New music for trumpet
John Wallace reflects on Spectrum for Trumpet

First steps on the violin
Approaches to early learning

Spotlight on mark forms
A closer look at these essential documents
Encore
Four books of favourite piano exam pieces

May 2015
Ask your local music retailer or search for ‘ABRSM Encore’
A very warm welcome to this issue of Libretto and to my first Outlook column as ABRSM’s new Chief Executive. As someone with a passion for music of all kinds, I am thrilled to be joining an organisation which believes wholeheartedly in the value of music, to individuals and to society as a whole.

During recent months I’ve been getting to know some of the many people who make up the ABRSM family: colleagues here in London, examiners and representatives all over the world. I’ve also been meeting and exchanging views with many other individuals and organisations involved with music education, who bring music making to life for students. One such organisation is Music for Youth. Its annual Regional Festivals, in February and March, provide performance opportunities for thousands of young musicians in the UK, as we report on page 13.

As the year continues we turn our attention to strings with the July release of new syllabuses for Violin, Viola and Cello. And in this issue of Libretto we look behind the scenes at our Cello syllabus recording sessions (page 14). The focus on graded music exams carries on with our Chief Examiner, John Holmes, exploring mark forms on page 16.

Away from the exam room, you can read about our Spectrum for Trumpet book of contemporary pieces (page 8), teaching the violin at the early stages (page10), the musical elements of time and tone (page 18), and ways to start playing and teaching jazz (page 20).

Whatever your interest or instrument, I hope there is something here to inspire you. In the meantime, I look forward to guiding ABRSM as we continue to encourage and support music making and learning around the world.

Michael Elliott
Chief Executive
More exams added to On Your Marks

During recent months we’ve been busy filming new examples of graded music exams as part of our On Your Marks project. This online resource is designed to give teachers and students a better understanding of how we mark exams and what examiners look for in a performance. With On Your Marks you can watch and assess all sections of a graded music exam, using our marking criteria for reference. At the end of the exam there is an opportunity to compare your assessment with the one made by our Chief Examiner, John Holmes.

In addition to Piano Grade 5, Oboe Grade 1, Alto Saxophone Grade 4 and Clarinet Grade 6, On Your Marks is now available for Violin and Trumpet exams. Then, later in the year we will be adding Singing, Trombone, Guitar, Cello and Grade 8 Piano.

To find out more and have a go at marking an exam, visit www.abrsm.org/onyourmarks.

Partnership supports jazz outreach project

Last September we teamed up with the National Youth Jazz Orchestra of Great Britain (NYJO) to support five of their outreach workshops. These gave young musicians around the UK the chance to rehearse, write and perform with members of the orchestra.

‘The partnership with ABRSM is a hugely exciting one for NYJO,’ said Stephen Chamberlain, NYJO’s Partnerships and Development Manager. ‘It will allow us to work in carefully targeted areas where we can make a high impact in our mission to reach and inspire as many young people across the UK with a knowledge and love of jazz.’

‘We’re delighted to be supporting NYJO’s community work,’ added Tony Pinkham, Corporate Marketing Manager at ABRSM. ‘The orchestra and junior bands of the NYJO Academy always deliver a creatively challenging experience at these events and everyone always comes away feeling inspired.’

Find out more about NYJO at www.nyjo.org.uk.

New for Bowed Strings

In July we will be releasing new repertoire lists for Violin, Viola and Cello. These come into effect in exams from January 2016, providing a fresh and exciting choice of pieces in a wide range of styles. To complement the syllabuses, we will be publishing a range of supporting resources. These include books of Violin Exam Pieces, with a Grade 8 volume for the first time, Violin and Cello syllabus recordings, and new repertoire books for viola and cello players.

There will be no changes to scales, sight-reading or aural tests and the Double Bass repertoire lists will remain unchanged.

To keep up to date with all our syllabus news, join our emailing list at www.abrsm.org/signup.
Latest Speedshifter versions released

As 2014 came to a close we celebrated four years of Speedshifter, our popular practice tool which allows you to vary the speed of an audio track without changing the pitch. We marked the anniversary by launching a new version of the desktop app, which now includes expanded track information for our current Woodwind syllabus. Speedshifter Mobile also has a new look now, making it even easier for students to use in their practice sessions.

To find out more, visit www.abrsm.org/speedshifter.

Mark form journey explained

For candidates taking a graded music exam, the mark form is an important part of their overall experience. It provides a record of their achievement in the exam along with helpful comments, which teachers and candidates can use to guide future learning. The mark form is also a special memento. Candidates often keep them for many years as a reminder of their musical progress.

We take great care to make sure that every mark form reflects our passion for quality and high standards. For this reason, we check all forms before sending them out. We also record important information from mark forms which helps us to monitor examining standards and to develop new syllabuses. Once these important checks are done we do everything we can to send the forms out as soon as we can.

To find out what happens to your mark form, from exam room to delivery, take a look at our new film – Journey of a Mark Form – at www.abrsm.org/results.

For a closer look at the mark form itself, turn to the article on page 16.

Connecting with Music Mark

At the end of last year, we were delighted to attend Music Mark’s annual conference. Music Mark is the UK Association for Music Education, and this event attracted a wide range of teachers, school leaders and other specialists. Together we shared knowledge and ideas, explored the findings of our recent Making Music research and looked at the challenges faced by music education today.

As Lincoln Abbotts, ABRSM’s Director of Strategic Development, told delegates: ‘Through recent changes and challenges, there have been constants around collaboration and connection. Fortunately, music teachers have much in common. Regardless of context, genre, style, circumstance or experience, we all care about music. We all care about supporting and inspiring the next generation of performers, teachers and listeners.

‘The importance of supporting today’s teachers through high quality CPD is something we all believe in strongly,’ he added, when talking about our ongoing partnership with Music Mark. ‘We know from conversations with teachers that we need to do more to understand local situations and to provide tailored support. By bringing together ABRSM’s team and Music Mark members, we’ll have the expertise, experience and understanding to do just that.’

‘Connecting through dialogue alongside exchanging and sharing best practice leads to a richer experience for all teachers,’ added Jem Shuttleworth, General Manager at Music Mark. ‘The children and young people who those teachers work with then benefit from their musical world being more connected – a world where teachers recognise, complement and build on the contributions that all are making to each young musician. This approach has been integral to our collaboration with ABRSM so far and to our plans for the future.’

To find out more about Music Mark, go to www.musicmark.org.uk.
Assessment for all

Our Performance Assessment is changing. We have removed the previous restrictions – relating to age or grade taken – so that the assessment is now open to musicians of all levels and ages.

