



# AUSTRALIAN ARMY BAND CORPS GUIDE TO AUDITION/RECITAL - 2015



# Introduction to your Audition

## The Audition Process

1. Congratulations on taking this first step in becoming an Army Musician. The audition is just one step in the Defence Force Recruiting process. The information and requirements for the audition may seem overwhelming, but it really is a simple process that allows us to see if you are suitable to become an Army Musician as well as allowing you to participate in the day to day life of an Army Musician to see if it really is what you are after.
2. The audition process is made up of a number of stages. These stages are:
  - a. interview with the Music Director of your local band (you should have already completed this stage)
  - b. individual performance recital, where you will be required to perform a recital, sight reading and common band excerpts
  - c. ensemble rehearsal audition, where you will rehearse with smaller groups within the band, including your instrumental section or group, jazz group of varying sizes or rock band
  - d. full band rehearsal.

## The Recital

### Recital performance levels

3. The Army Musician has three different performance levels. These levels are called Musician Grade One, Musician Grade Two and Musician Grade Three. Prior to your audition, you should choose, in consultation with your local area band's Music Director, the level at which you wish to be assessed against. The repertoire lists containing the requirements for these levels should have also been explained and supplied to you along with this guide.
4. Should you be applying for entry as an Army Reserve Musician, the minimum job standard is Musician Grade 1, whilst the minimum job standard for a Regular Army Musician is Musician Grade 2. You can be accepted into both the Army Reserve and Regular Army at one level lower, but you will be required to attain the minimum standard within 24 months for the Army Reserve and 12 months for the Regular Army. There is one exception to this standard – a vocalist will only be recruited at job standard (Musician Grade 2).
5. Most applicants can also choose to be assessed against either a classical or a commercial stream. Classical stream does not refer to what is termed the classical period, but rather refers to art music produced in, or rooted in, the traditions of Western liturgical and secular music, encompassing a broad period from roughly the 11th century to present times. Commercial stream includes styles from all areas of contemporary popular music. This term encompasses jazz, pop, blues, soul, country, folk, and rock styles. **Note**, classical stream for Saxophone is only for AR musicians. Commercial stream for Saxophone is only for ARA. For musicians transferring from AR to ARA on Saxophone a commercial barrier assessment is to be conducted.

6. Table One contains these details:

Instrument	Commercial	Classical	Instrument	Commercial	Classical
Flute/Piccolo	No	Yes	Bass Trombone	Yes	Yes
Oboe	No	Yes	Euphonium	No	Yes
Clarinet	Yes	Yes	Tuba	No	Yes
Saxophones	Yes	Yes/No	Tuned Percussion	Yes	Yes
Bassoon	No	Yes	Drum Kit	Yes	No
Horn	No	Yes	Guitar	Yes	No
Trumpet	Yes	Yes	Bass Guitar	Yes	No
Trombone	Yes	Yes	Keyboard	Yes	No
Vocalist	Yes	No			

**Table One – Commercial/Classical Requirements**

### Prerequisites

7. There are no prerequisite requirements for sitting a recital assessment.

### Recognition of prior learning

8. As there are no civilian equivalents to Army's Musician grades, all candidates must sit a recital assessment to be awarded a pay grade. Other aspects undertaken during Initial Employment Training, such as theory and aural may be considered for advanced standing. If you wish to apply for advanced standing, you will need to supply current evidence that you hold an equivalent qualification. Evidence of these qualifications must be in the form of a certified copy of your certificate and must include a final transcript of studies from the institution. Further information on this procedure can be given to you by the Music Director of your local band.

9. The timings for each performance recital are shown below.

Qualification Title	Assessment length	Duration of pieces
Musician Grade 1	40 minutes	30 – 35 minutes
Musician Grade 2	55 minutes	45 – 50 minutes
Musician Grade 3	65 minutes	55 – 60 minutes

10. The assessment length is the approximate overall time allowed for the recital. The duration of pieces refers to the total duration of all the pieces performed, and does not include:

- a. arrival/departure time
- b. setting up
- c. tuning
- d. breaks or pauses between items.

