

Rules at a Glance

- Must achieve a distinction for grades 1-8 practical and ARSM diploma exams in 2019 in order to enter.
- Must enter to compete in the correct event location, depending on which state you took the exam.
- Must **NOT** play exam pieces from any syllabus that was valid in 2019 (including syllabus overlaps), any new syllabus for 2020 or those pieces from a higher grade. See p.3 for exact syllabuses which are not allowed. The only exception is for ARSM diploma entries who may play a piece from their exam programme if they wish.
- You must play a piece that is within the maximum time limits stated. There is no minimum time limit for a piece.
- Entries accepted on a first come, first served basis. **We will close categories without notice, once they are full.**
- Entries are not confirmed until payment is made AND choice of piece is confirmed. Requests to change pieces after 7 days from submission of registration date until registration closing date will bear an admin fee of RM 30.00. No piece change is allowed after the closing date.
- You must bring one (01) copy of the score for the judges. A photocopy is okay for this purpose only.
- No rehearsal or warm-up slots are available for the competition. Participants who arrive early on the competition day cannot enter the competition room to rehearse or warm-up.
- **Deadline for entries is four weeks before each competition round. No late entries will be accepted.**
- No videography is allowed during the competition.
- We also have a special **Ensemble Category**, for instrumentalists / singers this year. See p.8-9 for full details.

**Full competition rules and details, including terms and conditions, can be found in the following pages.**

# High Scorers' Festival 2020

## Festival objective

*To give more opportunities for highest scoring candidates to participate in celebratory events, work on new repertoire that goes beyond the exam requirements, gain valuable experience from performing on stage as well as seeing your peers perform, and to give everyone the chance to be further recognised for their musicianship and performing skills.*

### 1. Dates and Regions

The events will take place across four regions:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Location**</b>	<b>States Covered</b>
<b>North</b>	Sunday 29 February 2019	Prince of Wales Island International School, Penang	Penang, Perak, Kedah & Perlis
<b>Sabah &amp; Labuan</b>	Sunday 8 March 2019	Hyatt Regency Hotel, Kota Kinabalu, Sabah	Sabah & Labuan
<b>South</b>	Saturday 14 March 2019	Holiday Villa Hotel, Johor Bahru, Johor	Johor
<b>Sarawak</b>	Sunday 15 March 2019	Hilton Hotel, Kuching, Sarawak	Sarawak
<b>Central*</b> <i>Grades 1, 3, 5, 7 &amp; ARSM</i>	Saturday 21 March 2019	Renaissance Hotel, Kuala Lumpur	Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, Melaka, Pahang, Terengganu & Kelantan
<b>Central*</b> <i>Grades 2, 4, 6 &amp; 8</i>	Sunday 22 March 2019		
<b>REGIONAL FINAL</b> <i>Grade 8 &amp; ARSM only</i>	May 2019 (exact date TBC)	Singapore	Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore

\*Exact dates for specific categories / grades in the Central Region are subject to small changes, depending on volume of entries, and will be confirmed two weeks prior to the event.

\*\* Depending which state you took the exam, you must enter for the relevant Event Location. For any exceptions, permission must be sought in writing from ABRSM (see contact details below).

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## **2. What do you get?**

Every participant gets a certificate of participation and free event passes for **two guests** (all performers, piano accompanists and page turners are given passes as well). Additional passes can be purchased at the event at a price of **RM 20 each**. Letters of appreciation will also be given to all teachers. Each participant will also receive a comment sheet with feedback from one of our jury panel, who are all professional musicians.

## **3. What do you need to play?**

i) **Participants must NOT play exam pieces from any exam syllabus that was valid in 2019 (including syllabus overlaps) as well as syllabuses for 2020.**

Instead you are required to prepare a non-exam piece and take this opportunity to learn something new. You may play a piece from much older syllabuses, provided they did not have a syllabus overlap in 2019.