The Performance Assessment provides an objective and independent evaluation of a musician’s playing or singing, while avoiding the pressure sometimes associated with public performance or exams.

During this assessment performers play or sing a short programme of music of their own choice. There are no scales, sight-reading or aural tests, and there is no pass or fail to worry about – no marks are awarded. Instead, performers receive constructive comments about their playing or singing written on their certificate, which the examiner gives to them at the end of the assessment.

This assessment has always been a good option for candidates with specific needs, who may not be able to take a graded exam but, as Nigel Scaife, ABRSM’s Syllabus Director, explains, it can now benefit a much wider group of people. ‘Whether you’re a student preparing for a concert, competition or audition, an adult learner who doesn’t want to take graded exams, or a teacher who is approaching a new genre for the first time, the Performance Assessment is an excellent opportunity to get feedback. It provides a focus for developing musicians of all kinds.’

Find out more about the Performance Assessment at www.abrsm.org/performanceassessment.

Teaming up with Sing Up

This year we are working with Sing Up, the not-for-profit organisation promoting singing in UK schools. Our funding goes towards their Sing Up Music scheme which works with primary schools to support music curriculum teaching and develop musicianship skills through singing. Later this year Sing Up plans to introduce a similar scheme in secondary schools.

Featuring 84 songs, Sing Up Music is a new addition to the organisation’s extensive resource bank. It offers a simple framework to help teachers develop a year’s scheme of work, from Reception to Year 6.

The ultimate aim of the project is to give all children an understanding of the building blocks of music. This is something we support wholeheartedly.

‘Despite investment in giving primary school children opportunities to play instruments or sing, only a small minority take their music learning forward in a more formal and progressive way,’ explained ABRSM’s Director of Strategic Development, Lincoln Abbotts. ‘As our Making Music research shows, those who do so are likely to be from more affluent backgrounds. Yet the huge number of young people making music in alternative settings suggests a real enthusiasm for playing and singing. That’s why we’re working with Sing Up to ensure that as many children as possible have access to high quality, formal music teaching.’

To find out more, visit www.singup.org.
Play it again!

Piano teachers looking for graded repertoire for their students will soon have four new books of pieces to choose from.

The Encore series is packed with the most popular piano exam pieces from the last 20 years. Containing repertoire which previously appeared on syllabuses at Grades 1 to 8, it provides music to explore between grades, for concerts and just for fun.

Covering a wide range of styles and periods, these versatile books are essential for piano students and teachers at all levels.

All four Encore books will be available in April from music shops and from www.abrsm.org/shop.

Look out for Aural Trainer 6 to 8

Our innovative aural skills app will soon be available for Grades 6 to 8. Just like the existing version for Grades 1 to 5, Aural Trainer 6 to 8 will help students to develop the skills they need at these grades through a series of interactive challenges.

Aural Trainer is an exciting and flexible way to develop core aural skills. For students it’s great for personal practice, while teachers can use it in lessons. You can approach the exercises in different ways and repeat questions as often as you need to. And with comprehensive feedback after every question and a progress page it’s easy to keep track of achievements.

With the forthcoming release of this new version for Grades 6 to 8, exam candidates at all levels will be able to benefit from this popular app.

ABRSM Aural Trainer is compatible with iPhone®, iPod touch® and iPad®.

To find out more about Aural Trainer Grades 1 to 5 or to sign up for news about Aural Trainer Grades 6 to 8, visit www.abrsm.org/auraltrainer.

Removing barriers to music making

As part of our mission to support and widen musical participation, we have been sponsoring the One-Handed Musical Instrument Trust (OHMI). This charity aims to remove the barriers to music making faced by the physically disabled. Vital to this aim is the development of suitable instruments – something that OHMI is passionate about. A lack of instruments denies unlimited participation in musical life to people with disabilities, amputees and those who may have been injured, suffered a stroke or developed arthritis. To help address this, OHMI runs an annual competition which invites technologists, inventors and instrument makers to design one-handed instruments.

‘Support from, and collaboration with, ABRSM is extremely valuable to us. It strengthens our work in removing the barriers to music-making faced by the physically disabled,’ said Stephen Hetherington, OHMI Founding Trustee. ‘This year we’re embarking on a music education project in collaboration with ABRSM, specifically aimed at disabled students, and we’re looking forward to sharing what we learn with other music education professionals.’

The 2015 OHMI competition is now open. For information about this and the Trust’s other work, visit www.ohmi.org.uk.

Short course develops Jazz Piano skills

Jazz pianist, composer and examiner Tim Richards is running a short course on our Jazz Piano syllabus this August. The intensive, three-day course has a residential option and will take place at Benslow Music in Hertfordshire. Open to all piano teachers, this is an ideal opportunity to take some first steps towards playing and teaching jazz.

This course is run by Tim Richards with Benslow Music. For further information, contact Benslow Music directly: www.benslowmusic.org.
**More on Spectrum for Trumpet**

*Spectrum for Trumpet* contains 16 new works by leading contemporary composers. The repertoire ranges from Grade 1 to 8 in difficulty, so there’s something for players of all ages and abilities.

The collection is perfect for exploring tonality, rhythm and technique through modern repertoire. It opens with engaging works for younger players. *I, Robotrumpet* by Gordon McPherson uses rhythm to conjure up images of a robot’s development, while Sally Beamish’s *Burglars* is inspired by favourite children’s book *Burglar Bill*.

More challenging pieces include James MacMillan’s *Study* – full of dynamic contrasts with energetic triplet motifs. *Coronach* by Rory Boyle is an evocative, Scottish-style lament, while Param Vir’s *the angel of the waikato* calls for a few notes on the woodblock! Michael Nyman’s piece – *Where the City’s Ceaseless Crowd* – evokes an urban landscape, and *JW Shuffle* by Guy Barker is a playful and refreshing take on jazz.

Throughout the book, descriptive titles and footnotes help with interpretation and the accompanying CD includes performances of all the pieces by John Wallace and pianist Simon Wright.

We published our first *Spectrum* book, for piano, in 1996, in collaboration with Thalia Myers. Three more piano titles followed, as well as books for violin, cello, clarinet, piano duet and string quartet. Almost twenty years later, the aim of the series remains the same: to commission the finest composers to write pieces of modest length and difficulty, while preserving the essential characteristics of their compositional style.

*Spectrum for Trumpet* is available from music shops worldwide and from www.abrsm.org/shop.
New music for trumpet

In October last year we published Spectrum for Trumpet, compiled by trumpeter and former Principal of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland John Wallace. We asked him to share his experience of working on this exciting collection of contemporary pieces.

