

# MUSIC DIRECTING DIPLOMAS

from 2024

ARSM (Associate of the Royal Schools of Music)

LRSM (Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music)

FRSM (Fellowship of the Royal Schools of Music)



# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>3</b>
About ABRSM.....	3
This qualification specification .....	3
ARSM and LRSM diplomas at a glance .....	4
FRSM diploma at a glance .....	6
About these qualifications.....	7
General information .....	11
<b>ARSM, LRSM and FRSM diploma overview</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>ARSM in Music Directing</b> .....	<b>13</b>
Introducing the qualification .....	13
Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice .....	14
Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context .....	16
Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice.....	18
<b>LRSM in Music Directing</b> .....	<b>19</b>
Introducing the qualification .....	19
Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice.....	20
Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context .....	22
Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice.....	24
ARSM and LRSM administrative information.....	26
<b>FRSM in Music Directing</b> .....	<b>28</b>
Introducing the qualification.....	28
Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice.....	29
Unit 2: Music Direction and Reflective Practice.....	32
FRSM administrative information.....	33
<b>ARSM assessment and marking</b> .....	<b>35</b>
Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes.....	35
Assessment criteria - Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice.....	36
Assessment criteria - Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context.....	37
Assessment criteria - Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice .....	38
<b>LRSM assessment and marking</b> .....	<b>39</b>
Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes.....	39
Assessment criteria - Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice.....	40
Assessment criteria - Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context.....	42
Assessment criteria - Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice .....	43
<b>FRSM assessment and marking</b> .....	<b>44</b>
Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes.....	44
Assessment criteria - Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice .....	45
Assessment criteria - Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice.....	47
<b>Grading and awarding</b> .....	<b>48</b>

---

# Introduction

## About ABRSM

ABRSM is The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and a global music education charity. At the heart of everything we do is our belief that music enriches lives. Building on our heritage, we offer face-to-face and digital exams, sheet music, recordings, apps and courses for students and teachers across the world. Our music qualifications provide clear goals, reliable and consistent marking, and guidance for future learning.

In partnership with four Royal Schools of Music, we carry on a long legacy of musical excellence. More than an awarding organisation, we support learners from the first note they play and empower teachers who help build musical skills and encourage progress around the world.

As a charity, we use all of the surpluses we generate to make significant donations towards music education initiatives and to develop our support for learners and teachers around the world. We advocate for music and its many forms, playing our part to ensure the future of music education and its place in society.

Together with our partners, our teachers and others around the world, we've been nurturing the future of music since 1889 - to help people start or continue their journey.

## This qualification specification

### What it covers

This specification provides all the relevant requirements and information learners need to prepare for the following qualifications:

- ABRSM Level 4 Diploma in Music Directing (ARSM)
- ABRSM Level 6 Diploma in Music Directing (LRSM)
- ABRSM Level 7 Diploma in Music Directing (FRSM).

### Validity of this specification

This specification is valid from October 2024 until further notice. We may update this document from time to time but will not make changes to the syllabus other than in exceptional circumstances. In such cases, advance notice of any changes will be posted on our website.

---

# ARSM and LRSM diplomas at a glance

## Diploma content

Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice

Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context

Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

## Assessment

---

### Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice (ARSM and LRSM)

---

#### What is assessed

This unit assesses the demonstration of music directing skills in leading musical work with others, including:

- Planning and responding to the needs and aspirations of the musicians
- How you engage, motivate and inspire others
- How you communicate musically
- Reflection and self-evaluation.

ARSM: Video: 30 minutes duration ( $\pm 10\%$ ) **and**

Supporting Commentary: 1,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 8 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

LRSM: Video: 45 minutes duration ( $\pm 10\%$ ) **and**

Supporting Commentary: 3,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 16 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

---

#### How it is assessed

- Video: A live recording of music directing
- Supporting Commentary: one or more documents in PDF format or spoken video.

ARSM: 15 marks (30% of diploma)

LRSM: 30 marks (40% of diploma)

---

### Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context (ARSM and LRSM)

---

#### What is assessed

This unit assesses knowledge and understanding of music directing more generally, including:

- Values and professional behaviours
- How you adapt strategies, activities and resources to suit the needs of others
- Evaluating your approach
- Your responsibilities as a music director.

ARSM and LRSM: Written submission of 2,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 12.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

---

#### How it is assessed

- One or more documents in PDF format or spoken video.

ARSM: 15 marks (30% of diploma)

LRSM: 15 marks (20% of diploma)

---

---

## Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice (ARSM and LRSM)

### What is assessed

A structured conversation with an ABRSM examiner, to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing, including:

- Gestural techniques and communication strategies
- Reasoning behind repertoire choices/selection
- Evaluation of music directing approaches, activities and resources
- Preparatory research and reflection as a music director.

ARSM: 30 minutes duration

LRSM: 40 minutes duration

### How it is assessed

- A structured conversation using video conferencing software.

ARSM: 20 marks (40% of diploma)

LRSM: 30 marks (40% of diploma)

---

# FRSM diploma at a glance

## Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice

### What is assessed

This unit assesses your expertise and wide knowledge of the field of music directing through the creation of a significant and original piece of work. This is either through a live public performance **or** extended research. Some examples are:

#### Public Performance

- Part of a concert
- A Military/Parade Band for a specific occasion
- An act or scenes from a Musical Theatre work.

#### Extended Research

- A significant piece of research in the field of music directing
- A substantial programme of training for music directors, with supporting resources.

Public Performance: 55-minute video ( $\pm 10\%$ ), including 20 minutes of rehearsal with a group in preparation for a public performance and 30–35 minutes of directing the group in a public performance **and** Supporting Commentary: 3,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 17 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

Extended Research: 10,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 50 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

Pre-approval is required for either pathway in this unit.

### How it is assessed

- Public Performance: One live video recording **plus** supporting commentary of one or more documents in PDF format or spoken video.
- Extended Research: One or more documents in PDF format or spoken video.

45 marks (60% of diploma)

## Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

### What is assessed

A structured conversation with an ABRSM examiner, to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing, including:

- Giving a 10-minute spoken summary of your Unit 1 submission and conclusions
- Critical evaluation and analytical skills
- Insight into broad trends in music directing, to help guide and influence others
- Understanding of the needs of musicians working in a range of contexts
- Original thought and persuasive communication skills.

50 minutes duration

### How it is assessed

- A structured conversation using video conferencing software.

30 marks (40% of diploma)

---

# About these qualifications

## Qualification objectives

Encouraging diverse approaches to music directing, these diplomas are designed to stimulate enjoyment and achievement through the progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding, and enable a candidate's directing skills to be formally recognised and rewarded. They encourage lifelong learning without restrictions on length of study or the need for formal study in a college or university. At each level of the diploma, the candidate's skills as a music director are explored and assessed in depth.

## Who the qualifications are for

Our ARSM and LRSM Music Directing diplomas provide a pathway for a wide range of individuals involved in music directing, and have been developed to reflect the current practices, contexts and responsibilities of the role, whether in a formal or informal setting. The FRSM diploma in Music Directing is for experienced music directing practitioners seeking to make an original contribution to the music performance field or broader music industry through public performance or extended research.

The Music Directing diploma suite allows candidates to measure their abilities against internationally recognised levels:

- Level 4: equivalent in level to the end of the first year of an undergraduate degree course
- Level 6: equivalent in level to the final year of an undergraduate degree course
- Level 7: equivalent in level to a master's level degree course.

ABRSM Music Directing diplomas are available to anyone who can demonstrate the appropriate level of skill and understanding required for the qualification. Information about entry requirements can be found on page 8.

## Progression routes

The qualifications are progressive and as candidates move through the diploma levels, they will find that the tasks become more demanding. The focus moves from planning and delivering an individual session at ARSM (our Level 4 diploma in Music Directing) to multiple ones at LRSM, researching appropriate repertoire and evaluating progress over time. The complexity of the supporting evidence required also increases.

Through a combination of live directing and written or spoken components, candidates at ARSM and LRSM levels demonstrate planning, musical directing and communication skills, and provide contextual evidence to support the directing decisions they have made.

For FRSM candidates, we invite experienced music directors to make an original contribution to the music industry, enabling development for others, through either a public performance or extended research.

Irrespective of a learner's personal motivation to achieve one of ABRSM's Music Directing diplomas, each qualification can provide a pathway to:

- Higher-level qualifications offered by other awarding organisations
- Graduate or postgraduate programmes of study
- Employment in the creative arts sector.