Grades 1-8 exam repertoire must NOT be played from the following syllabuses:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Syllabus Years which are NOT allowed</b>
Piano	2017-18, 2019-20
Strings	2016-19, 2020-23
Woodwind	2018-21
Brass	Syllabus from 2013
Harp	Syllabus from 2019
Guitar	Syllabus from 2019
Singing	Syllabus from 2018
Singing for Musical Theatre	Syllabus from 2019
Percussion	Current Syllabus, Syllabus from 2020

ii) You must not play an exam piece from a higher grade. You can play a piece that is higher in difficulty than the graded exam pieces you played in 2019, but the point here is not to play ANY exam pieces for this competition.

iii) The **ONLY** exception: **ARSM diploma may perform a piece from the exam performance programme** (which includes all listed repertoire on the syllabus and free choice pieces, such as grade 8 level choices).

iv) Most importantly, you should play something you enjoy and that shows off your strength as a performer. Of course it is always good to challenge yourself with new repertoire, but ensure to prepare a piece that is within your technical capabilities. Playing a 'simpler' piece really well is better than playing a piece that is too difficult and not playing it well at all.

v) **You may play a piece from any genre.** You will be entered into categories based on the grade you completed for the exam in 2019; however you may play a piece that is the same level, easier, or harder, but this is up to you.

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v) **It is not necessary to play from memory**, but you are encouraged to do so if you are able to and you think it will enhance your performance. However, all singers must perform from memory.

vi) Participants need to **prepare ONE piece/song no longer than the timings listed below**. You may perform a collection of pieces/songs provided they are from the same set and do not exceed the time limits given below. You may perform multiple movements from the same work (e.g. more than one movement from a Sonata), again provided it does not exceed the timings given below. You should not, for example, perform two short pieces by different composers.

vii) Time limits are the for total playing time ONLY (and breaks between movements/pieces/songs), and therefore does not include time walking on and off stage, tuning your instrument, stage set-up etc.

Category	Grades 1 & 2	Grades 3 & 4	Grades 5 & 6	Grades 7 & 8	ARSM	Ensembles
Maximum playing time	2 minutes	3 minutes	4 minutes	5 minutes	8 minutes	8 minutes

viii) Participants who go significantly over time may be stopped, subject to the jury's discretion. Participants who go significantly overtime will not be able to receive a trophy, but honourable mentions may still be awarded if the performance was commendable and otherwise prize-worthy. This is subject to the jury's discretion.

ix) There are no minimum time limits for length of piece played at any category.

x) **Participants must provide their own piano accompanist.** Backing / minus one tracks are not permitted. You must perform with live accompaniment; however rock band and jazz band accompaniments are not allowed. If you are unsure about this, please do contact us.

## **4. Copies of Music**

i) **You must bring one (01) copy of the score for the adjudicators reference. Copies will be returned to participants after the category has finished.**

ii) If you are performing with the music you **MUST** perform from the original score. Photocopied scores are not allowed, except to assist with difficult page turns.

iii) You may bring a page turner if you need it.

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## **5. Eligibility to Enter**

i) **All distinction holders from the 2019 practical exams (grades 1-8 and ARSM diploma) may enter the competition.**

ii) Places in the competition are allocated on a first come first serve basis. Once full, a category may be closed without prior notification. **You are therefore encouraged to apply early to avoid disappointment.** Grades 1-3 will be in particularly high demand due to the large volume of distinction holders in these categories.

iii) Remember, you are entering under the grade which you took the exam in 2019.

## **6. Cost to Enter**

Due to the larger scale of these events we do have to charge a nominal admin and participation fee. **Participation fee is waived for candidates who scored 140+ in the exam.**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Fee breakdown</b>
Grades 1-8	<b>RM 120</b>	<i>RM 60 admin fee; RM 60 participation fee</i>
ARSM Diploma	<b>RM 150</b>	<i>RM 60 admin fee; RM 90 participation fee</i>
ONLY Grades 1-8 scoring 140+ marks	<b>RM 60</b>	<i>RM 60 admin fee; RM 0 participation fee</i>
Ensemble (2-5 players / singers)	<b>RM 250</b>	<i>RM 60 admin fee; RM 190 participation fee</i>

## **7. How to Enter**

i) The entry deadline is **four weeks prior to your region's competition date**. By this time you must have completed the online entry form (with details of the piece/song to be performed) and paid the entry fee. Link to the form is provided in the email sent to you. **Late entries will not be accepted after this date**

ii) **If you do not make the fee payment, the registration will not be accepted.** Entries are not considered complete until you have provided the full performance information (title of piece/song and composer name, as well as piano accompanist name if applicable).

iii) Requests to change pieces after 7 days from submission of registration date until registration closing date will bear an admin fee of RM 30.00. No piece change is allowed after the closing date.