How did you get involved with Spectrum for Trumpet?
ABRSM wanted to commission a volume of trumpet pieces in the Spectrum series, to stimulate interest both in the instrument and in contemporary composers writing new and colourful stuff. The idea was for a collection of brand new works that would span the range of abilities, from beginners to those of Grade 8 standard.

Was there anything like this around when you were learning the trumpet?
Absolutely not! When I was at music college I played the music of other students. It was my way into the mysteries of the instrument – a means of continually exploring its capabilities.

Too many conservatoires are still unadventurous in the trumpet music they require students to play. This new volume challenges the orthodoxy that you should rely on the same old pieces. It’s so important that young players encounter new music by leading composers at the top of their game.

How did you decide which composers to ask?
We decided that the best thing was for me to go to composers I’d worked with previously as a trumpeter – who’d maybe written pieces for me. As it turned out, they were all really enthusiastic. Tom Adès dashed off his Reveilles virtually overnight!

How did composers react to having to write for particular levels of ability?
What came across was how they thrived on being given parameters. Dominic Muldowney said he loved that challenge in writing his Fanfare Rondo – seeing what the boundaries were and having to find solutions.

I gave Robert Saxton the difficult task of writing a Grade 1 piece. He did it brilliantly in his Fanfare, producing a fife and drum/Susato-type march. And we all know about the complexity in Sir Peter Maxwell Davies’s music, so the simplicity he offers here in Processional may come as something of a surprise.

So how tricky are the most difficult pieces?
Well, Michael Nyman’s Where the City’s Ceaseless Crowd is sheer energy from start to finish! A real test of stamina – which is all part of modern trumpet playing. Tom Adès’s piece presents the challenge of very demanding metric modulation. Even professional trumpeters have problems with that sort of thing.

But you know, today’s young players can tackle anything! It always amazes me. Pieces that once seemed impossible to play become standard repertoire.

Would you say the composers kept their familiar musical languages?
Absolutely. Those who know their music will easily hear the individual styles and stamps. And what excited me was how various pieces moved away from ‘traditional trumpetry’ to the creation of real atmosphere. James MacMillan’s Study is very mythic, Sally Beamish’s Burglars ultra-playful and Stuart MacRae’s Black Pearl – well – it’s very dark! Several composers gave me little tone pictures.

And are these musical languages approachable for young players?
Overall the collection is post-modern and eclectic. There’s none of the 1960s and 70s avant-garde about it. And everything is written with the trumpeter in mind. What we want to do is create an appetite for contemporary music so that young players look out for more. That helps ensure there’ll always be new music.

As usual with Spectrum, there’s an accompanying CD featuring all the pieces, played here by you. What’s the benefit of that?
From my teaching I know that these days young players like to hear the music they’re being asked to learn early on.

Making the recordings, with pianist Simon Wright, was a fabulous experience. A completely new work is still like wet clay and performers have a part in giving it final shape. We occasionally went back to the composers and asked if we could change this or that. We found Michael Nyman’s piece so relentlessly fast that we got his agreement to bring down the metronome marking!

Do you have any advice for teachers introducing these Spectrum pieces to their students?
Get students to consider what the music is trying to say. What’s the atmosphere? OK, you have to teach the technical side – and these pieces fit very well with the exercises students will be doing. But then you need to get away from these being just notes on a page and engage the imagination.

Is there a moment in your career when you saw the impact a new piece of music can have on an audience?
I recall playing James MacMillan’s Epiclesis in the Usher Hall as part of the Edinburgh Festival – he wasn’t so well known then. At the end you’d have thought Scotland had won the World Cup! The whole place erupted. The audience went wild. One of the most incredible experiences of my life!
Groups, games and learning together
Rachel Meredith

Whether to teach instrumental music individually or in groups is a subject which provokes plenty of discussion, and there are pros and cons to both approaches. My feeling is that young children enjoy learning in small groups. There are also good opportunities for ensemble work and games – less easy to manage in individual lessons.

Technical grounding
The important thing is not to allow good technical grounding to be negatively affected by the larger numbers. To encourage good posture and technique I use ‘triggers’, which form the technical basis of every lesson:

- Looking in the mirror – for a correct left-hand shape, the palm of the hand being the mirror;
- Trampoline – for a flexible, squashy bow hold;
- String pulling you up to the ceiling – for an upright but relaxed stance.
- The Suzuki method uses footprints (draw round the child’s feet) to produce good posture, with the left shoulder over the left foot. These can be useful and fun, and they avoid the front-facing, droopy violin which can otherwise occur.

Bowling
Once posture and bow hold are established, I go on to a series of bowing techniques on open strings, using names as memory aids:

- Aeroplane landing – lots of retake down bows with reminders to avoid frightening the passengers with any bumps;
- Rockets – retake up bows;
- Tortoises – slow bows of various duration;
- Kangaroos – bows that jump from heel to point;
- Ants – tremolo;
- Boeing 737 – varying bow speeds (7 seconds down, 3 up) with different numbers too. Valuable for early success in bow pacing.

Children also like to make up their own names, and this is a good way to ensure they remember and then practise these techniques.

I like to establish a confident use of the bow before starting the left hand. This tends to result in a better sound than starting with pizzicato and left hand. So early lessons involve warm ups, as above, and lots of open string rhythm work. At some point you can introduce notation. I’m very much in favour of the ‘play then read’ sequence, so technique is not compromised by decoding the notes.

In the very early stages I find that the E string and middle of the bow are the easiest places to start bowing, as the elbow is down and the bow naturally balanced. Once pupils are producing a focused sound, I encourage fuller bows, emphasising the ‘banana’ shape – a slight curve in the middle of the bow stroke that ensures equal contact with the string throughout the length of the bow.

It’s essential to explain and insist on correct elbow position from the start. There are various games that help this – the ‘rainbow’ that moves over all strings with carefully aligned elbow is a useful one. I also play a game where a pupil stands...
with their back to the group and we have to guess which string their bow is resting on, by looking at the elbow position.

The left hand
Moving on to the left hand, it’s vital that good hand position becomes second nature. Some methods spend a long time on the 1st finger, playing on each string before introducing the 2nd finger and so on. But this can result in a collapsed wrist, which is easier to avoid if all fingers are introduced fairly quickly. Reading also becomes more logical with this approach.

I’m in favour of the 4th finger being used early on to reinforce a good hand shape; 3rd position is a possible option, so the distance between 3rd and 4th fingers is more manageable. Sheila Nelson’s Tetratunes are useful here, with some tunes notated in 1st, 3rd and 4th positions – good for the ear and fingerboard geography.