Further details of our diploma qualifications can be found at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas).

---

## Entry requirements

There are no upper age limits for any of the Music Directing diplomas.

- **ARSM**
  - Recommended minimum age of 16.

We advise that candidates do not attempt the ARSM until they have a minimum of six months' experience in the field of music directing. This could encompass a range of activities, including observing, being part of a team, leading rehearsals, coaching, contributing activities to group sessions, supervising practice, attending training, etc.

- **LRSM**
  - Recommended minimum age of 21
  - ARSM in Music Directing or Grade 8 Practical, Performance or Theory.

Candidates should have demonstrable experience as a music director, designing, delivering and evaluating work for which they are accountable in a range of settings, typically for at least a year.

- **FRSM**
  - Recommended minimum age of 24
  - LRSM in Music Directing or appropriate professional experience.

Candidates should have demonstrable experience as a music director, designing, delivering and evaluating work for which they are accountable in a range of settings, typically for at least three years.

Aligned with our aim to provide open access and to recognise learners' achievements, we offer a range of substitutions for the entry requirements, including previous learning and professional experience (detailed below).

Candidates should ensure that their music directing and supporting skills are appropriate for the level of diploma they wish to take. Further information on the requirements of each diploma can be found on the relevant page.

In place of an ABRSM Grade 8, we accept equivalent qualifications from other awarding organisations, such as:

- Australian Music Examinations Board
- Guildhall School of Music & Drama
- London College of Music Examinations
- Music Teachers' Board
- RSL
- Royal Conservatory of Music (Canada) (Grade 9)
- Royal Irish Academy of Music
- Tu Dublin Conservatoire
- Trinity College London
- University of South Africa

We may request a copy of the appropriate certificate as evidence of the entry requirement. If this cannot be provided when requested, the exam entry will be rejected without refund of the fee.

## Appropriate professional experience and Recognised Prior Learning (RPL)

Candidates may apply to offer appropriate professional experience or prior learning as a substitution for the entry requirements, which includes legacy qualifications from ABRSM or another awarding organisation. For more details on how to apply, please visit [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas).

Important: Applying for this substitution is a *separate* procedure from booking to take the diploma and can take up to six weeks. Approval of professional experience must have been granted **before a candidate enters** for a diploma.

## How we are regulated

ABRSM exams are regulated in the UK by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), Qualifications Wales, and the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA Regulation). They are part of the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) in England and Northern Ireland.



---

## Regulated qualification details

The table below shows the regulated titles and qualification numbers of Music Directing diplomas. Further information can be found at <https://register.ofqual.gov.uk/>

Qualification number	Qualification title	ABRSM title*
610/4691/7	ABRSM Level 4 Diploma in Music Directing	ARSM
610/4692/9	ABRSM Level 6 Diploma in Music Directing	LRSM
610/4693/0	ABRSM Level 7 Diploma in Music Directing	FRSM

\* Throughout this document, the ABRSM title is used to refer to each diploma.

## Regulation (rest of world)

Information on how ABRSM exams are recognised in individual countries can be found at [www.abrsm.org/more-information/regulation-and-ucas-points](http://www.abrsm.org/more-information/regulation-and-ucas-points).

## Qualification size

Diploma	Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	Total Qualification Time (TQT)	Credits
ARSM	60	1000	100
LRSM	120	2000	200
FRSM	150	2400	240

The GLH and TQT are estimates of the average time required and should be used as guidance only; it is recognised that there will be variance dependent on each individual's level of experience and ability.

## Malpractice and maladministration

We take any form of malpractice or maladministration very seriously.

- **Malpractice** is defined as any act that compromises or is an attempt to compromise the assessment process, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate. This also includes any act that damages our reputation or credibility as an awarding organisation.
- **Maladministration** is defined as any act that breaches the regulations through a mismanagement of administrative processes, particularly where such a breach could compromise the integrity of a qualification or assessment.

Candidates must follow the requirements set out in the relevant specification, Exam Regulations and all other ABRSM policies about the delivery of our exams. In cases where candidates have committed malpractice, a sanction or penalty may be given. Our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy can be found at [www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies](http://www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies).

## Plagiarism

ABRSM defines plagiarism as an attempt by the candidate to reuse the work of others as their own. This means copying from a published or unpublished source without acknowledging it, constructing a précis of someone else's writing or ideas without citing that writer, or colluding with another candidate to submit the same or similar work. Plagiarism applies to all sources.

The Compliance Officer, in accordance with the Malpractice and Maladministration Policy ([www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies](http://www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies)), will consider all suspected cases and candidates will be penalised or disqualified if a charge of plagiarism is upheld. Candidates will have a right of appeal and representation if such a charge is made.

---

## Infringements

It is important that the relevant exam requirements as set out in this qualification specification are read and understood in full. If these are not met in any way, it could lead to a warning, mark deduction or disqualification at ABRSM's discretion.

Examples of infringements include:

- Presenting video evidence that is too short or too long.
- Presenting supporting evidence that is above or below the suggested word count or time specified.

Action is typically taken as follows:

- Warnings, in the form of written correspondence, are applied to minor infringements.
- Mark deductions from a component of the exam are applied to more serious cases and may be two marks or more, depending on the circumstances.
- Disqualification is applied to cases where requirements are not fulfilled in a fundamental way:
  - video evidence that is significantly too short
  - where we believe the evidence submitted may not be the candidate's own
  - evidence (the performance or written/spoken work) is posted on any social media channels.

Examiners report infringements to ABRSM who investigate and decide what action is to be taken. This process may delay the release of the exam result.

ABRSM's decision on any infringement is final. Prior acceptance of an infringement without penalty does not set a precedent and appeals will not be accepted on this basis.

## Access (for candidates with specific needs)

We are committed to providing fair access to our assessments for candidates with specific needs by putting in place access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. ABRSM's Fair Access Guidelines and Specific Needs Policy is available at [www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/specific-needs](http://www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/specific-needs). Where a candidate's needs are not covered by the guidelines, each case is considered individually.

## Special consideration

Special consideration is given to candidates who suffer temporary illness, injury or indisposition, or adverse circumstances at or near the time of the assessment that are beyond the candidate's control. This will not result in an adjustment to marks and will not change the assessment criteria. Please refer to our Special Consideration Policy at [www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies](http://www.abrsm.org/more-information/policies).

## Diversity

ABRSM is committed to creating greater diversity, equality and inclusion in the field of music and we are actively working to achieve this across our portfolio of assessments and wider organisation. Our Diversity and Inclusion Plan is available at [www.abrsm.org/diversity-inclusion](http://www.abrsm.org/diversity-inclusion).

---

## General information

### Exam Regulations

When preparing for an exam, it is important to read ABRSM's Exam Regulations, which set out the rules for completing the qualifications listed in this specification. This information is available at [www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/exam-regulations](http://www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/exam-regulations).

### Amendments

Any updates to this specification, such as minor corrections or clarifications, will be posted at [www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/syllabuses](http://www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/syllabuses).

### Making an entry

Details of exam dates, fees and how to book an exam are available at [www.abrsm.org/how-to-book](http://www.abrsm.org/how-to-book).

### Available subjects

The ARSM, LRSM and FRSM Music Directing diplomas are available for those whose focus is on the delivery, planning and evaluation of music directing.

---

# ARSM, LRSM and FRSM diploma overview

ARSM (Associate of the Royal Schools of Music) and LRSM (Licentiate of the Royal Schools of Music) are both music directing diplomas, designed to showcase the planning, delivery and evaluation of directing music. They provide music directors with flexibility and responsibility in planning and preparing music rehearsals, sessions and performances, encouraging and equipping them to explore and extend strategies and approaches in a variety of settings. They also provide further opportunity for music directors to develop overarching practitioner skills through the contextual evidence required to support the decisions they have made.

The FRSM in Music Directing (Fellowship of the Royal Schools of Music) has been designed to provide candidates with the opportunity to contribute to the field of music directing through extended research or a public performance, both pre-approved.

At all three levels, candidates are required to demonstrate their knowledge and expertise in music directing, how the provision of music directing can be expanded on and improved by high quality musical interactions, and how communication skills - verbal and non-verbal - play a vital role.