11. If your performance fails to meet the minimum length for the recital, you may not pass the audition regardless of the quality of your recital. It is your responsibility to ensure that your recital program meets the requirements for the level you wish to be assessed against.

### **Which instrument to play**

12. You must play a single type of instrument, but you can, if you wish, use two different members of the same instrument family, e.g. soprano and alto saxophones or vibraphone and marimba. You may not play more than one type of instrument, e.g. trumpet and trombone, or saxophone and clarinet.

13. If your instrument takes time to set up (e.g. drum kit) you must make suitable arrangements in advance so that the assessment timings are not affected by setting up or removing instruments. You must supply your own instrument, except in the case of piano or percussion assessments. If you wish to be assessed using one of these instruments, you must contact your local band's Music Director to organise an instrument for you if you wish to use an Army Band instrument.

14. You must complete basic tuning before entering the assessment room. You may check your tuning against a piano or other accompanying instruments at any stage during the recital.

15. You can only be assessed on the instruments listed in the table above.

### **General remarks**

16. The music that you perform is to be drawn either from the indicative repertoire lists in the guide that has been given to you during your initial interview or from your own choice of repertoire, which must be pre-approved as explained below.

17. All programmes must consist of a minimum of two works. Your chosen programme should display a range of moods, styles and tempi. Assessors will comment on the artistic balance and timing of your programme as a whole.

### **Playing a programme of music entirely chosen from the repertoire lists**

18. If you choose a programme selected entirely from the repertoire lists of music then you may take the assessment without further approval.

### **Choosing a programme of music containing own choice pieces**

19. If you wish to propose a programme consisting partly or completely of pieces that are not listed in the repertoire lists you must submit the whole programme for approval to the Commanding Officer of the Defence Force School of Music via the Music Director of your local Army Band, following these guidelines:

- a. you must not play any work that is listed on a grade at a lower standard
- b. any own choice works that you propose must demonstrate a comparable level of technical and musical demand to the pieces given in the repertoire lists, which should be referred to for an indication of this level
- c. items that are considered insufficiently demanding will not be approved.

**Note** that an item being approved previously in one programme does not automatically mean that the same item will always be approved. Items are considered in the context of whole programmes and what is approved in one programme may not be approved in another.

### **Programme approval — how to propose your own repertoire**

**Remember** — we will not consider submissions of individual pieces. You must send in a complete programme for approval.

20. Before you decide on your programme, check each own choice item carefully against the current repertoire lists before sending in your programme.
21. In approving your programme proposal we do not consider either timing or balance of works so please be sure you check these two elements carefully. The approval is simply in terms of technical and musical difficulty and it is your responsibility to design an appropriate and balanced programme that fits into the timings stipulated. How well you do this forms part of the assessment.
22. Submit your proposed program to your local band's Music Director in writing. Email is the simplest and the preferred option. Please provide as much detail as possible for such works to enable us to identify your own choice piece(s). Telephone applications will not be accepted.
23. Consideration of your programme approval may take up to three weeks, and can be longer if your programme needs to be adjusted. You are therefore strongly advised and encouraged to make the proposal in good time. Once approval has been given, no alterations can be made without further approval.
24. If the proposal is accepted we will email you a permission notification. This notification must be kept and shown to the assessor at the start of your assessment.
25. If the proposal is not accepted we will send you an email of explanation. You should then change the piece(s) and re-submit the programme (or replace the whole programme with pieces listed in the repertoire lists). Remember that the whole programme must be re-submitted following the guidelines above, and that any re-submission can take up to a further three weeks to be considered.
26. We are bound by industrial relations provisions and therefore, we cannot carry out an assessment where approval for own choice program has not been granted or sought. Therefore you are strongly advised not to book an audition date until your programme has been approved.
27. The Commanding Officer, Defence Force School of Music's decision on approval of any item or programme will be final.

## **Taking the Assessment**

28. Please note that audiences are not permitted for audition assessments.

### **Pieces**

#### **Repeats and other musical directions**

29. When performing an audition recital you should:
  - a. use your discretion regarding repeats, ornaments, etc. to achieve a performance which is stylistically appropriate. Long exposition repeats should not be played

- b. play all cadenzas; these may be improvised or played from scores
- c. observe all *da capo* and *dal segno* instructions
- d. truncate extended introductions (and tutti passages in concerto movements) in a musically appropriate fashion to ensure that there is not an excessive amount of time spent listening to the accompanist. alone.