You can encourage the flexibility of the left hand by using natural harmonics – fun and easy to find from an early stage. Confidence in moving around the fingerboard will also help with vibrato later on.

Technique, reading and listening
For me, the most enjoyable and productive lessons are those which involve technique, some reading, plus listening. Follow my leader is good for listening, with teacher or pupil being the leader. Choose a suitable series of notes (not too many) and pass calls and responses around the group. You can add variety by using different dynamics, articulation or parts of the bow.

When pupils are more confident with reading, games could include:
- Spot the mistakes;
- Join in when you can – teacher starts anywhere in the piece and pupils pick up as soon as they can;
- Pass the music – one pupil starts and the teacher calls out who should continue, going round the group.

Obviously many of the above can be adapted to work in individual lessons too, with the advantage that they can be paced to suit the individual child.

Rachel Meredith teaches upper strings. She is an ABRSM examiner and Bowed Strings syllabus selector.

Teaching tips for an individual approach
Jessica O’Leary
Teaching individual beginners can be fantastically challenging and rewarding. If we get it right, they will love music for their whole life and encourage their own children to learn. So these early lessons are crucial. We need to foster confidence, enthusiasm and parental support – then with skill and kindness we can transform a generation!

Posture
Establishing good posture now can help to prevent later problems. It is best for students to stand with feet hip width apart, soft knees and tummy, shoulders down and an imaginary string from head to ceiling.

The violin needs to rest on the collar bone with a shoulder rest, sponge (plus thick elastic band) or chamois leather. Otherwise, the violin slides and it feels like bowing on a moving target! I usually shape cheap sponges until the posture is settled. Some violins have unreasonably high bridges – painful for little fingers – so best to fix this straight away.

Developing confidence
Early lessons can start with singing and clapping games to develop good rhythm, pitch awareness and basic improvisation. This removes the anxiety of getting things wrong and helps develop sight-reading skills. Using elements from the next piece is then good preparation, working aurally first and then with sheet music. A mixture of easy memorising and reading will develop confidence – and encourage independent learning.

Bowing first
I address bowing before the left hand. Bowing firmly in the middle is most natural – fluid motions, not too slowly on open strings. Then extend to the top half [elbow hinging, parallel to bridge] and later to the bottom half [whole arm movement].

Even in the first few lessons, students should be able to achieve a clean tone with a relaxed arm. Swinging arms around rhythmically encourages relaxation while demonstration from the teacher develops awareness and understanding of sound.

Fun and games
I usually include lots of games on open strings in early lessons:
- Copy the rhythm;
- Answer me back;
- Guess the string – moving the right elbow precisely for string changes;
- Eyes closed;
- One leg;
- Draw in the air.

Backing tracks are useful here and you can use ABRSM’s Speedshifter to change tempi. Keep games short [two minutes] as muscles develop, and make sure students relax in between – while singing, note reading, clapping or listening to music – or as soon as arms or brains start to get tired!
Playing pieces
Choose pieces students like – they won’t play them at home otherwise. Perhaps a few different pieces, with some new ones each week.

I find that singing first, then playing gets the quickest and most fluid results. Adding strong open string rhythms over a CD will help to engage students as they develop their bowing tone. You could also ask students to draw pictures or make up words to the first phrases of a piece to open up their imagination.

No matter how simple the music, firm rhythm, good tone, dynamics and confidence are essential – some memorising is desirable too.

The left hand
I introduce the left hand when the following are secure:
- Clear tone – all fingers curled and relaxed;
- Sense of character – dynamics;
- Crotchets, quavers and minimis.

Other things can go out of focus while the new skill is developing, but a little open string work will help to regain balance.

Minimum finger pressure is needed if the bowing is solid. I like to use all four fingers, singing first and then lightly placing the fingers. This gives a proper hand shape and sets things up well for quick progress.

Try using octave harmonics to allow students to ‘feel the weight needed’. Or sliding up and down (‘polishing the strings’), which gives the correct left-arm angle and creates a terrific feeling of freedom. This also helps with early vibrato and removes the fear of shifting that often affects progress around Grade 5.

At this early stage, I use basic solfège on a movable Do and interchange it with other options. For example, Three Blind Mice: Me, Re, Do; C, B, A; or 2, 1, 0. You can play the same tunes on different strings or in different positions. However, beware of just using numbers as students think everything’s okay if the ‘correct fingers’ are going down. Under pressure, this can create the wrong key.

Encouraging performance
Playing with friends and feeling proud of their achievements is vital for students’ development. Start small by asking them to play a few favourite, easy bars while the next student is unpacking. Gradually move up to a whole piece, then to playing for a small group, in an assembly or informal concert.

Finally think about competitions or exams. At each stage monitor and observe your students’ playing. If they don’t play in tune, is more singing needed or is their left hand stiff? No dynamics? Is it bow division/speeds or characterisation?

Involving parents
I encourage parents to leave the violin out at home for easy practice, loosening the bow each time and leaving the shoulder rest on. I teach them how to use the fine tuners (never pegs), singing the notes from a piano or tuner on their phone. You could also invite parents into lessons occasionally to quietly take notes.

A quick call home mid-term can help to keep parents’ awareness high. You can highlight potential ability, talk about expectations from both sides and give details of concerts. Building relationships in this way helps with student motivation and increases practice. Remember, however, that we, as teachers, have the biggest influence on our students’ love of music.

Jessica O’Leary is a performer and teacher. She is an ABRSM examiner and Bowed Strings syllabus moderator.

Getting started with ABRSM...

Violin Star
Taking the youngest violinist from beginner level to around Grade 2, Violin Star is full of inspiring and imaginative repertoire and provides an ideal introduction to the musical skills and techniques needed in the early stages.

www.abrsm.org/violinstar

Music Medals
Our Music Medal assessments provide goals and rewards at the early stages of learning an instrument. Designed with group teaching in mind, they are available to all learners in the UK and for a wide range of instruments, including violin.

There are five levels of Medal – Copper, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum. For each Medal there are three sections: playing an individual line in an ensemble; playing a solo; and one of four tests chosen from Sight-reading, Make a tune, Call & response or Question & answer.

With the teacher acting as Teacher-Assessor, Music Medals are taken in a familiar environment at a time that’s right for everyone. They allow pupils to play to their strengths and perform at their best.

www.abrsm.org/musicmedals

Violin Prep Test
The Prep Test is designed for pupils who have been learning an instrument for about six to nine months. It covers the skills being developed at this stage: pitch and rhythm; controlled and even playing; accuracy and tone quality; and musical perception.