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**Exact registration deadlines are as follows:**

<b>Region</b>	<b>Exact Registration Deadline</b>
North	1 February 2020 11:59pm
Sabah & Labuan	9 February 2020 11:59pm
South	15 February 2020 11:59pm
Sarawak	16 February 2020 11:59pm
Central	22 February 2020 11:59pm

## **8. Event Schedule**

i) The competition will take place from approximately 10am – 6pm each day. After registration closes, we will publish and email the exact schedules approximately two weeks before the event. Awards will be given out at the end of the morning session and the end of the afternoon sessions.

ii) You are not expected to attend the whole day, but just the time slot assigned to your category. However, you and your guests are welcome to stay and watch the other categories. Please remember to be back in time for the prize giving.

iii) registration will begin 45 minutes prior to the start of the morning sessions and 30 minutes prior to the start of the afternoon sessions.

## **9. Categories, Jury and Assessment**

i) Participants will be entered into categories based on the grade completed for the practical exam in 2019. Categories will not be divided by instrument/voice, but rather all assessed together by a team of generalist adjudicators. Categories maybe further subdivided by age, subject to number of entries and the decision of the organisers.

ii) ABRSM will appoint a selection of professional musicians to act as adjudicators for the competition, working as a panel of generalists. Each participant will receive a comment sheet from one of the jury panel. Verbal comments will also be given at the prize giving sessions.

iii) The jury will be looking at the performance as a whole. They will be looking for stage presence and communication with your audience; your interpretation of the music, playing with understanding, and attention to detail in the score; and your delivery – how well you meet the technical challenges of the piece. Overall they are looking for a communicative, stylistic, and expressive presentation.

iv) Marks are not published or disclosed, but instead are only used for internal reference among the jury panel. This is NOT an exam and therefore you will not receive a mark. This is a competition and therefore the result is ultimately your ranking within the category of performers that you are competing against.

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v) To receive any prizes at all, performers must reach a level which is equivalent to at least a merit in the exam. That does not mean that anyone who plays to at least a 'merit level' will automatically get a prize, as ultimately it depends on the overall standard of the group you are competing within. However, where the standard of a group is particularly strong, the jury panel may award joint prizes and additional honourable mentions. This is entirely subject to the jury's discretion. Where the standard of a group is particularly weak, no trophies may be awarded subject to the jury's discretion, assuming that the standard of playing is consistently below merit.

vi) We understand that participants have received a distinction in the exam, however this does not always guarantee that a participant will perform to the same distinction level in the competition. The time frame and choice of piece is generally longer (needing greater stamina to achieve consistency) and the performance setting is different, as you are playing in front of a jury panel, your fellow competitors, and a general audience. This is therefore a very different experience and challenge compared to performing in the exam room. You should use this as a good learning experience to develop your own performing skills, build confidence, and learn by watching how your peers play (both how they interpret and deliver the music, as well as their presence on stage).

### **10. Performance Attire**

Participants are encouraged to dress smartly for this competition. Although we will be assessing your music-making on your instrument/voice, presentation is also important, so you are encouraged to dress smartly and appropriately for such an occasion.

### **11. Event Supporters**

The Malaysian Youth Orchestra Foundation (MYOF) will be helping with the administration of this event. MYOF will be collecting the registration fees on ABRSM's behalf.

### **12. Regional Final**

Gold trophy winners from the Grade 8 and ARSM categories will be invited to the Regional Final in Singapore. More details will be published on our website soon.

