

News for Piano teachers

2019 saw the introduction of a new Piano syllabus. Next year (2020) will be the final year where candidates can prepare for either option: an old or a new syllabus exam. From 2021, only the new (2019) syllabus will be examined. Click [here](#) for more information about the new piano syllabus content.

The new (2019) syllabus features a new suite of grade books (Series 18). It also includes the Series 17 grade books, brand new manual lists and a new approach to Technical Work.



The new Technical workbooks introduce keys in a slightly different way to the old syllabus approach. In addition, the new technical work requires a reduced level of scales to be prepared for each exam, replacing this content with engaging and prescriptive technical exercises for each grade that help students build the skills needed for pieces at each advancing grade level.

Each exercise first introduces a *Try This First* excerpt to scaffold the student toward mastering the exercise. Following the examinable exercise, teachers will find another shaded box, entitled *Extra for Experts*. This more challenging version of the exercise extends students who have mastered the examinable exercise. The *Extra for Experts* section is useful post-exam to introduce a new challenge, bridging a student's skills toward the expectations of the grade ahead.

We have received a positive response from teachers who have already embraced the new piano syllabus technical exercises. AMEB (NSW) teacher, Lauren Fadem commented: "the names of the new studies stimulate my student's imagination and curiosity. They approach each short exercise with glee, eagerness and a 'can do' attitude. Robust study of the technical elements is still happening, yet the look of dread on their faces when we cover technical learning has become a thing of the past."

These new exercises will be of benefit to all Piano and Piano for Leisure students, even though at this stage they are only examinable in the new Piano syllabus. Incorporating this new system of technical work in your students' lessons will help your students to transition across to the new Technical work, which is compulsory for Piano exams from 2021.

Just go to [AMEB Connect](#) to purchase any of the new Piano syllabus resources for the year ahead.

Piano Q&A

What exactly are the 'Old' and 'New' Piano subject options I see when I enrol?

Teachers should prepare each student entirely from EITHER an older edition (2017 or 2018) or a new (2019 or 2020) edition of the AMEB piano syllabus. [Click here](#) for clarification.

Can I prepare students with some elements from 'Old' and some elements from 'New' syllabus?

It is important that **all** preparation must be drawn from the options presented in an older manual (for 'Old' syllabus exams) or from the 2019 or 2020 syllabus for 'New' syllabus exams. Mixing elements of 'Old' and 'New' syllabus in 2020 exams may result in a lowered grade, a change of subject fee or the mark of "Unable to Assess" depending on the extent of the incorrect preparation.

So does this mean that I can't use Series 15 or Series 16 anymore if I enrol for 'New' syllabus?

No, teachers and students can prolong the life of their Series 15 and 16 Grade books even if they move across to the 'New' syllabus. For a full list of which items from these older grade books are now included in the manual lists for 'New' syllabus, [click here](#).

Of course, older grade books can also be a source for Extra List items in the 'New' syllabus for grades 2 - 7.

If I enrol for Repertoire exams, do we still prepare technical work for the exam?

Naturally, it is recommended that all students cover technical work, discuss general knowledge about their pieces and work on their aural and sight reading skills in their weekly lessons in order to become the most well-rounded musician. However, none of these elements are examined in a [Repertoire](#) (only) exam.

Can a Piano Repertoire program contain any pieces suited for that grade level?

No, Piano Repertoire candidates must draw the List pieces in their program from the options published in the 2019 or 2020 Manual of Syllabuses – that is, Series 17, Series 18 or the new Manual lists. The own choice item, however, can come from any source of the correct standard and duration.

What is a Collaborative exam?

Candidates enrolling for grades 5 -8 can choose the Solo (traditional) exam option, or the Collaborative exam option, if they wish to develop their ensemble skills. [Click here](#) for more information.

Who can I collaborate with?

In grades 5 and 6, Piano candidates can collaborate with another pianist, selecting a piano duet from the syllabus options in List C or List D to add to their solo program. Collaborative candidates enrolling for Grades 7 and 8 have collaborative options for piano duet, piano and violin, piano and flute or piano and clarinet that they can incorporate into their program. To learn more about the Collaborative syllabus, consult the 2019 or 2020 AMEB Piano syllabus and watch this short [video](#).

Is the collaborator also graded?

No, just as an instrumentalist brings a piano accompanist to their exam (who is not graded!), the same is true for the person who collaborates for a piece or two in the exam for a piano candidate in their Collaborative piano exam. However, the collaborator should be capable of playing at a high standard, so it does not compromise the candidate's ensemble work on the day.