With the Prep Test, there is no pass or fail – it is designed to be relaxed and enjoyable and to give candidates a real sense of achievement. At the end of the test, candidates receive a certificate which includes encouraging and helpful comments from the examiner.

Working towards this early goal encourages the development of good technique and all-round musicianship. It is also the perfect introduction to the experience of taking an exam.

www.abrsm.org/preptest
Participation and belonging

As a charity promoting musical participation, Music for Youth is an organisation we are proud to support, as Rhian Morgan finds out.

Making musical involvement possible
As a teenage musician growing up in Leicestershire, Judith Webster remembers enjoying every minute of the experience. Violin lessons, concerts, county orchestras and tours were all on offer and part of everyday life. But today, as Chief Executive of Music for Youth, a UK-based music education charity providing free access to performance and audience opportunities for young musicians, Judith wonders how different life might have been if she’d played, say, the bass guitar or another instrument which didn’t have so many organised opportunities for music making.

‘A big part of being a musician is the involvement – playing with other people,’ she says. ‘And that’s exactly what we are doing with our Regional Festivals. With the backing of ABRSM, these events give more than 40,000 young musicians the chance to perform in front of an audience each year, whatever their instrument, age or standard.’

Music for Youth and ABRSM
ABRSM has a long-standing relationship with Music for Youth – sponsoring their Regional Festivals for 20 years. The charity’s work is split into four areas: the Regional and National Festivals, the Schools Prom and Showcase Music, where young musicians take centre stage at major political, business, industry and education events.

To Lincoln Abbotts, Director of Strategic Development at ABRSM, the Regional Festivals provide ‘something extra special’. ‘It’s an opportunity for groups of all sizes and musical styles to perform with and to each other,’ he says ‘and also to benefit from expert feedback. Each year these unique events bring together so many young musicians at venues all over the UK in a real celebration of musical skills and talents.’

Quantity, quality and variety
Music for Youth stages dozens of festivals and concerts each year. Just a glance at its website shows the huge number of events on offer. In February alone, there were festivals at Aldeburgh, Southampton and Gateshead, not to mention a performance at the Royal Albert Hall.

There are the expected bands, choirs and orchestras, but there are also valuable opportunities for rock, pop and urban instrumentalists and singers, and for performers of world, folk and roots, traditional, jazz and international music. Ensembles, meanwhile, can encompass anything from 20 clarinetists, to a collective of junk percussion players, to a group of early music performers.

Creating the feelgood factor
Judith well understands the excitement these young performers feel when they walk out on to that stage, whether at a top London venue or in a school hall in their home town.

‘I still find time to play the violin in orchestras and I still absolutely love it,’ she says enthusiastically. So what is it – and in particular what is it about Music for Youth festivals – that creates that special feelgood factor for performers and audiences alike?

‘We get some amazing feedback from performers, music leaders, teachers and parents,’ explains Judith. ‘It’s popular because there are local opportunities, which are easy for people to get to, yet everyone is part of a much, much bigger, national movement. It’s a supportive environment where you can see what other people are doing and aspire to achieve what they have done.’

Skills for life
But, she believes, it’s not just about the music. ‘Of course, being involved is a big part of this and taking part really has an effect on your whole person, on your identity. As a former music therapist, I’ve seen how music can help you develop an empathy with others; you really learn to express yourself.

‘I feel so strongly that the skills you learn in music, to whatever standard, help you on your life journey,’ she adds. ‘Music gives you hooks you can hang things on.’

The sense of being part of something special while gaining skills for life, say many of those who have performed, is exactly what Music for Youth gives to everyone who takes part in their Regional Festivals.

About the Regional Festivals
- The Music for Youth Regional Festivals are for groups of two or more musicians, based in the UK, aged 21 and under, performing music to any standard.
- It’s free to enter and you can perform in any style.
- Performers get the chance to: play live to an audience; receive feedback from Music for Youth Music Mentors; watch performances from other local groups.

To find out more, visit www.mfy.org.uk.
Recording in progress

We take a look behind the scenes at a recent recording session of pieces from our forthcoming Cello syllabus.

Over eight days in December and February cellists, pianists, producers and engineers gathered at the Yehudi Menuhin School and the Royal College of Music. They were there to record every piece from our forthcoming new Cello syllabus.

Later in the year we will be releasing these recordings on CD and as audio downloads. They are designed to provide an informative and inspiring resource for teachers and learners as they explore new repertoire and prepare for exams.

 Altogether six cellists and six pianists were involved in the project. Between them they performed 164 pieces and created just over ten hours of recorded music.

 Repertoire ranged from the simplest, anonymous French Bourrée at Grade 1 to the Albéniz Tango set for Grade 8.

 In these photos cellist Tim Wells and pianist Dominique Wong-Min are performing works from Grades 2 and 5, under the watchful eye of our expert engineers, producers and music editors.

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It’s tempting to think that the main value of the mark form is in the marks, and we know that this is, understandably, the first thing that candidates, teachers and others look for! However, the real value of an ABRSM mark form is in the feedback and insight contained in the examiner’s comments, written at the time, in response to the candidate’s live performance on the day, in the exam room.

The mark form provides a connection between the candidate, the ABRSM marking criteria and the examiner, with the comments showing how the examiner has used the criteria as the basis of their assessment.

Describing and explaining
In our marking criteria we set out the essential ingredients of music making which we assess through our exams – pitch, time, tone, shape and performance. By referring to the candidate’s control of these ‘ingredients’, the examiner highlights the main strengths and weaknesses which came across during the exam. In this way, the mark form provides candidates with a description of their exam performance. It also explains how the combination of strengths and weaknesses heard on the day leads to the marks they have been awarded.

In turn, teachers and candidates can use this feedback as a helpful springboard for progression – it highlights potential areas for future focus and development.

‘...the real value of an ABRSM mark form is in the feedback and insight contained in the examiner’s comments...’

A special memento
Along with its relationship to the marking criteria, the mark form does also have a more personal aspect. It is written by hand, during the exam by an examiner who wants the candidate to do their very best. In this way it provides a special link between the candidate and the musical expert who listened to their exam performance. For many candidates this hand-written mark form goes on to become a special memento of their musical progress and achievement.

Marking from the pass mark
ABRSM examiners mark up or down from the pass mark. This is unlike so-called ‘penalty marking’ – where a candidate starts with full credit, but then loses marks each time they make particular mistakes. It is also unlike ‘from zero’ marking, where a candidate begins their exam with no credit and has to build marks up from a ‘blank page’.