Candidates awarded a Music Directing diploma can use the relevant letters ARSM, LRSM or FRSM after their name.

These qualifications allow candidates to receive formal recognition of their level of achievement, in addition to feedback to support their own learning journey. They provide those wishing to hone and refine their practitioner skills with motivation and structure, as well as providing an opportunity to demonstrate contextual understanding of the field of music directing and the needs of the broader music industry.

## Structure

These diplomas have been carefully designed to synoptically assess the underpinning knowledge and understanding required for music directing. These skills are presented through contact with musicians in the group, an awareness of how candidates plan and respond to their musicians' needs in a live setting, and an appreciation of the context in which the directing and learning takes place. Candidates are also provided with the opportunity for critical evaluation and self-reflection, enabling them to skilfully navigate the evolving landscape of music directing and allowing for continuous improvement.

The ARSM and LRSM both have three components with the following marks:

<b>Unit 1A</b>	Music Directing in Practice	ARSM 15 marks, LRSM 30 marks
<b>Unit 1B</b>	Music Directing in Context	ARSM 15 marks, LRSM 15 marks
<b>Unit 2</b>	Music Directing and Reflective Practice	ARSM 20 marks, LRSM 30 marks

The FRSM has two components with the following marks:

<b>Unit 1</b>	Music Directing in Practice	45 marks
<b>Unit 2</b>	Music Directing and Reflective Practice	30 marks

## How the exams work

- The ARSM and LRSM diplomas are delivered as digital exams, where a video recording of the candidate's music directing and the supporting evidence (written or spoken) are assessed by one of our examiners.
- The FRSM is a submission of either a video of a rehearsal and a public performance with a commentary, or extended research (both options can be written or spoken), uploaded for assessment by one of our examiners.
- For all three diplomas, candidates will attend a professional discussion with an examiner, using video conferencing software.

These exams are 'on demand' in nature, and the directing can be recorded at a venue of the candidate's choosing.

---

# ARSM in Music Directing

## Introducing the qualification

The ARSM in Music Directing focuses on the quality of the interaction between you and the musicians with whom you are working. This encompasses a wide range of scenarios. For example, you could be a conductor rehearsing an orchestra, band, choir or other ensemble, or a creative practitioner devising music with a group of less experienced musicians. You could be directing musicians at a high level of performance proficiency or working with adult amateurs, youth and community groups at any level. You could be preparing repertoire from any genre, working from notation or alternative musical stimuli, with groups of any size.

Your choice of music is integral to the assessment and you should take account of its suitability to the size, skill level and instrumentation of the group you are working with.

The qualification consists of three parts: **Unit 1A**, **Unit 1B** and **Unit 2**. Each part has a different focus, allowing you to demonstrate a broad range of skills.

---

### Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice (15 marks) is designed to focus on:

- the quality of your planning for the session(s);
- your awareness of, and responsiveness to, the needs and aspirations of the musicians with whom you are working;
- the range and creativity of strategies and techniques you employ to engage, motivate and inspire musicians;
- the musical behaviours you demonstrate and the confidence with which you do this;
- the quality of your verbal, non-verbal and musical communication;
- your in-depth knowledge of the music, supported by appropriate gestural technique;
- your ability to adapt in the moment to an active situation;
- your ability to reflect on and evaluate your own practice and the success of your initial plans considering your experience.

---

### Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context (15 marks) is designed to focus on:

- your understanding of what it means to be a music director, including professional behaviours and communication strategies;
- the range of rehearsal strategies, approaches, activities and resources you have at your disposal;
- the ways in which you employ skills of reflection and self-evaluation to deepen your insight into your own areas of strength and weakness;
- the wider professional context and your responsibilities within it.

---

### Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice (20 marks) is designed to focus on:

- providing the opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences gained as a music director;
- discussing the responsibilities, behaviours, techniques and communication strategies suitable to the role of music director;
- expressing your knowledge and understanding of the principles and values of music directing.

---

# Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice

This unit is designed to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing working with a known group. It focuses on:

- the knowledge, skills and understanding required to plan, deliver, evaluate and reflect upon a session;
- the range of approaches and communication strategies you have at your disposal; and
- how you adapt these to suit the demands of the repertoire you have chosen, and the needs and musical aspirations of the group with whom you are working.

This includes:

- Awareness of the role of music director:
  - the values
  - musical knowledge
  - music directing techniques, skills, knowledge and understanding
  - professional behaviours and communication strategies that underpin it.
- Ways in which you can adapt strategies, activities, resources and communication to suit the musical aspirations of a specific group of musicians.
- Evaluation of your own approach, material and activities, with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of directing/musical leadership.
- Making interactions musical, where your work as a director has a direct impact on the performance.
- Self-reflection based on where you are in your directing journey.

## Content

Two submissions are required for Unit 1A: Video Evidence **and** Supporting Commentary (15 marks).

### Video Evidence

The 30-minute video ( $\pm 10\%$ ) allows for the practical demonstration of music directing music skills delivered through a live, one-off session/rehearsal, culminating in a short run-through of the music that has been worked on. For clarity, 'session' refers to any singular event where you have taken responsibility as a leader. This could be as the day-to-day director of an ensemble or group, or as a one-off session.

Some examples would include leading and directing:

- an individual rehearsal with an orchestra/band/choir or other ensemble;
- a creative session with a group where you are improvising/devising a piece of music;
- a sectional or small group rehearsal with a sub-group of the main ensemble;
- a session designed to help a group understand/experience a specific musical style or elements;
- a professional development session for colleagues which must include practical work, in rehearsal, with musicians.

The session you choose to record should be one for which you have had the chance to prepare thoroughly. This may be through observing a similar session on previous occasions and/or in dialogue with the colleague who usually delivers it. This is so that you can build up knowledge of the needs, strengths and areas for development of the musicians as you plan for the session that you will lead. It can focus on any aspect of ensemble or group playing/singing that you choose, for example:

- Preparing specific repertoire for performance
- Activities designed to hone the group's ensemble skills and develop its sound
- Working on specific stylistic features of the music, developing the interpretation
- Increasing technical/vocal confidence
- Any genre-specific performance practice.

The session should last 30 minutes ( $\pm 10\%$ ) with you as the director and you will need to provide a single-take video of the whole session as part of your submission. It is important that you pay attention to your verbal, non-verbal and musical communication.

---

This could be through a number of different ways, including:

- How you use gesture and verbal instruction to influence the sound of the group
- Musical interaction with the participant(s)
- Using your voice or other means of musical demonstration
- Directing or leading the ensemble accompaniment to a soloist, etc.

At the end of the video (and included in the 30 minutes), you should direct a short run-through to show how the session has impacted the group's performance of the music you have been working on.

### **Supporting Commentary**

You should create a written submission of 1,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 8 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). This work takes the form of a series of short items organised using additional information provided by ABRSM. These are **not** extended writing tasks.

The Candidate Resource document available at <http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/music-directing> provides detailed information about the additional evidence required:

- A description of the context in which the rehearsal/session will take place.
- An analysis of the previous experience, needs and aspirations of the musicians involved.
- The repertoire you have selected, giving reasons for your choice and a short analysis of the passage(s) you will be working on.
- An overview of what you intend to achieve within the time given, rehearsal/session activities and communication strategies.
- A detailed plan for the rehearsal/session, with timings.
- A short narrative and a detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of your planning for, and delivery of, the rehearsal/session.
- Feedback from musicians in any format of your choice – this could be a couple of minutes at the end of your video submission (not included in the 30-minute assessment duration).
- Lessons learned and any further research needed.

### **What is assessed?**

**Your Music Directing Video:** 30-minute duration ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

**Supporting Commentary:** Written submission of 1,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 8 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). If you choose the spoken option, you do not have to record this at the same time as the Music Directing video.

- You can record your directing video in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be provided on the video recording.
- You can submit the written commentary in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

### **How is it assessed?**

For this component, examiners are looking for demonstrable skills in directing musical work with others, including:

- Realistic and imaginative planning.
- Awareness of, and responsiveness to, the context in which the work is taking place and the needs and aspirations of the group.
- The range of strategies used to engage, motivate and inspire the group.
- The effectiveness of those strategies and how they are adapted in response to the needs of the group/dynamic of the rehearsal.
- The musical behaviours demonstrated where gesture, verbal and non-verbal communication all contribute to the musical outcome
- The ability to reflect on and learn from experience, and to evaluate the effectiveness of work as a music director.

