



AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND CORPS

Audition Guide

Thank you for your interest in joining the Australian Army Band Corps (AABC). This guide is intended to answer any questions you may have about the audition and will detail all of the procedures involved in the process.

A host will be appointed for you, and will guide you through the process on the day. This person will also act as a point of contact and be able to handle any additional queries you may have.

The audition usually takes place over an extended period, in most cases two days, and includes five basic parts:

- a. section rehearsal;
- b. full band rehearsal;
- c. practical audition (including technical work);
- d. theory assessment; and
- e. aural assessment.

Performance ability is the main criteria for determining suitability for employment, however the additional assessments give a clearer overall picture of your capabilities. This assists us in determining the appropriate entry level and identifying individual training requirements.

All candidates accepted as Australian Regular Army musicians must attend the Defence Force School of Music (DFSM) on completion of recruit training to undergo Corps Indoctrination Training (CIT).

The audition process comprises performance based assessments and written/theoretical components. Each are detailed in the sections that follow.

PERFORMANCE BASED ASSESSMENTS

SECTION REHEARSAL

In the section rehearsal you will demonstrate your ability in a small group environment. The relevant Section Leader would run this session and it would typically involve the music used in the full band rehearsal. It may take place either before or after the full band rehearsal.

Some instruments do not form part of a section eg we don't have oboe or bass guitar sections. Where section rehearsal is not possible, due to instrumental constraints eg no section to rehearse with, then a small group rehearsal (Woodwind Quintet/Rhythm section) may be more appropriate.

This session usually lasts 45 minutes to an hour, and allows us to hear you in a variety of styles. The assessor would be looking for your ability to blend with the other musicians in the section, play in a range of styles and to follow musical directions.

FULL BAND REHEARSAL

The Full Band Rehearsal would ideally follow on from section rehearsal. This rehearsal creates an opportunity for us to see you in the situation most relevant to your employment in the AABC.

We would be looking for the ability to balance, blend, play with good intonation and time, and follow the conductor's directions.

PRACTICAL AUDITION

Practical audition would follow all other assessments (including written) so that a clear picture of you is emerging as your presentation begins. Typically this would include:

- a. prepared works;
- b. technical work;
- c. sight-reading; and
- d. 24-hour list (optional).

Prepared works

Candidates select three contrasting works of a standard appropriate to their perceived entry standard. As a guide, candidates should choose works between 8th grade and Licentiate AMEB.

The minimum standard for a Band Corps musician is a performance standard equivalent to AMEB AMusA. Players who fail to meet this standard may still be accepted into training positions for either Basic Musician Course (BMC) or on-job training (OJT) via Corps Induction.

Technical work

Candidates are expected to present technical work in all keys. Major, melodic and harmonic minor scales are required, along with arpeggio, broken arpeggio, dominant and diminished sevenths, and broken dominant and diminished sevenths.

Whilst any format for the technical work is acceptable, it will need to be presented over two octaves (where possible within the range) both ascending and descending using varied articulations. Where three octaves are possible within the range these may also be required. In addition to these, candidates may be asked to perform chromatic scales or sustained tones of the assessor's choice.

The assessor will ask for individual pieces of technical work from the required list.

Sight-reading

Candidates will be asked to perform sight-reading to demonstrate their ability in this area. As a supplement to the sight reading, a 24-hour list may be used. A player's ability to prepare works at short notice is arguably as valuable as pure sight-reading in our context.

24-hour list

If a two-day model is adopted, candidates may be given music on day one that is to be prepared and presented on day two. This allows a candidate with average sight-reading ability to demonstrate their ability to prepare works at short notice. This component is optional and would be used in conjunction with, rather than in place of, sight-reading.

WRITTEN COMPONENTS

Performance ability is the main criteria for determining the suitability of an applicant. To give a clearer overall picture of your capabilities and knowledge, additional assessments assist in determining the appropriate entry level while identifying individual training requirements.

THEORY ASSESSMENT

There are three components to this assessment:

- a. general rudiments;
- b. harmony and musicianship; and
- c. general questionnaire.

The first two components should take approximately one hour each. The general questionnaire is completed before the day of the audition and should be provided either prior to, or at the start of day one.

General rudiments

This assessment covers the candidate's basic knowledge of musical theory. It covers the base level of musical general knowledge expected of a musician in the AABC. Candidates with limited knowledge in general rudiments may need to complete theory modules from the DFSM. Depending upon performance in other areas it may be deemed appropriate that this is completed as part of the BMC. In the case of exceptional performers, these competencies may be gained prior to enlistment and assessed during CIT.

Harmony and musicianship

This assessment deals with the slightly more advanced areas of voice-leading, four-part writing and musical form. Candidates with good performance in all other areas could be encouraged to develop these skills prior to enlistment, yet typically this would be completed during CIT.

Copies of the DFSM Theory packages can be used as study guides and are available from AABC units via your host.

AURAL ASSESSMENT

The aural assessment comprises two parts:

- a. Group assessment: conducted under assessment conditions from a CD. It includes interval recognition, chord progression recognition, melodic and rhythmic dictation. A sample of the assessment items is provided to give you an idea of how this assessment will be conducted.
- b. Individual assessment: conducted one on one, with the candidate required to display various components such as sight singing (sol-fa is preferred), singing intervals above or below given notes, rhythmic reading, 'singing and clapping' and 'conducting and singing'.