Strengths and weaknesses
In our practical exams, the examiner is simultaneously evaluating a candidate’s strengths and weaknesses as they play or sing. There is no fixed ‘tariff’ of plus or minus points. Instead, these strengths and weaknesses are weighed in the balance in relation to one another. The pass mark is used as a ‘neutral’ starting point from which examiners arrive at a rounded
assessment of a candidate’s overall musical performance.

All five musical elements described in our marking criteria – pitch, time, tone, shape and performance – together contribute to the mark for a piece or song. So, potentially, any of them can become a significant influence, upwards or downwards, during a candidate’s playing or singing. This is why our examiners mark from the pass mark throughout the exam, using the criteria relevant to each section.

A reliable and rounded assessment
Because our marking criteria refer to five fundamental areas of music making, we train our examiners to base their assessment on these, and to reflect this through their comments on the mark form. Using our extensive library of recorded examples, with indicative marks and ideal comments, we are able to give trainee examiners plenty of practice in this.

We want our examiners to provide candidates with a reliable and rounded assessment of their exam performance, balancing strengths and weaknesses and showing their combined effect on the musical outcome. To help examiners achieve this, we train them to refer to at least three areas of the criteria in their comments for each piece or song, focusing on those which have the strongest influence on the mark.

Matching comments to marks
We also emphasise the importance of matching comments to marks, so that the number in the marks column is explained and supported by the examiner’s written comments. For teachers and candidates, we want the mark form to provide an effective description of what happened in the exam. Ideally, when you read a mark form comment, you should almost be able to hear the original playing or singing in your head!

Ongoing reviews
As well as training before becoming an examiner, we carry out ongoing reviews of our examiners’ marking throughout their time with ABRSM. All our examiners have their mark forms thoroughly reviewed and appraised by an experienced ‘reader’ at two-yearly intervals, and the feedback examiners receive from this process guides and supports them in their continuing professional development.

Checking and quality assurance
As the mark form is so important to teachers and candidates, we pay particular attention to ensuring that all our mark forms are of consistent high quality. Training examiners in writing effective, supportive comments is one part of this, but we also check mark forms once they are returned to our offices.

At the same time, we record all the marks awarded, which gives us a broad picture of each examiner’s marking, and highlights any trends. This also provides an overview of ABRSM marking more generally, helping us to maintain standards of marking accuracy and consistency across different grades and instruments, and over time.

‘...when you read a mark form comment, you should almost be able to hear the original playing or singing in your head!’

Developing syllabuses
Finally, the checking process allows us to track the pieces and songs candidates are choosing to perform in their exams. We can then use this information when developing new syllabuses – it helps us to select pieces and songs that candidates will enjoy learning and performing.

Creating a positive experience
Insisting on these checks and reviews means that it can take up to two to three weeks before we can issue mark forms. We do understand that candidates are anxious to receive their results as quickly as possible, but we also believe this checking process is vital. It helps us to ensure that candidates receive mark forms of the highest quality, and which make a positive contribution to their overall exam experience.

Summing up
So, the mark form provides candidates with tangible evidence and recognition of their musical achievement, written at the time of the exam by a thoroughly trained musical expert. Not only is it a source of evaluative feedback about a candidate’s playing or singing during the exam, but it also provides them with potentially valuable ‘feed-forward’ for their future musical learning and progression.

To find out what happens to mark forms – from exam room to delivery – take a look at our Journey of a Mark Form film at www.abrsm.org/results.

To read our marking criteria for graded music exams (instruments and singing), go to www.abrsm.org/markingcriteria.
Pitch, time, tone, shape and performance are at the heart of all music. They also form the basis of our marking criteria. In the second of a series of articles exploring these elements, composer Judith Bingham and flautist and conductor Richard Davis share their thoughts on time and tone.

**Time: the wider relationship of time with music**

Music is a wonderful garden bordered and hedged by time. There is no getting away from time in music – one cannot be separated from the other.

**The composer**

For a start, the piece of music represents a certain period of time in the composer’s life, like a diary. That might be a week, but almost certainly more like a month, or months, or even years. In that time immense events can happen to the composer as in any person’s life - personal loss, illness, marriage, the birth of a child, war, exile, imprisonment. Or there can just be the day-to-day relationship of the composer with a succession of blank pieces of paper, punctuated by meals, walks, arguments or sleep.

Whatever the case, the music in some way documents that progression of time, and in 99.9% of cases, contracts the time a piece took to write into a fraction of that in music. A piece that takes five minutes to be played may have taken two months to write. One complicated bar in several parts may well have taken an hour to write. Every note has been thought about – its meaning, its articulation, its dynamic – and yet it may whizz past in a nanosecond.

**The listener**

In the same way, a composer and their music occupies a space in the life of the listener, like an entry in their diary. Here, time becomes elastic. A long piece may speed past or a relatively short piece may seem interminable. Tiny pieces can be life changing. The Silver Swan by Orlando Gibbons lasts only 1 minute and 13 seconds on my recording and yet the stillness, sadness and intense truthfulness of the music make you experience each second in a way that we rarely do in real life. In this piece, every second seems elongated and is a wide space in which there is time to have several different thoughts.

**Pulse and tempo**

One of the first decisions a composer has to make relates to the time signature. This may seem a simple decision. Is the piece in 3 or 4, is it a dance rhythm like 6/8 or a march in 2/4? But all the time signature generally does is lay down a pulse, like a heartbeat.

Some music does stick to that pulse – think of the famous Mozart C major piano sonata (K. 545) which has no syncopation and often seems childlike in its adherence to the tempo. However, it was written for beginners and Mozart may have deliberately written a piece that needed to be played rigidly in time to achieve its effect!

Many pieces immediately start to pull around the time within the framework of the pulse. The best players and conductors know how to give a sense of that pulse without rigidly sticking to it. This is a question of poise and sensitivity in well-known music, but in new music establishing the right tempo can be very difficult.

For the composer, conveying the subtlety of time manipulation in musical notation is endlessly challenging. Even setting a metronome mark can cause problems, as what seems like the right tempo mark in your living room can be quite wrong in a large space, such as a cathedral. And many conductors, who are generally highly energetic individuals, are influenced by their own heartbeats and metabolism. They may play music faster without even noticing.

**The life of a piece**

It takes empathy and thought to feel the deep beating heart of the music’s own metabolism. This generally only comes with time and repeated performances. Hopefully, with those repeated performances, the piece itself moves forward in time, while the creator and performers stay in the past.

Each performance refreshes the piece, and adds a sort of barnacle of human experience to its side. It does not remain the
same, any more than a living being does. As it ages, it can fall in and out of favour, find itself played on completely different instruments, get itself lost in libraries and attics, and be pored over by music historians and students.