Specific assessment criteria can be found on the relevant pages.

---

## Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context

This unit is designed to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing more generally, and to express the conclusions reached as a result of your developing experience as a music director.

This includes:

- Ways in which you can adapt strategies, activities and resources to suit the needs of a diverse range of musicians working in different contexts.
- Evaluation of your own approach, material and activities, with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of rehearsal and performance situations.
- Making interactions musical.
- Knowledge of your responsibilities as a music director.
- Values and professional behaviours of a music director.
- Self-reflection based on where you are in your directing journey.

### Content

One written **or** spoken submission is required for Unit 1B (15 marks).

You will create a written submission of 2,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 12.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). This work takes the form of a series of responses to four topics chosen by you from a list: one mandatory and three others, to be chosen as indicated from the groups below. Conclude your work with a self-reflection based on where you are in your music directing journey. The tasks have been designed to provide you with the opportunity to showcase your strengths, demonstrating your understanding and developing expertise as a music director.

Using the Candidate Resource available at <http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/music-directing> you must create a submission made up of **five** different tasks:

- One mandatory task, **plus**
- One task chosen from Group A, **plus**
- Two tasks chosen from Group B, **plus**
- A self-reflection.

### Mandatory Task

Your personal ethos and approach as a music director.

**Group A** (choose **one** task from the following):

1. An analysis of your own prior musical experiences and the influence this has had on your approach to music directing.
2. A description of a music directing training event/class you found particularly inspirational and the impact it has had on your directing.
3. An account of how you went about identifying and solving a problem as a music director and the musical approach/communication strategies/activities you chose to achieve your aims.

**Group B** (choose **two** tasks from the following):

1. A case study based on another rehearsal/session you have directed in a different context to that covered in Unit 1A.
2. A short evaluation of two resources and how you have used them to inform your approach to directing.
3. A report detailing two rehearsal/session observations where you were the observer.
4. An example of an original resource/piece of repertoire that you have developed or adapted to use when directing a group.

### Self-reflection

Conclude your work with a self-reflection based on where you are in your music directing journey and how your preparations for this diploma have helped you develop as a director. Word count of 500 ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 2.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).



---

## What is assessed?

This unit is assessed by a piece of written or (video-recorded) spoken work. The spoken work (if chosen) should be recorded separately to the video evidence required for Unit 1A.

- Written submission of 2,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 12.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).
- You can submit the written document in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

## How is it assessed?

For this component, examiners are looking for evidence of analytical skills, well-developed and convincing insights based on current and developing experiences and/or research, confident communication (whether written or spoken), and authentic self-evaluation. Specific assessment criteria can be found on the relevant pages.

---

## Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

This unit is designed to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing in a structured conversation with an examiner, and to express, explore and illustrate the conclusions you have reached as a result of your developing experience as a music director.

### Content

#### Professional Discussion (20 marks)

For this unit, candidates are invited to take part in a professional discussion with an examiner lasting 30 minutes. The discussion will take place using video conferencing software. You are encouraged to have to hand anything you feel would enhance your response, including whatever you might need for demonstration purposes (e.g. sample repertoire and resources, etc). Technical guidance for this part of the diploma is available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

The professional discussion will be led by the examiner and structured as follows:

- Questions arising from the Unit 1 submissions, giving you the opportunity to expand on any information provided and to clarify any areas which would benefit from greater detail. The examiner may, for example, ask you to expand on:
  - the gestural techniques and communication strategies you employed
  - the reasons behind the choice of repertoire and rehearsal activities/strategies
  - the effectiveness of the group set-up
  - the acoustics of the rehearsal venue and any impact they had on the session
  - a music director's responsibilities towards the musicians with whom they are working.
- Scenario-based questions designed to explore the music directing decisions taken, including any differentiation or reactive changes. For example:
  - "If this had been a more/less experienced group, how would you have adapted your approach?"
  - "If this player had not been available, how would you have ensured there was still progression during the rehearsal?"
  - "Are there any additional activities/strategies you can think of that might have enhanced the group's rehearsal experience and/or musical achievement?"
- Questions about anything you have found particularly interesting during your exploration of music directing, such as significant insights drawn from your experience, new resources you have discovered, personal research and reflection, etc.
- Discussion of your self-reflection and any next steps you have identified for your own professional development.

### What is assessed?

You are expected to be able to demonstrate the following:

- Awareness of the context in which music directing takes place.
- The professional behaviours and responsibilities, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful in the role.
- The ability to draw on a broad frame of reference to talk about music directing with insight and understanding.
- The ability to evaluate directing approaches, repertoire, resources, rehearsal strategies and activities.
- The ability to describe and evaluate communication strategies: verbal, non-verbal and musical.
- The ability to communicate the results of your personal research and reflection, drawing on a range of sources.
- The ability to confidently and clearly use specialist musical terminology in your role as music director.
- Description of how this has informed your practice going forwards and any next steps in your own development as a music director.

### How is it assessed?

You are encouraged to draw upon your own experience when answering the questions, providing concrete examples from your own music directing, your observations of others, approaches, activities and resources you have explored, material you have read or researched, etc. Examiners are not looking for one specific answer to each question. Instead, they want to discover your engagement with the role of music director, and the reference of experience and knowledge on which you can draw, based on research and reflection, and the depth of the insights you have to share.

We can conduct the professional discussion in any language, but you must provide your own translator. Further details can be found at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

---

# LRSM in Music Directing

## Introducing the qualification

The LRSM in Music Directing focuses on your ability to plan, deliver and evaluate rehearsal programmes, communicating musically, verbally and non-verbally, in ways which enable the musicians with whom you are working to be motivated and inspired as they work towards a specific performance opportunity. This encompasses a wide range of scenarios. For example, you could be a conductor rehearsing an orchestra, band, choir or other ensemble. You may be working with highly proficient performers or those with less experience. You could be preparing repertoire from any genre, working from notation or alternative musical stimuli, with groups of any size.

Your choice of repertoire, and the strategies and techniques you use for working with it, are integral to the assessment, and you should take account of their suitability to the size, skill level and instrumentation of the group you are working with.

The qualification consists of three parts: **Unit 1A**, **Unit 1B** and **Unit 2**. Each part has a different focus, allowing you to demonstrate a broad range of skills.

### Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice (30 marks) is designed to focus on:

- the quality of your planning for the rehearsals/sessions;
- your awareness of, and responsiveness to, the needs of the musicians with whom you are working;
- the range and creativity of strategies you employ to engage, motivate and inspire musicians;
- the musical behaviours you demonstrate and the confidence with which you do this;
- the quality of your communication: verbal, non-verbal and musical;
- your ability to adapt in the moment to an active situation;
- the impact your work as a director has on the musical performance and progress of the group with whom you are working;
- your ability to reflect on and evaluate your own practice and the success of your initial plans.

### Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context (15 marks) is designed to focus on:

- your understanding of what it means to be a music director, including professional behaviours and communication strategies;
- your adaptation of the range of rehearsal strategies, approaches, activities and resources you have at your disposal;
- the ways in which you employ skills of reflection and self-evaluation to deepen your insight into your own areas of strength and weakness;
- your evaluation of your own approach and that of others;
- your knowledge and understanding of the wider professional considerations of music directing.

### Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice (30 marks) is designed to focus on:

- communication of your insights, research and reflection;
- your critical evaluation and analytical skills;
- discussing the responsibilities, behaviours and communication strategies suitable to the role of music director;
- your knowledge of legal and professional issues around music directing;
- how you engage in a structured conversation with an ABRSM examiner, allowing you to express and explore your work as a music director.

---

## Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice

This unit is designed to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing by working with your group. It focuses on the knowledge, skills and understanding required to plan, deliver, evaluate and reflect upon a series of rehearsals or sessions. This encompasses the range of approaches and communication strategies available to you, how you adapt these to suit the demands of the chosen repertoire, and the needs and musical aspirations of the group with whom you are working.

This includes:

- Awareness of the role of music director: the values, musical knowledge, skills, understanding, professional behaviours and communication strategies that underpin it.
- Ways in which you can adapt strategies, activities, resources and communication to suit the musical aspirations of a specific group of musicians.
- Evaluation of your own approach, material and activities, with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of directing/musical leadership.
- Making interactions musical, where your work as a director has a direct impact on the performance of the group with which you are working.
- Self-reflection based on where you are in your directing journey.
- Knowledge of your responsibilities as a music director.

