

Theory of Music ABRSM Guidelines

Theory GRADE 6

As in preceding grades. The harmonic vocabulary expected will include all $\frac{5}{3}$, $\frac{6}{3}$ and $\frac{6}{4}$ chords on *any degree* of the major or minor (harmonic and melodic) scale; the recognition of the *dominant seventh* chord in root position, first, second and third inversions, and the *supertonic seventh chord* in root position and first inversion, in any major or minor key; and the figuring for all these chords. An understanding of the principles of *modulation* and knowledge of *cadences*, *ornamentation* and *melodic decoration* (which might include passing notes, auxiliary notes, appoggiaturas, changing notes and notes of anticipation) will also be expected. Questions will cover:

1. Writing specified chords for voices in four parts or for keyboard (at the candidate's choice) above a given bass part of about four bars.
2. The indication of suitable chords for the accompaniment of a diatonic melody of about eight bars in any key, using any recognized method of notation, or, at the candidate's choice, the provision of a bass to a given melody, adding figures to indicate the intended harmonies.
3. Composition of a melody for a specified instrument (a choice will be given), using a given opening. Modulation to the dominant, subdominant, relative major or relative minor may be required.
4. Questions on short extracts of music written for piano or in open score for voices or for any combination of instruments and/or voices, designed to test the candidate's knowledge of the elements and notation of music, including the realization of ornaments, the identification and notation of underlying harmonic structure, phrase structure, style, performance, and on the voices and instruments for which the works were written.

Theory GRADE 7

As in preceding grades, with the addition of recognition of *all diatonic secondary seventh chords* and their inversions, the *Neapolitan sixth and the diminished seventh* chords, and of all figures commonly used by composers during the period c.1620–1790 to indicate harmonies above a bass part. Questions will cover:

1. The indication of chords and movement of the inner parts by figuring the bass in a passage in which both the melody and bass are given.
2. Rewriting a given passage to include appropriate suspensions and notes of melodic decoration.
3. Continuation of a given opening for solo instrument with keyboard accompaniment, which will be given in full throughout the passage, by completing the solo part, or, at the candidate's choice, composition of a melody for a specified instrument (a choice will be given) based on a given progression of chords or melodic figure.
4. Questions on short extracts of music written for piano or in open score for voices or for any combination of instruments and/or voices, designed to test the candidate's knowledge of the elements and notation of music, including the realization of ornaments, the identification and notation of underlying harmonic structure, phrase structure, style, performance, and on the voices and instruments for which the works were written.

Theory GRADE 8

As in preceding grades. The harmonic vocabulary expected will *include all standard diatonic and chromatic chords*. Questions will cover:

1. Continuation of a given opening of a passage from a Baroque trio sonata for two treble instruments and basso continuo. The basso continuo part will be given throughout and fully figured (but a realization for keyboard will not be required).
2. Completion of an outline of a short passage for keyboard. Some knowledge of the styles practised by composers from the time of Haydn onwards will be assumed.
3. Continuation of a given opening of a melody for a specified instrument (a choice will be given).
4. Questions on short extracts of music written for piano or in open score for voices or for any combination of instruments and/or voices, designed to test the candidate's knowledge of the elements and notation of music, including the realization of ornaments, the identification and notation of underlying harmonic structure, phrase structure, style, performance, and on the voices and instruments for which the works were written.