 marks - partial marks are never awarded for this question. The bar must be entirely correct for the full 2 marks to be awarded.</p> <p>Please note deductions will occur if incorrect groupings are used.</p>
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5. Harmony: Four-part vocal style, piano style and two-part writing

Examiners are looking for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognition of the basic chord pattern • recognition and use of standard cadential figures • smooth voice-leading • appropriate use of the chords and inversions from the grade or syllabus being examined • no grammatical errors (see below) • examiners do not remove one mark per error type, but rather the overall impression is taken into consideration when awarding marks in an effort to acknowledge those aspects the candidate has successfully addressed • for two-part writing - recognition and use of imitation, balance between the parts, a convincing texture, tonal
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	<p>stability, appropriate and convincing modulations as required and avoidance of grammatical errors</p> <p>Please note, Piano style consists of one note in the bass and a chord in the treble (the chord generally of three notes); when writing in piano style, if a treble line is given, the added notes in the treble should be placed under the given treble note/s.</p>
Deductions will occur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when cadences are not recognized • if passing / auxiliary notes have been fully harmonized • application of passing/ auxiliary notes is not successfully demonstrated as required (i.e. not below Grade 5) • there is incorrect use of doubling • consecutive 5ths and 8ves (described in Music Craft as parallel 5th and 8ves) occur • exposed 5ths and 8ves occur between soprano and bass lines (cadences excepted) • if the harmony is completed in the wrong key, 50% of the mark will be deducted • voices that have more than an 8ve between tenor and alto, or alto and soprano • voices out of normal choral ranges (as specified in the syllabus) • incorrect use of augmented and diminished chords • unresolved leading notes • incorrect use of second inversion chords • if the exercise is completed in fewer voices than specified. • misspelt chords, e.g. if CEG was clearly intended but CFG was written • other errors including incorrect rhythm, incorrect note values, slow harmonic rhythm, and in the lower grades using harmony notes as passing notes or vice versa • if piano style is required but the answer is in four-part vocal style or vice versa 50% of the mark will be deducted

6. Set Works

Musicianship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in questions requiring recognition of the set work, examiners are looking for the correct name of the composer, the full name of the work, and naming of the correct section of the work (sections of works should be identified with reference to the structure of the work rather than bar numbers). Such questions are typically worth three marks, with one mark awarded for each of these criteria.
Musicianship and Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific identification of sections is required e.g. if the extract is a coda, then the identification should be named as 'coda', not as 'recapitulation'
Music Craft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • aural - only the title is required if the question asks to identify a set work

All Syllabuses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> incorrect identification of sections or instruments will incur deductions
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7. General Knowledge

Examiners are looking for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> questions requiring the name of a genre must specify the actual genre not a category e.g. 'anthem' is a genre, whereas 'chamber music' is a category questions such as describing the character of a dance need specific and relevant information about that dance such as texture, tempo, mood, ornamentation, style etc. Whether the dance is the first or last in the suite is not part of character, neither is time signature or form
Deductions will occur if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> questions that require a specialised answer but pertinent or specific or accurate information is not given e.g. 'tempo di menuetto' is incorrect if the question requires naming the tempo of a minuet questions that ask for the tempo of a dance, the beats per minute [bpm] is given questions requiring naming a city, the name of the country is given instead

8. Scales and Keys

Deductions will occur if	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> requested to name the 'key' of a melody, the scale 'type' is given as the answer e.g. if a melody is in A minor, then the key name is 'A minor', not 'A harmonic minor' In higher grades, i.e. from grade 5 and above, minor scales need to be identified as 'harmonic' or 'melodic'. If the question is worth 1 mark, then no mark will be awarded if these descriptors are not included.
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9. Instruments

<p>In score questions, naming a woodwind or brass instrument must be specific i.e. either 'clarinet in A' OR 'clarinet in B flat' as appropriate; horn in F, trumpet in Bb etc. Deductions will occur if the transposition identifier is omitted.</p>

10. Terms

<p>If asked for the meaning of a musical term, deductions will occur if the name of the term is given instead of its meaning.</p> <p>Music Craft has its own terminology and will not be accepted for Theory and Musicianship.</p> <p>AMEB definitions are the acceptable meaning for all musical terms. These may be found in the Manual of Syllabuses.</p>
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Music Craft Specific Comments

Whilst Music Craft has its own particular vocabulary, in general, the same marking applies to Music Craft questions as to Theory of Music and Musicianship, but note:

Whilst the actual terminology 'exposed/consecutive 5ths/8ves' does not appear in the Music Craft syllabus, smooth voice-leading that includes moving to the nearest chord tones is expected in writing cadences and harmony exercises. Consequently, marks will be lost for weak or insecure voice-leading.

If the Helmholtz system is required for note naming, deductions will occur if an alternate system is used.

Cadence recognition must be stated completely i.e. 'perfect authentic' [PAC], 'imperfect authentic' [IAC], 'half' [HC] or 'plagal'. Deductions will occur if the cadence is not fully described.

Key recognition requires an upper-case letter for a major key and a lower-case letter for a minor key e.g. G, g.

Naming a chord in a specific bar of a set work requires the full name eg. V 4/2 (or V42). This principle applies to all chord descriptions in Music Craft.

For questions on harmony that require a 4-part vocal progression against a given figured bass line, deductions will occur if the answer is a melody or written in piano style.

When a figured bass is given, deductions will occur if the required chords do not comply with the figuring.

Deductions will occur if terminology, signs, terms and English translations do not comply with those stated in each grade of the Music Craft syllabus.

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