### Content

Two submissions are required for Unit 1A: Video Evidence **and** Supporting Commentary (30 marks).

#### Video Evidence

A 45-minute video ( $\pm 10\%$ ) focused on work with an ensemble over time towards a specific performance opportunity. It should include a series of examples drawn from rehearsals/sessions you have directed that clearly evidences the ways in which your directing skills have influenced the musical outcome and of the ensemble developing its work over time. These could be drawn from any context where you have been working as a music director/leader.

Some examples of working towards a specific performance opportunity would include:

- Leading a series of rehearsals with an orchestra/band/choir or other ensemble.
- Leading a series of creative sessions with a group where you are improvising/devising a developing piece of music.
- Leading a series of rehearsals with an orchestra/band/choir or other ensemble, working towards a specific competitive or assessment opportunity.
- Leading a series of rehearsals designed to improve the ensemble and musical skills of a less experienced group of players working on a specific piece of repertoire.

It can focus on any type of repertoire or aspect of ensemble playing that you choose. The work captured in your video must be sustained over a number of rehearsals with the same group and be delivered to concrete rehearsal plans, against which you can evaluate your effectiveness. Work can focus on any aspect of musical development that you choose but must evidence a process leading towards a final performance. Some examples of topics are:

- Preparing specific repertoire for performance.
- Activities designed to hone the group's ensemble skills and develop its sound.
- Working on specific stylistic features of the music, developing the interpretation.
- Increasing technical/vocal confidence.
- Contemporary performance practice.

The video evidence may take place at any point during the rehearsal period, but it must demonstrate progress over time culminating in the ensemble performing a selection of the music (10–15 minutes) that has been worked on. This could be one or several complete works or excerpts of longer works.

You must ensure that the video demonstrates your directing in action and captures real musical improvement on the part of those you are working with, against a set of clear aims you have planned for. It is important you pay attention to how you will communicate musically, verbally and non-verbally as this forms part of the assessment.

---

This could be through a number of different ways, such as:

- How you use gesture and verbal instruction to influence the sound of the group.
- Musical interaction with the participant(s).
- Creative music-making.
- Using your voice or other means of musical demonstration.
- Directing or leading the ensemble accompaniment to a soloist, etc.

At the end of the video (and included in the 45 minutes), you should direct a single-take 10–15-minute performance, to show how the rehearsal process has impacted on the group's performance of the music you have been working on.

### **Supporting Commentary**

You should create a written commentary of 3,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 16 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). The content of this work takes the form of a series of short items, organised using additional information provided by ABRSM. These are not extended writing tasks.

The Candidate Resource document available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/music-directing](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/music-directing) provides detailed information about the additional evidence required, which includes:

- A description of the context in which the sessions are taking place.
- An analysis of the previous experience, needs and aspirations of the musicians involved.
- A plan of what you intend to achieve and the reasons for choosing the content, activities and strategies.
- An accompanying narrative or directing diary containing your ongoing self-reflection.
- Detailed plans, with timings, covering the sessions from which you have taken the video clips.
- A mechanism for capturing feedback from musicians.
- A detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of your planning for, and delivery of, these specific sessions and any lessons learned.
- A self-reflection detailing next steps for your own development/further research.

### **What is assessed?**

**Your Music Directing Video:** 45-minute duration ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

**Supporting Commentary:** Written submission of 3,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 16 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). If you choose the spoken option, this does not have to be recorded at the same time as the Music Directing video.

- You can record your directing video in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be provided on the video recording.
- You can submit the written commentary in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

### **How is it assessed?**

For this component, examiners are looking for demonstrable skills in leading musical work with others over a number of rehearsals/sessions including:

- Realistic and imaginative large-scale planning.
- Awareness of, and responsiveness to, the context in which the work is taking place, the needs and aspiration of the group and the demands of the repertoire chosen.
- The range of strategies used to engage, motivate and inspire the group.
- The musical behaviours demonstrated, where gesture, verbal and non-verbal communication all contribute to the musical outcome.
- The confident and impactful use of various types of feedback given to the group.
- The ability to reflect on, and learn from, experience and to evaluate the effectiveness of work as a music director.

Specific assessment criteria can be found on the relevant pages.

---

## Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context

This unit is designed to give you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing more generally, and to express the conclusions reached as a result of your developing experience as a music director.

This includes:

- Ways in which you can adapt strategies, techniques and approaches to suit the needs of a diverse range of musicians working in different contexts.
- Evaluation of your own approach to a range of repertoire and strategies for working musically with others, with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of rehearsal and performance situations.
- Making interactions musical.
- Knowledge of your responsibilities as a music director.
- Values and professional behaviours of a musical director.
- Self-reflection based on where you are in your directing journey.

### Content

One written **or** spoken submission is required for Unit 1B (15 marks).

You will create a written submission of 2,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 12.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). This work takes the form of a series of responses to four topics chosen by you from a list: two from Group A and two from Group B, to be chosen as indicated from the groups below. Conclude your work with a self-reflection based on where you are in your music directing journey. The tasks have been designed to provide you with the opportunity to showcase your strengths, demonstrating your understanding and developing expertise as a music director.

Using the Candidate Resource available at <http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/music-directing> you must create a submission made up of **five** different tasks:

- Two tasks chosen from Group A, **plus**
- Two tasks chosen from Group B, **plus**
- A self-reflection.

#### Group A (select **two**):

1. An account of how you identified and solved a problem as a music director, and the musical approach/communication strategies/activities you chose in order to achieve your aims.
2. An account of, when taking on music directing responsibilities in a previously unfamiliar context, the ways in which you had to adapt your approach to suit different types of musicians and meet their needs.
3. An account, with examples, of your approach to nurturing musical progression and how you evaluate your success as a music director.
4. An account of any legislation that impacts on you as a music director, and what your professional responsibilities are towards those with whom you are working.

#### Group B (select **two**):

1. A short evaluation of two resources and how you have used them to inform your approach to directing.
2. A report detailing two rehearsals/sessions where you were the observer.
3. An example of an original resource/musical approach that you have developed or adapted to use when directing a group, with a rationale or contextual information.
4. An example of a piece of repertoire that you have arranged for use when directing a group, with a score and a rationale or contextual information.

#### Self-reflection

Conclude your work with a self-reflection based on where you are in your music directing journey and how your preparations for this diploma have helped you develop as a director. Word count of 500 ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 2.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

---

## What is assessed?

This unit is assessed by a piece of written work or (video-recorded) spoken work. The spoken work (if chosen) should be recorded separately to the video evidence required for Unit 1A.

- Written submission of 2,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 12.5 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).
- You can submit the written document in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

## How is it assessed?

For this component, examiners are looking for evidence of analytical skills, well-developed and convincing insights based on thorough and relevant research, confident communication (whether written or spoken) and thorough self-evaluation based on significant personal commitment and thought. Specific assessment criteria can be found on the relevant pages.

---

## Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

This unit is designed to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing in a structured conversation with an examiner, and to express, explore and illustrate the conclusions you have reached as a result of your developing experience as a music director.

### Content

#### Professional Discussion (30 marks)

For this unit, candidates are invited to take part in a professional discussion with an examiner lasting 40 minutes. The discussion will take place using video conferencing software. You are encouraged to have to hand anything you feel would enhance your response, including whatever you might need for demonstration purposes (e.g. sample repertoire and resources, etc). Technical guidance for this part of the diploma is available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

The professional discussion will be led by the examiner and structured as follows:

- Questions arising from the Unit 1 submissions, giving you the opportunity to expand on any information provided and to clarify any areas which would benefit from greater detail. The examiner may, for example, ask you to expand on any of the areas listed below and how they may have impacted on your effectiveness as a music director:
  - the gestural techniques and communication strategies you employed
  - the reasons behind the choice of repertoire and rehearsal activities/strategies
  - the effectiveness of the group set-up
  - the acoustics of the rehearsal venue and any impact they had on the rehearsal/session
  - a music directors' responsibilities towards the musicians with whom they are working.
- Scenario-based questions designed to explore the directing decisions taken, including any differentiation or reactive changes. For example:
  - "If this had been a more/less experienced group, how would you have adapted your approach?"
  - "If this player had not been available, how would you have ensured there was still progression during the rehearsal?"
  - "Are there any additional activities/strategies you can think of that might have enhanced the group's rehearsal experience and/or musical achievement?"
- Questions about the additional responsibilities of a music director around health and safety, safeguarding, copyright and performing licenses.
- Questions about anything you have found particularly interesting during your exploration of music directing, such as significant insights drawn from your experience, new resources you have discovered, personal research and reflection, etc.
- Discussion of your self-reflection and any next steps you have identified for your own professional development.