In its survival through time, like a spaceship on a long journey to unknown planets, the music carries human meaning to people its creator could never have known.

Judith Bingham is known for her many choral works. Her compositions also include pieces for orchestra, brass band, various chamber groups and solo instruments. She has written music for the choirs and organs of churches and cathedrals around the world, while her latest work is an anthem for the reinterment of Richard III.

Tone: the importance of tone and creating a beautiful sound

Even if you possess the most natural musical phrasing or an amazing technique, it may not be quite enough if your sound is unappealing. Beauty of sound, in many ways, is the most immediately appreciated aspect of any musician’s performance. Think of tone as your musical shop window – how you display yourself to the public. If your tone is beautiful then the listener will be more readily drawn into your performance.

Experimenting with sound

The problem with beauty is that it is subjective – often governed by styles and cultures. And, it is also difficult for us to hear how we truly sound. It is essential, therefore, for students to have someone who can listen to them regularly as they experiment to create their unique tone.

Teachers need to describe to students how their tone is ‘coming over’. Sometimes a student may like their sound while the teacher does not! At other times both teacher and student might love the quality but the teacher may comment that it doesn’t project or resonate enough.

If students continue to experiment, with the guidance of their teacher, they will begin to understand how to replicate a variety of beautiful timbres. Once this is achieved they will have a palette of colours with which to paint their musical picture.

All this beauty, though, is false and unusable if the notes are out of tune. Intonation and beauty must be thought of as one – running in tandem. The harmonic structure of every note must be in tune with itself (resonating in sympathy) but also in tune with its neighbouring notes. Then, and only then, will the sound ring out, project and be beautiful.

Approaches to practice

It is useful for students to isolate their tone practice, even if only for a few minutes a day. They should first recreate yesterday’s sounds and then try to improve on them.

Encourage students to think of tone practice as putting a ‘microscope’ to their sound. Students need to ask: is that the most beautiful sound I have ever made? If not, try again. And when they finish the tone part of their practice, they shouldn’t then ignore the beauty of their sound. Technical practice – studies, scales, arpeggios – should also be tone practice.

As musicians we continue to learn and we must also continue to practise our tone. The muscles we use as musicians are not naturally formed. We are not born with a heightened dexterity in our fingers or with extreme muscular strength in our embouchure or a sensitive flexibility in our bowing arm. These things take time to hone and every day that we don’t play, our muscles will begin to return to their natural state.

An athlete wouldn’t dream of running a competitive race without months of training. In the same way, musicians must consider a similar routine of disciplined work, one that covers all aspects of musical playing and singing – including tone.

Richard Davis is a conductor, flute player and author of Becoming an Orchestral Musician: a Guide for Aspiring Professionals. He is Senior Flute Tutor at the Royal Northern College of Music and a coach for the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain.

Discover how pitch, time, tone, shape and performance form the basis of our marking criteria at www.abrsm.org/markeringcriteria.
Getting started with jazz

Mark Armstrong reflects on the value of teaching jazz and offers some practical ways to begin.

At last year’s ABRSM Teachers’ Conference I co-presented an introductory jazz session with Alexander L’Estrange. Feedback from teachers showed much enthusiasm for jazz but also trepidation about getting started. Here, I hope to go some way towards encouraging the former and dispelling the latter.

Being involved in jazz education has taught me at least as much about the music as it has my pupils. I would encourage everyone to be open minded and honest about the fact that education is a journey of discovery for both pupil and teacher. The ability to say ‘I don’t know the answer, let’s find out together’ is the mark of a confident, not an ignorant teacher!

As the world of commercial and professional music evolves it seems clear that the skills needed for jazz performance, in particular a strong understanding of rhythm and a sense of freedom and flexibility beyond the notation, are those that will mark future players out from the crowd.

There are many routes to a life-long enjoyment of jazz available for players, singers and listeners of all kinds, but some early understanding of the style can only enrich the experience for everyone.

The first step

So, let’s get practical. A crucial first step for you and your students is to develop a strong internal sense of swing and rhythm. However, do remember that we are all climbing that particular mountain and few have reached the summit of perfect time.

There are some words you need to know. We refer to ‘groove’ and ‘feel’ in jazz and these terms are mainly interchangeable.

Add the vocalised subdivision one beat at a time until all four are in place. This makes you think like a drummer and synchronises an internalised sense of pulse.

For swing, although the ‘dul’ triplet placement is used in some advanced rhythms, for now think of it as a spacer to ensure correct placement of the ‘AH’ off-beat. The degree of accent and long-short unevenness in swing can change according to tempo and individual style, but triplets is a good starting-point.

Moving on

The next step could be to apply this to a simple 12-bar blues melody. Figure 2 provides an example.

The melody deliberately uses different starting-points for each of the three phrases: beat one; the ‘and-of’ one; and beat two. When not playing on the first beat, think (or say) ‘Huh!’ to mark and bounce off the silent first beat – don’t be shy! Each phrase also includes a ‘push’ into bars 3, 7 and 11. All of this shows some of the syncopated variety in jazz rhythm.

Beginning to improvise

To begin improvising on this tune, simply use the notes of the melody. There is no need to address the harmony for now – the melody notes will all more or less work over all the chords in the sequence. For added ‘spice’ try transposing the melody up a minor third to create another set of improvising notes (and a harmony part).

At this stage it is more important to develop a secure confidence in note placement than to address harmonic complexity. There are some great examples of famous jazz solos that use a limited number of pitches. Listen to Miles Davis’s solo on Blues by Five from the album Cookin’ with the Miles Davis Quintet. This is a masterclass in how the principles of simple note-choice and really effective rhythmic placement can be used to create a fantastic ‘in the pocket’ solo.
Using the pentatonic scale
Figure 3 provides another exercise, this time using a straight [even] quaver feel. The notes in the top line are a minor pentatonic scale. To begin with you can teach these aurally to your student, out of time. Then you could introduce the printed rhythm.

After this, try an echo game with a metronome or tapping your foot as you play. Play a short and simple echo that fits over eight beats, for your pupil to repeat in time. To start with, limit these to the first two notes and use a simple rhythm but with a little syncopation. Try varying starting places, as described above for Figure 2.

Gradually add more notes until you are using all five separate pitches plus the upper tonic quite freely. However, always finish your phrase with a long note or some rest to allow processing time before the echo playback!

Once your pupil feels confident about this you can reverse the process and ask them to play echoes for you to repeat. After this, you could play the accompaniment and ask your pupil to improvise a series of two-bar phrases using the pentatonic scale they now know. This is a great way to encourage fluency in improvisation. It also develops a sense of harmonic rhythm and phrase length, which forms an important part of structuring improvised melodies.

