

Advice to candidates

Practical examinations

Licentiate

Candidates are advised not to attempt this examination too soon after the successful completion of an AMusA examination. Give yourself time to develop the required technique. Allow sufficient time to build a detailed musical understanding of the pieces in your examination programme and to develop and present a coherent interpretation. If you are playing exceptionally technically demanding works, ensure that you are presenting them at a point where you can concentrate on interpretation, not mechanics. Make sure you have experience playing your programme under performance conditions.

While the examination requires a very high standard of technical ability, remember that technical brilliance alone is not a guarantee of success. Rather, it is the ability to use your technique as a means of delivering an interpretation of artistry and power that is the focus of the examination.

With this in mind, be certain to select works that are within your technical abilities. The stress that overly ambitious selection of repertoire places on your performance is evident to the examiners, even when you are successful in playing all the notes.

Answers to general knowledge questions often appear rote learned and mechanically presented. Good answers to these questions grow out of an enthusiasm for the music you play. Make the analysis and history of your pieces a part of the process of learning them. This is also helpful in developing a performance that makes appropriate stylistic decisions for each piece.

Treat your examination as a recital with all the dignity and formality entailed.

Where you are performing with an accompanist, remember that your accompanist is a fellow musician and performer.