#### What is assessed?

You are expected to be able to demonstrate the following:

- Awareness of the context in which music directing takes place.
- Understanding of the underlying principles and values of music directing, the role of music director and its inherent responsibilities.
- The ability to draw on a broad frame of reference to talk about music directing with insight and understanding.
- The ability to evaluate directing approaches, repertoire and resources, rehearsal strategies and activities.
- The ability to describe and evaluate communication strategies: verbal, non-verbal and musical.
- The ability to communicate the results of your personal research and reflection, drawing on a range of sources.
- The ability to confidently and clearly use specialist musical terminology in your role as music director.
- Description of how your preparation for this qualification has informed your own practice and any next steps you will take in your development as a music director.



---

## **How is it assessed?**

You are encouraged to draw upon your own experience when answering the questions, providing concrete examples from your own music directing, your observations of others, approaches, activities and resources you have explored, material you have read or researched, etc. Examiners are not looking for one specific answer to each question. Instead, they want to discover your engagement with the role of music director, and the reference of experience and knowledge on which you can draw, based on personal research and reflection, and the depth of the insights you have to share.

We can conduct the professional discussion in any language, but you must provide your own translator. Further details can be found at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

---

# ARSM and LRSM administrative information

## Submitting written or spoken evidence for Units 1A and 1B

In addition to a live recording of music directing (Unit 1A), candidates must also submit the supporting commentary for Unit 1A and the submissions for Unit 1B, which can be either written or spoken (video-recorded) at their choice. All evidence must be uploaded at the same time.

Candidates should be aware of the following:

- For quality assurance purposes, candidates should use their ABRSM Contact ID, not their name, on any submitted work.
- Submitted work may not be re-used at another level of ABRSM diploma, although reference to it can be made.
- ABRSM reserves the right to refuse examination of any submitted work if it contains material of an unsuitable nature.
- ABRSM regrets that it cannot return any submitted work; candidates are advised to keep a copy for their records.

## Video of Music Directing evidence

This can be recorded in any language. If it is in a language other than English, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

The video of music directing must:

- be recorded with the candidate and musicians visible to camera throughout;
- contain uninterrupted music directing rehearsals/sessions;
- follow the recording and submission guidance at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance);
- be recorded in one continuous take (ARSM only);
- include a spoken introduction by the candidate, which includes:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - length of video.

## Written evidence format

This can be written in any language. If it is in a language other than English, a full translation must be provided.

The documents must be in the following format:

- Typed and saved as a PDF.
- All pages must be numbered.
- The front page must contain:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - word count (excluding any self-reflections, footnotes, bibliography/discography).
- The work must be consistent in its presentation and referencing style.

## Spoken evidence format

This can be recorded in any language. If it is in a language other than English, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

The spoken evidence must:

- be saved in an identical video format to the Unit 1A video of music directing;
- be recorded with the candidate visible to the camera throughout;
- follow the recording and submission guidance at <http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance>;
- include a spoken introduction by the candidate, which includes:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - length of video (excluding any self-reflections, footnotes, bibliography/discography);
- include reference to sources, including bibliography/discography.

The spoken evidence does not have to be recorded in one continuous take.

---

## **Professional discussion**

This will be conducted online, using video conferencing software. ABRSM will schedule the discussion between the candidate and examiner. Guidance is available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

## **Declaration of genuine work**

All evidence must be the candidate's own. Candidates are required to complete the Candidate Declaration Form as part of the online submission process.

## **Photocopies**

The use of unauthorised photocopies of copyright music is not allowed. We may withhold the exam result where there is evidence of an illegal copy (or copies) being used. In the UK, copies may be used in some limited circumstances. For full details, see the MPA's Code of Fair Practice at [www.mpaonline.org.uk](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk).

## **Venues and equipment**

The video of music directing is made at a venue of the candidate's choosing. This can be any location with appropriate space and equipment. The candidate is responsible for organising the venue.

## **Making the recording**

For ARSM, the music directing rehearsal/session must be recorded in one continuous take and the recording must not be paused at any point during that take. The play-through of the repertoire rehearsed should be included in the same continuous take.

For LRSM, multiple extracts from a number of music direction rehearsals/sessions are required; each extract should be uninterrupted.

If candidates are under 18, the recording process must be overseen by a Responsible Adult (aged 18 or over).

Candidates must ensure that parental permission for musicians under the age of 18 to be recorded for the purpose of this assessment has been given.

Detailed instructions on how to record and submit the evidence are given in the guidance available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

## **Overlong evidence**

The examiner may stop assessing any evidence that exceeds either the maximum word count or duration.

---

# FRSM in Music Directing

## Introducing the qualification

The FRSM in Music Directing focuses on your ability to deeply reflect on your experience in directing, how you impact others, significant personal research and knowledge of music direction more widely, and how you synthesise these into a single original piece of work. The work you produce can be either practical in nature or more academic in focus, depending on the pathway you choose.

The qualification consists of two parts: **Unit 1** and **Unit 2**. Each part has a different focus, allowing you to demonstrate a broad range of skills.

The work on which you base your submission could have taken place and/or be taking place in a range of contexts. For example, you could be an experienced orchestral/choral conductor, band director, musical theatre MD or a musical leader creating/devising music. You may be working with highly proficient performers or those with less experience. You could be preparing repertoire from any genre, working from notation or alternative musical stimuli with groups of any size. You may, instead, be focusing on music direction from a more academic standpoint.

You can choose **one** of two different pathways for this diploma:

**A. Public performance**

**B. Extended research**

Pre-approval of your chosen area of study must be obtained before beginning work. Irrespective of the option you choose, you are required to submit a detailed description of the work you intend to undertake for ABRSM to provide feedback and to ensure it is sufficient in scope to meet the requirements of the qualification.

Once your proposal is approved and your Unit 1 submission has been received, you will then be invited to take part in a professional discussion with an examiner which will allow you to discuss your submission in more depth, as well as giving you the opportunity to demonstrate your broad and deep knowledge of music direction more widely.

---

# Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice

This unit allows you to demonstrate your wide knowledge of music direction to create a significant performance or original piece of work. This should draw upon a combination of your deep experience in the field of music direction, extensive personal research, profound skills of self-reflection and self-evaluation, wide knowledge of current trends and significant developments, and astute interpretative and evaluative insight into the discipline of directing music. Depending on the option chosen, this will include:

- Awareness of the role of music director: the values, musical knowledge, skills and understanding, professional behaviours and communication skills that underpin it.
- Ways in which you can adapt approaches and communication strategies to suit the demands of the chosen repertoire and the needs and musical aspirations of a specific group of musicians.
- Evaluation of your own approach, material and activities, with a sensitive understanding of the dynamics of directing/music leadership.
- Broad, deep and nuanced understanding of the music you are directing, informed by sophisticated analytical and interpretative skills.
- Making interactions musical, where your work as a director has a direct impact on the performance of the group with which you are working.
- Self-reflection based on where you are in your directing journey.
- Knowledge of your responsibilities as a music director.

Candidates must choose **one** of the two options detailed below.

## Content

### Option A: Public Performance and Supporting Commentary (45 marks)

#### Public Performance

For Option A, you are required to create a 55-minute video ( $\pm 10\%$ ) focused on work with an ensemble leading towards a public performance. The video must include 20 minutes of rehearsal with a group in preparation for a public performance and 30–35 minutes of directing the group in a public performance. The performance should be in a single take, unedited, and clearly show you as the director and at least some of the musicians performing. Some examples would include:

- Part of a concert
- A Military/Parade Band for a specific occasion
- An act or scenes from a Musical Theatre work
- An improvisatory performance or piece devised by the musicians themselves.

You must ensure that the video demonstrates your directing in action, capturing assured and authoritative musical direction on your part, considering the expectations of the musicians with whom you are working, the demands of the repertoire you choose, and the context of a public performance.