Eventually you can use the principle of the ‘avoid note’ – the fact that B flat sounds better over bars 1 and 3 than over 2 and 4. This begins to introduce harmonic awareness, but without too much complex detail and in a way that stresses aural understanding.

I hope this short article has put some fundamental jazz concepts in a form that can be of practical use in your teaching. Embracing these simple ideas and sticking with them until they are fully internalised and comfortably achieved can be tremendously beneficial, not just for jazz playing but for all kinds of music.

Mark Armstrong is a jazz and commercial trumpet player and composer/arranger. He is Artistic Director of the National Youth Jazz Orchestra, Jazz Professor at the Royal College of Music and an ABRSM examiner.

ABRSM Jazz exams for a range of instruments are available at selected centres. You can buy ABRSM jazz books and CDs from retailers worldwide and from www.abrsm.org/shop.
The benefits of early pedalling

I enjoyed reading the article on ‘Pedal Power’ (Libretto 2014:2). I teach piano pedalling as early as possible. Children love the effect they can get. I also find it helps children who swing their feet because they sit so far back on the piano stool that their feet don't touch the ground. To use the pedal they have to push the stool back a bit and sit on the edge to keep their heel on the floor, encouraging a good sitting position.

I start teaching pedalling using the A Dozen a Day books by Edna Mae Burnam. We begin as soon as they reach the exercise in Book Two which has the C triad followed by the ‘Big Friendly Giant’ chord (B F G – thanks to Roald Dahl for this!) with one hand at a time. I teach them to put the pedal down first, play the first chord, then play the second chord, then say ‘up down’, play the next chord, ‘up down’ etc. It can be done as slowly as they need to get it correct.

I then use the pedal in every exercise with chords in the Dozen a Day books and gradually they get the ‘up down’ movement in the correct place on the note. When we come to use it in a piece they have no problem at all, even as early as Grade 1.

Once the basic sustaining pedal technique is instinctive, it is easy to teach the other aspects of pedalling later on. When I take on non-beginner pupils who have not done any pedalling, they tend to play too fast to get the ‘up down’ action in the correct place. They come up with the chord and go down on the next and the finger fluency is also affected.

Some years ago I taught an adult who had reached Grade 3 as a child, given up and then just played for her own pleasure afterwards. She had not been taught pedalling properly. We spent hours working on it but whenever she knew a piece well enough to relax into it, the pedalling went haywire again! So I firmly believe in teaching pedalling as early as possible.

JO DOLMAN

Percussion concerns

I am concerned by the lack of reference to percussion in Libretto. I started using the ABRSM Percussion syllabus when living and teaching in London in the early 90s. I put a number of students through your exam system and was greatly impressed by the quality of the examiners and their appraisal of and comments about my students. Likewise, after returning to Australia, I used the syllabus in all the schools where I taught.

However, Libretto has increasingly made less and less reference to percussion. To ignore possibly the most dynamic and important instrumental group of the past century is really to be deaf to the music of our time. Does this mean that ABRSM does not recognise percussion as an instrumental area anymore? Where is percussion, such as vibraphone, in your otherwise excellent Jazz syllabus? And what has happened to the syllabus for drum kit?

PETER FARMER

ABRSM responds

At this moment our Syllabus Department is working on completely revising the Percussion syllabus.

We are planning a new structure with more varied and flexible pathways. For example, a marimba player could focus just on their instrument all the way up to Grade 8. We are also looking at different routes for orchestral instruments. Alongside this, we intend to publish a wide variety of new resources for percussionists, such as accompanied orchestral excerpts.

We did pilot some ideas around a possible drum kit syllabus a few years ago and received positive and useful feedback from participants. While this wasn’t something we were able to take forward at the time, the pilot feedback will be a great help as we plan our syllabuses in the future.

We are still at the development stage for the new Percussion syllabus. However, we will be piloting some of the materials and syllabus content later this year and will be looking for teachers to help us with this. Then, in the run up to the release of the new syllabus we will be exploring percussion teaching and learning, and the syllabus itself in Libretto.

In the meantime, we would like to find out what teachers think about our current Percussion syllabus, and what they would like to see in the new syllabus. Please share your views at www.abrsm.org/percussionreview.

Write to Lucy North, Libretto editor, with your views. You can email libretto@abrsm.ac.uk or send letters to Libretto, ABRSM, 24 Portland Place, London W1B 1LU, UK. We may edit letters and emails before publication.
Your views in the correct place on the note. When we teaching, resources and professional and experiences to ideas on readers think on a range of music general. We want to find out what ABRSM and music education in slowly as they need to get it correct.

Second chord, then say 'up down', play the hand at a time. I teach them to put the pedal by the 'Big Friendly Giant' chord (B F G – in Book Two which has the C triad followed). We begin as soon as they reach the exercise 'Power' (Libretto 2014:2). I teach piano I enjoyed reading the article on 'Pedal The benefits of early pedallingJO DOLMAN pedalling as early as possible. Children love encouraging a good sitting position.

On the edge to keep their heel on the floor, they have to push the stool back a bit and sit so far back on the piano stool that their feet don't touch the ground. To use the pedal technique is instinctive, it is easy to teach pedalling properly. We spent hours working afterwards. She had not been taught the effect they can get. I also find it helps to Libretto, ABRSM, 24 Portland Place, London W1B 1LU, UK. We may edit the correct place. They come up with the have not done any pedalling, they tend to play too fast to get the 'up down' action in when she knew a piece well and whenever she knew a piece well. She had not been taught the problem at all, even as early as Grade 1. Once the basic sustaining pedal has happened to the syllabus for drum kit? Percussion in Libretto. I started using the percussion, such as vibraphone, in your instrumental area anymore? Where is at this moment our Syllabus Department is working on completely revising the syllabus. At this moment our Syllabus Department is working on completely revising the Percussion syllabus. At this moment our Syllabus Department is working on completely revising the ABRSM Percussion syllabus when living and Australia, I used the syllabus in all the current Percussion syllabus, and what to Libretto, ABRSM, 24 Portland Place, London W1B 1LU, UK. We may edit and syllabus content later this year and we will be piloting some of the materials and received positive and useful feedback from participants. While this wasn’t possible drum kit syllabus a few years ago has happened to the syllabus for drum kit? However, Libretto has increasingly made for percussionists, such as accompanied orchestral excerpts.

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We believe that good foundations in performance and theory create rounded and confident musicians. That’s why our exams and assessments are the first choice for many.

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