### **Editions**

30. Publishers' names are given simply as suggestions, and you are at liberty to use any other edition, provided that it has not been shortened or otherwise simplified.

### **Music for the assessor**

31. In all assessments, you must provide the assessor with a copy of the music that you play. Copies should be free of any hand writing, with the exception of directions detailing changes as suggested in the above paragraphs. Bars should be numbered in pencil; the first bar of each system and then after long rests is sufficient. If there is more than one assessor they will not need a copy each, one copy will always be sufficient.

### **Photocopies**

32. You must bring an original copy of the music to the assessment room (even if you play/sing from memory). You can give a photocopy of this original copy to the assessor. At the conclusion of your assessment all photocopies supplied to the assessor will be retained and destroyed. The assessment will not be allowed to proceed if there are no originals in the room. There are two exceptions to this requirement; firstly, if the publication is out of print and there is evidence to support this or secondarily, you will be performing a jazz piece that you have personally transcribed.

### **Accompanists (including supporting musician/s)**

33. Works written with accompaniment must be performed with live accompaniment where possible and if available, unless the work is specifically written for pre-recorded accompaniment. Whilst a live accompaniment is preferred, CDs and other recordings may be used, especially for instruments being assessed against the commercial stream. For single-line instruments, it is recommended that not more than one piece be unaccompanied.

34. For commercial assessments a band or group of up to four others may perform as your supporting musicians but must be supplied by you.

35. It is your responsibility to provide the accompanist(s).

### **Page turners**

36. The assessor is not permitted to act as a page-turner and should not be asked.

### **Performance from memory**

37. Vocalists are expected to perform from memory for all recitals. Instrumentalists are not required to perform from memory until Musician Grade 3 level; however it is encouraged at all recital levels

**Presentation skills**

38. You should demonstrate a high level of stagecraft, as in a public performance situation. For all participant performers, dress should be of the kind considered appropriate for a lunchtime or early evening recital. Spoken introductions are not required.

**Assessment room protocol**

39. Audiences are not permitted for audition assessments at any level. Only the candidate and the assessor(s) can remain in the room during the complete assessment. Accompanists and page turners may remain in the assessment room only whilst needed.

40. The assessor will not normally interrupt the recital component of your audition by any conversation whatever, but will observe your professionalism and stagecraft at every stage of the assessment. You should treat the assessment as if it were a public performance, albeit without applause.

41. The assessor will need to make notes for the report, and may not be able to watch the performance at all times.

**The Audition Assessment**

42. To be granted a competent grading for the audition assessment, you must pass the recital, common band excerpts, sight reading and ensemble rehearsal elements.

**MUSIC DIRECTOR INTERVIEW**

43. You should have completed your interview with the Music Director of your local band prior to obtaining this document. If you have not been interviewed at this stage, it is imperative that you contact your local band immediately to organise this. This interview should give you a chance to view the working environment of the band, informally converse with members of the band regarding the job of an Army Musician and witness a snapshot of the band's daily operation. More importantly the interview allows the Music Director an opportunity to supply you with all the relevant information regarding the entry audition and job requirements, career options, remuneration and the other conditions of service. You are also able to highlight any questions you may have regarding the specific nature of the job.

**PERSONAL PARTICULARS PROFORMA**

44. During this interview, you should have completed the personal particulars proforma. This form captures all relevant information discussed during the interview. In addition to contact details, any secondary instruments, teachers and performance experience, there is also an opportunity for you to indicate if you have any experience or interest in areas such as audio, lighting, arranging, conducting, web design, secondary instruments etc.

**HOSTS**

45. You will be provided with a host for the duration of your audition. The host will assist you in feeling at ease whilst in an unfamiliar environment and to answer any questions throughout the process.

## CONDUCT OF THE AUDITION

46. You should arrive fully prepared for all elements of the audition process. Prior to the commencement of any assessments, you will be briefed on the audition schedule with specific details of when the various assessments will be conducted.