An admin fee of MYR 100 will apply to those eligible to attend the regional final in Singapore. At the regional final, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> prizes will be awarded in the Grade 8 and ARSM categories, as well as honourable mentions given. No joint prizes will be given in the regional final.

Further details of this Regional Final, including registration information, will be provided in February 2020 and eligible participants will be contacted separately.

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## **13. Ensemble Category**

You can enter ensembles from 2 to 5 players / singers into the competition. This is to encourage candidates to explore the joy and benefits of playing / singing in groups and making music together. A single, flat entry fee applied for ensembles (from 2-5 players / singers) is RM 250. For this category, there is no discounted rate for those who scored 140+ in grades 1-8. The same regulations broadly apply as above, however specific differences and condensations are given as follows:

i) The players / singers must be made up of graded exam candidates only. Teachers and professional musicians are not allowed to play / sing as part of the ensemble.

ii) At least ONE (01) of the players / singers must have gained a distinction in the 2019 practical exams (grades 1-8 and ARSM diploma). Therefore, candidates who did not receive a distinction can still take part in this category, provided at least one of the ensemble performers scored a distinction.

iii) Minimum number of players / singers is two (02). We allow piano duets. In general, we allow any combination of two players / singers, with the exception of piano + solo player / singer. *For example, piano + violin is not accepted as ensemble, but piano + 2 violins is okay.* This is to make a clear distinction between this category and the main solo categories of the competition.

iv) Maximum number of players / singers is five (05). 5 players / singers + piano is not accepted; the maximum, in that case, would be 4 players / singers + piano.

v) Total playing time for ensembles is 8 minutes (including breaks between movements/pieces/songs), and therefore does not include time walking on and off stage, tuning your instruments, stage set-up etc.

vi) Ensembles may perform any repertoire (including those listed in exam syllabuses) and may present more than one piece / song within the 8 minute time frame. These pieces can be unrelated i.e. different genres / composers. Additional credit is not given for 'programming', but you are welcome to present a contrasting programme if you wish.

vii) Ensembles with players of different ages are fine, provided they all passed an ABRSM exam in 2019.

viii) Ensembles will not be categorised by age or grade. Although ensembles will participate together in one category, they will be assessed individually and not competing directly against one another. Therefore, all ensembles will be eligible to win gold prizes if deemed worthy by the jury panel.

ix) These will be assessed as follows: Gold (distinction level), Silver (merit level), Bronze (pass level), Honourable Mention (below pass level, or in breach of regulations as set out above).

x) Candidates who receive a distinction are allowed to participate in both the solo category and ensemble category.

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xi) Candidates may perform in more than one ensemble, provided it is made up of a different combination of members. *For example, a piano candidate may enter the solo category, and also enter in a piano duet and a piano trio. In addition, a candidate can enter as a piano duet more than once, provided they perform with a different duet partner each time. However, they cannot play the exact same piece with a different duet partner.*

xii) No electronic instruments or backing tracks are allowed as part of the ensemble. No full drumkit is allowed. Single percussion instruments (e.g. snare drum, bongos etc) would be accepted, providing they have a properly and individually scored part.

## **14. FAQ**

### ***i) Can I play an exam piece from a higher grade?***

No pieces from the current, new or previous exam syllabus should be played, even if you are attempting to play a more difficult piece for the competition. Only ARSM category can play pieces from the syllabus or what they played in the exam performance programme.

### ***ii) If I have gained distinction for more than one exam, can I enter more than once?***

Yes. For example, if you gained a distinction for grade 2 piano and distinction for grade 3 piano, you can enter twice under the separate grades. Each entry will require a separate entry fees.

### ***iii) Can I play/sing pop songs in the competition?***

You may play/sing a piece/song of any genre. However, no backing / minus one tracks are allowed. You must provide your own live accompaniment (piano, guitar etc). Rock band and Jazz band accompaniments are not permitted.

### ***iv) What should I wear to perform?***

Participants are encouraged to dress smartly for this competition. While we will be assessing your music-making on your instrument/voice, presentation is also important, so you are encouraged to dress smartly and appropriately for such an occasion.