#### Supporting Commentary

In addition to your video, you should create a commentary of 3,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 17 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). The purpose of this is to provide contextual information about the group with which you are working, the repertoire chosen, the rehearsal process, the musical and interpretative decisions you made, and the venue and audience for the performance.

You can present this in any format you choose, making sure you include:

- A description of the group with which you are working: its prior experience, strengths and weaknesses.
- The repertoire you have chosen to work on with this group and why.
- How you prepared the repertoire and started making interpretative decisions, including any research you had to undertake to inform those decisions and how they might have changed over time.
- An outline of the rehearsal process and any insights you developed during that time, reflecting on your own performance and that of others.
- An accompanying narrative or rehearsal diary containing your ongoing self-reflection.
- A detailed evaluation of the effectiveness of your planning for, and delivery of, the rehearsals and lessons learned.
- Specific techniques you had to develop or employ to achieve the musical results you wanted.
- An evaluation of the performance as a whole in relation to your musical aims, and the expectations and experience of the audience.
- A self-reflection detailing next steps for your own development/further research.

---

If you choose this option, you must first submit a detailed description of the work you intend to undertake for ABRSM to provide feedback. This initial submission must contain the following information:

- Context for the performance and rationale for undertaking it, for example:
  - The standard of the musicians and the impact you are seeking to make
  - Any unmet needs of the ensemble that you are seeking to address
  - Your approach to planning and preparation
  - Choice of venue, with rationale.
- A short summary of the group's experience.
- The proposed repertoire for the performance, with rationale.

You should not embark on the work until you have had feedback on this initial submission from ABRSM. Please submit your proposal via email to [syllabus@abrsm.ac.uk](mailto:syllabus@abrsm.ac.uk).

### **Guidelines for repertoire selection**

When choosing their programme, candidates should consider:

- The types of repertoire best suited to the specific ensemble they are directing. This includes the size, skill level and instrumentation of the ensemble.
- Selecting repertoire that provides appropriate personal challenge to the director. This might include:
  - Complexity in rhythm
  - Complexity in harmony
  - Complexity of musical structure
  - Interpretive demands
  - Ensemble co-ordination, including any soloists.
- Curating a programme that effectively displays the diversity and breadth of their knowledge, and demonstrates their versatility and adaptability as music directors. This includes:
  - A range of musical approaches and rehearsal strategies
  - A range of communication strategies: musical, verbal and gestural.

Part of the professional discussion will include a rationale for repertoire selection. Candidates will be required to articulate why they chose specific pieces, how the pieces align with the ensemble's capabilities, and what they aim to achieve musically and technically through the repertoire.

### **What is assessed?**

**Music Directing Video:** 55-minute duration ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

**Supporting Commentary:** Written submission of 3,500 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 17 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ). If you choose the spoken option, you do not have to record this at the same time as the Music Directing video.

- You can record your directing video in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be provided on the video recording.
- You can submit the written commentary in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

### **How is it assessed?**

For this component, examiners are looking for demonstrable skills in leading musical work with others in the context of a live public performance, including:

- Realistic and imaginative planning, with extensive detail and specifics in the commentary.
- Awareness of, and responsiveness to, the context in which candidates are working, the needs and musical aspirations of the group and the demands of the repertoire chosen.
- The range of strategies used to inspire the group musically in the moment.
- The musical behaviours demonstrated, where gesture and non-verbal communication are critical to the musical outcome.
- The confident and impactful use of a wide range of techniques, commensurate with the demands of the repertoire presented.
- The ability to reflect on and learn from experience, and to evaluate the effectiveness of work as a music director.

---

### **Option B: Extended Research** (45 marks)

For Option B, you are required to create a piece of work equivalent to 10,000 words ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 50 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

Some examples of the types of original work that would be suitable for submission for this unit are:

- A significant piece of academic research in the field of music direction, for example, covering the interpretation of certain repertoire, the development of directing skills in specific contexts or to suit the demands of specific repertoire.
- A substantial programme of training for music directors, with supporting resources.
- A detailed outline for a programme of creative work with a specific group of musicians, or of preparation for a specific performance event.
- A detailed evaluation through the lens of a music director of a musical institution such as a venue, festival or training provider (or a comparative study of more than one).

If you choose this option, you will first submit a detailed description of the work you intend to undertake for ABRSM to provide feedback on. This initial submission must contain the following information:

- Context for the work and rationale for undertaking it.
- A short summary of your experience and why you have chosen to focus on this topic.
- For academic research:
  - The research question you are posing
  - How you intend to structure your work.
- For training or programme design:
  - The types of musicians you are seeking to influence
  - The unmet needs you are seeking to address
  - The working method you intend to adopt.
- For detailed evaluation:
  - The subjects you intend to study
  - The methodology you intend to use.
- For submissions (or parts of submissions) which are in a format other than the written or spoken word, such as visual art, music, film:
  - How you intend to reach the word count equivalence (extent of resources, number of web pages, etc.)
  - The research question you are posing
  - How you intend to structure your work.

You should not embark on the work until you have had feedback on this initial submission from ABRSM. Please submit your proposal via email to [syllabus@abrs.ac.uk](mailto:syllabus@abrs.ac.uk).

### **What is assessed?**

Written submission of 10,000 words (or equivalent) ( $\pm 10\%$ ) or 50 minutes spoken ( $\pm 10\%$ ).

- You can submit the written document in any language. If English is not used, a certified translation into English must be provided at the same time. All written evidence must be uploaded in PDF format.
- You may speak in any language. If English is not used, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

### **How is it assessed?**

For this component, examiners are looking for work that signifies an original contribution to the discipline of music directing. Your work will be assessed on the range of skills you demonstrate as a music directing specialist, including your subject matter expertise in a chosen area, your ability to design and conduct original research using appropriate methodologies, and your broad and deep understanding of directing techniques and the underpinning musical knowledge and understanding.

Specific assessment criteria can be found on the relevant pages.

---

## Unit 2: Music Direction and Reflective Practice

This unit is designed to allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of music directing in a structured conversation with an examiner, and to express, explore and illustrate the conclusions you have reached as a result of your developing experience as a music director.

### Content

#### Professional Discussion (30 marks)

For this unit, candidates are invited to take part in a professional discussion with an examiner lasting 50 minutes. The discussion will take place using video conferencing software. You are encouraged to have to hand anything you feel would enhance your response, including whatever you might need for demonstration purposes (e.g. sample repertoire and resources, etc). Technical guidance for this part of the diploma is available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

The professional discussion will be led by the examiner and structured as follows:

- A 10-minute spoken summary of the content of your Unit 1 submission and the headline conclusions reached.
- The examiner will then ask questions arising from the summary, giving you the opportunity to expand on any information provided and clarify any areas which would benefit from greater detail.
- Questions on the approach taken to the work submitted: how you formulated the plan, any research undertaken, how plans changed in the light of experience, etc.
- Questions on the conclusions reached or the work that has been developed, the impact on your practice and the implications for others working as music directors.
- Questions about anything you have found particularly interesting during your exploration of music directing, such as significant insights drawn from your experience, new resources you have discovered, personal research and reflection, etc.
- Questions to determine your approach to carrying out your responsibilities as a music director, including any relevant legal frameworks such as copyright law, performance rights, etc.
- Questions about wider trends in music directing, inviting you to identify significant recent developments that impact your own work and that of others. For example, how venues and festivals programme music, working in a digital age, etc.
- Your self-reflection and detailed evaluation of your own professional development.

#### What is assessed?

You are expected to be able to demonstrate the following:

- High-level critical evaluation and analytical skills.
- Authoritative communication of the results of personal research and reflection, drawing on a wide range of sources.
- Insight into broad trends in music directing allied to a strong sense of how you might want to guide colleagues and influence and persuade decision-makers.
- A sensitive and nuanced understanding of the needs of musicians working in a range of contexts.
- Full professional awareness of the legalities and responsibilities of working as a music director.
- Original thought, supported by strong evidence.
- Persuasive communication skills and a creative approach towards music directing.

#### How is it assessed?

You are encouraged to draw upon your own experience when answering the questions, providing authentic and genuine examples from your work in the field of music directing. The examiners are exploring the extent to which you are fully engaged in and knowledgeable about the discipline of music directing and the music industry more widely, the breadth of the frame of reference on which you can draw based on personal research and reflection, and the depth, impact and originality of the insights you have to share.