47. Some elements of your audition will be recorded via video tape. Your audition will be reviewed for final approval by the Commanding Officer of the Defence Force School of Music. It will also be available for you in the event that you disagree with either the assessment panel's recommendation or the Commanding Officer's approval.

## PERFORMANCE AUDITION

48. The first part of your audition will consist of your individual performance of excerpts from common band literature, sight reading and your recital. The order with which you perform these elements is entirely up to you.

49. You will be required to prepare all of the band excerpts contained in the repertoire lists. During the audition, you will be asked to perform a minimum of three, but you must be prepared to perform them all.

50. For the sight reading element, you will be asked to perform three separate pieces. These pieces will be chosen from the Army Band's repertoire and are indicative of the types and styles of music you will be required to perform as a member of an Army Band.

51. The recital element has been covered in detail already.

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

52. You will be assessed against the following criteria:

### **Intonation**

53. You will need to maintain your intonation at all times, within your own instrument tessitura and with your accompanist(s).

### **Tempo**

54. You will need to choose an accurate tempo and maintain it as required by the music. If your piece has a tempo marking, you will be assessed against that tempo. If you perform one of your recital pieces at a tempo that is dramatically different from the printed tempo markings, this should be notated on the copy of the music that you supply to the assessor. You must also be prepared to answer questions about this at the conclusion of your recital. Sight reading and the common band excerpts must be performed as written.

### **Technique/Articulation**

55. Your articulations must be in accordance with tempo, style and markings of the piece. You will also be assessed against '*specific to instrument*' techniques, such as finger coordination, ability to slur, sticking or tonguing.

### **Accuracy**

56. Accuracy refers to both pitch and rhythmic accuracy. Mispitching, split notes, '*squeaking*' reeds are all regarded as inaccurate notes.

**Artistry**

57. This is where you can show your mastery of your instrument and allow the music to play. This is possibly the most important assessment criteria. The assessor will be looking for a musical performance rather than a stilted, robotic regurgitation of the notes.

**Dynamics**

58. You must cover as wide a range of dynamics as the music asks.

**Rhythm**

59. Are your note values, lengths and rests accurate in relation to the tempo and style of the piece? One or two small errors may be acceptable for a complex piece; however, in a simple tune, the level of tolerance for rhythmic error will be reduced.

**Quality of Sound**

60. The assessor will primarily be looking at your consistency of tone through all registers and throughout the duration of your performance.

**ENSEMBLE REHEARSAL PROCEDURE**

61. At the conclusion of your individual performances, you should be given a break before moving onto the ensemble rehearsal element.

62. After a brief introduction to the section, you will then take part in a section or small group rehearsal. This small group could range from a woodwind quintet to a jazz quartet, whichever is the most appropriate for your instrument and preferred style. This session would last approximately 45 minutes to an hour, giving the Section Leader adequate time to hear you in a variety of styles and to ascertain your ability to follow musical directions.

**BAND REHEARSAL**

63. The Full Band rehearsal would ideally follow on from the section rehearsal to allow you to perform in a large group situation. This rehearsal creates an opportunity to see how you perform in the situation most relevant to your future employment in the Army Band and allows you to see what the daily schedule is for an Army Musician.

64. The assessor will be looking for the ability to balance, blend, play with good intonation and time and follow conductor's directions. The assessor may be the conductor, but will more likely be a senior musician who will sit close to you during the rehearsal.

**WHAT HAPPENS NEXT**

65. At the conclusion of your audition, you will be given a detailed explanation of your performances and you will be asked to sign the audition assessment forms. The assessor will not be able to tell you whether you have passed the audition at this stage, but they can tell you what their recommendation will be.

66. When the paperwork is completed, it is sent to the Defence Force School of Music for final review by the Commanding Officer / Chief Instructor. You will receive a letter informing you of your success or otherwise in due course. This process should take no more than two weeks, but may take longer during peak periods of the year. Once you receive your letter informing you that you have successfully passed the audition, you should contact your local Defence Force Recruiting

Centre to progress your enlistment.

67. Again, thank you for your inquiry on becoming an Army Musician and we wish you good luck on the exciting journey that you are now commencing.