### ***v) Can I bring a page turner?***

Yes – all pianists and piano accompanists are allowed to bring a page turner if needed. Page turners and piano accompanists will be given free passes to come to the event.

### ***vi) Will teachers get free passes to the competition?***

No free passes will be given to teachers. Each participant will receive two free passes and it is up to the participant to whom they wish to give these passes to.

### ***vii) Can I perform with scores?***

Yes, participant may perform with scores. However, we encourage participants to perform from memory if they feel it will enhance their performance.

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## **15. Terms and Conditions**

- i. Only registrations with full payment submitted via the online registration form will be accepted between 25 November 2019 and four weeks prior to the competition date (as specified on Page 6).
- ii. Late Registration will not be considered.
- iii. Places in the competition are allocated on a first come first serve basis. Once full, a category may be closed without prior notification. You are encouraged to apply early to avoid disappointment. Grades 1-3 will particularly be in high demand due to the large volume of distinction holders in these categories.
- iv. **Please do not bank in cash when paying for the event!** Payment options are via online banking / telegraphic transfer only. MYOF will be collecting the funds on behalf of ABRSM.
- v. This competition is only eligible to High Scorers from Malaysia. High Scorers from other countries are not allowed to participate in this event.
- vi. Full payment must be made during registration in order to secure a place.
- vii. No refund will be entertained, should a participant withdraw from the competition after registration where payment has already been submitted.
- viii. Adjudicators' decisions are final and cannot be challenged. Marks awarded will not be disclosed, but an individual comment sheet is provided for each participant and verbal feedback given during the prize giving.
- ix. The organizer reserves the right to use all photographs and/or videos from the competition for future promotional materials.
- x. Participants are not allowed to film/video/record audio of the competition, unless it is of their own child performing. This video must NOT be published online, due to performing and composition copyright.
- xi. It is the responsibility of the participants to arrive on time for their competition category. Exact timings for the day will be published online and emailed to participants at least 2 weeks in advance of the event. Participants must be ready and willing to perform earlier or later than their scheduled time due to any cancellations and unforeseen schedule changes.
- xii. A certificate of participation will only be given to participants who have attended and performed, including piano accompanists. Kindly ensure that all the names are spelt correctly during the online registration (including the teacher names). Certificate re-prints will be charged at **RM 10 each**, including re-prints of the letters of appreciation for teachers. Postage charge is additional to this. Self-collection in Klang Valley is possible.
- xiii. All accommodation and transport arrangements are the responsibility of the participant and the organiser will not be responsible for arranging this.
- xiv. Please ensure to bring one copy of the music to the event for the adjudicators reference. It is okay to provide a photocopied score for the

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adjudicator, but if you are playing with the music you MUST play from the original score. Photocopies are not allowed, except to assist with difficult page turns. You may bring a page turner if you require it.

- xv. Grand piano, adjustable stool, chairs, and music stands will be provided. Other instruments are not provided. Foot stalls (guitar) and extension pedals (for younger / shorter pianists) are not provided; however you are welcome to bring your own. Please contact us if you have bulky instruments (percussion / harp) and need to arrange delivery to the venue.
- xvi. No rehearsal time will be given prior to the competition. Access to the competition room is not allowed, until the performers are invited in to take their seats and the doors are open to the general public.
- xvii. If music stands are required, our stage assistant will bring this on stage and help to adjust it to your preferred height. However, it is YOUR decision as a performer to decide where you want the music stand to be positioned. You are also welcome to move the stand yourself once it has been placed on stage, so that you are comfortable with the position of it.
- xviii. You are encouraged to tune your instrument properly before playing – don't worry if this takes some time. For lower grades (1-5) your teacher may assist you to tune the instrument.
- xix. By submitting the online Application Form, which forms a part of the Rules & Regulations and Terms & Conditions of the High Scorers' Festival, the participant is deemed to agree and comply with this document.

### **16. Contact**

If you **cannot** find the answer to your question in this document, then please email [abrsmevents.my@gmail.com](mailto:abrsmevents.my@gmail.com)

For payment / registration enquiries, please email [admin@myof.org.my](mailto:admin@myof.org.my)