We can conduct the professional discussion in any language, but you must provide your own translator. Further details can be found in the guidance at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).



---

# FRSM administrative information

## Submitting written or spoken evidence for Unit 1 (Options A or B)

In addition to a recording of music directing, candidates must also submit the supporting evidence, which can be either written or spoken (video-recorded) at their choice. All the evidence must be uploaded at the same time.

Candidates should be aware of the following:

- For quality assurance purposes, candidates should use their ABRSM Contact ID, not their name, on any submitted work.
- Work previously submitted for another ABRSM diploma may not be re-used, although reference to it can be made.
- ABRSM reserves the right to refuse examination of any submitted work if it contains material of an unsuitable nature.
- ABRSM regrets that it cannot return any submitted work; candidates are advised to keep a copy for their records.

## Video of Music Directing evidence

This can be recorded in any language. If it is in a language other than English, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

The video of music directing must:

- be recorded with the candidate and musicians visible to camera throughout;
- follow the recording and submission guidance at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance);
- be recorded in one continuous take (the performance);
- include a spoken introduction by the candidate, which includes:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - length of video.

## Written evidence format

This can be written in any language. If it is in a language other than English, a full translation must be provided.

The documents must be in the following format:

- Typed and saved as a PDF.
- All pages must be numbered.
- The front page must contain:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - word count (excluding any footnotes, bibliography/discography).
- The work must be consistent in its presentation and referencing style.

## Spoken evidence format

This can be recorded in any language. If it is in a language other than English, English subtitles must be included on the video recording and a full translation provided.

The spoken evidence must:

- be recorded with the candidate visible to camera throughout;
- follow the recording and submission guidance at <http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance>;
- include a spoken introduction by the candidate, which includes:
  - ABRSM Contact ID
  - date
  - length of video (excluding any footnotes, bibliography/discography);
- include reference to sources, including bibliography/discography.

The spoken evidence does not have to be recorded in one continuous take.

---

## **Professional discussion**

This will be conducted online, using video conferencing software. ABRSM will schedule the discussion between the candidate and examiner. Guidance is available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

## **Declaration of genuine work**

All evidence must be the candidate's own. Candidates are required to complete the Candidate Declaration Form as part of the online submission process.

## **Photocopies**

The use of unauthorised photocopies of copyright music is not allowed. We may withhold the exam result where there is evidence of an illegal copy (or copies) being used. In the UK, copies may be used in some limited circumstances. For full details, see the MPA's Code of Fair Practice at [www.mpaonline.org.uk](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk).

## **Venues and equipment**

The video of music directing is made at a venue of the candidate's choosing. This can be any location with appropriate space and equipment. The candidate is responsible for organising the venue.

## **Making the recording**

For Option A, performances must be recorded in one continuous take and the recording must not be paused at any point during that take.

Candidates must ensure that parental permission for musicians under the age of 18 to be recorded for the purpose of this assessment has been given.

Detailed instructions on how to record and submit the evidence are given in the guidance available at [www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance](http://www.abrsm.org/other-assessments/diplomas/guidance).

## **Overlong evidence**

The examiner may stop assessing any evidence that exceeds either the maximum word count or duration.

# ARSM assessment and marking

## Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The following table describes the level of knowledge and skills required of the candidate. It also shows the specific expertise successful candidates will be able to demonstrate.

### ARSM (RQF Level 4)

Assessment objectives	Learning outcomes
<p>Create a portfolio based on a session or rehearsal you have led as a musical director, including video recordings, session plans, musical analysis, rehearsal strategies and self-evaluation. Present your research, reflections and proposed next steps for further development of your practice clearly and persuasively.</p> <p><b>30%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Present a portfolio reflecting proficiency in music directing to include planning, a range of musical approaches and rehearsal strategies, and evidence of a range of musical, verbal and gestural communication strategies.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate competency in directing music by leading inclusive sessions that adapt to the needs of musicians, integrating different approaches to inspire and motivate musical achievement.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate an understanding of musical concepts and directing techniques and, through self-evaluation and reflection, identify areas for development.</li> </ol>
<p>Prepare a submission based on your wider practice, articulating your own ethos as a director and reflecting on different aspects of the role.</p> <p><b>30%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop an understanding of the wider context of professional practice in music directing, connecting concepts with practical experience.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate an awareness of the underlying principles and values of music directing, including the musical and interpersonal behaviours of a music director.</li> <li>3. Communicate a thorough knowledge of the different techniques and strategies relevant to music directing that engage and support.</li> </ol>
<p>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of music directing by discussing, clearly and in detail, your submitted work, broader themes in music directing and the results of your self-reflection and evaluation, using practical examples where appropriate.</p> <p><b>40%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate a well-developed understanding of music directing concepts, techniques and approaches, both musical and interpersonal.</li> <li>2. Generate responses that are supported by evidence, insight and experience.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate competency in music directing and the ability to articulate perspectives and to self-reflect with maturity.</li> </ol>

### Mark allocation

Marks are allocated for each component of the assessment, as shown in the table below.

Component	Maximum marks	% of total mark
<i>Music Directing in Practice</i>	15	30%
<i>Music Directing in Context</i>	15	30%
<i>Music Directing and Reflective Practice</i>	20	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Result categories

The result categories for the ARSM diploma are set as follows. A Pass in each component of the assessment is not required to pass overall.

Result category	Mark band
<i>Distinction</i>	45-50
<i>Merit</i>	40-44
<i>Pass</i>	34-39
<i>Below Pass 1</i>	25-33
<i>Below Pass 2</i>	17-24

## Assessment criteria – Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice

Distinction 15-14 marks	Merit 13-12 marks	Pass 11-10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, sensitive and nuanced awareness of the context in which the session is taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Authoritative musical communication strategies; directing techniques have an authoritative and inspiring impact on the musical performance of the group.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is assured and shows considerable empathy with their needs.</li> <li>• Planning, repertoire, techniques and strategies are suitable and they engage, include and motivate musicians; there is strong evidence that the aims of the session have been met in full.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection, identifying substantive next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough awareness of the context in which the session is taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Effective musical communication strategies; directing techniques have a convincing impact on the musical performance of the group.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is effective and shows clear empathy with their needs.</li> <li>• Planning, repertoire, techniques and strategies are suitable and they engage and include musicians; there is clear evidence that the aims of the session have been met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection, identifying clear next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overall awareness of the context in which the session is taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Reliable musical communication strategies; directing techniques have a clear impact on the musical performance of the group.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is good and shows overall empathy with their needs.</li> <li>• Planning, repertoire, techniques and strategies are suitable; there is some evidence that the aims of the session have been met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection, identifying some next steps for own development.</li> </ul>

Below Pass 1 9-7 marks	Below Pass 2 6-5 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of the context in which the session is taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Inconsistently reliable musical communication strategies; directing techniques have limited impact on the musical performance of the group.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is inconsistently clear and shows limited empathy with their needs.</li> <li>• Planning, repertoire, techniques and strategies are only partially suitable; there is evidence that the aims of the session have been only partly met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection, and of identifying next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no awareness of the context in which the session is taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Poor musical communication strategies; directing techniques have little or no impact on the musical performance of the group.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is weak and shows little or no empathy with their needs.</li> <li>• Planning is minimal, and repertoire, techniques and strategies are unsuitable; there is evidence that the aims of the session have not been met.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection, nor of identifying next steps for own development.</li> </ul>

## Assessment criteria – Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context

Distinction 15–14 marks	Merit 13–12 marks	Pass 11–10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles, values, professional behaviours and communication strategies inherent in the role of music director are authoritative, nuanced and relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is appropriate throughout.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by deep musical understanding, is excellent and considers a broad range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles, values, professional behaviours and communication strategies inherent in the role of music director are convincing and relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is mostly appropriate.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by strong musical understanding is convincing and considers a range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles, values, professional behaviours and communication strategies inherent in the role of music director are relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is generally appropriate.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by clear understanding is well-informed and considers some approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>
Below Pass 1 9–7 marks	Below Pass 2 6–5 marks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles, values, professional behaviours and communication strategies inherent in the role of music director are unconvincing with limited relevance to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is rarely appropriate.</li> <li>The submission shows limited musical understanding and considers a limited range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians, underpinned by limited musical understanding.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles, values, professional behaviours and communication strategies inherent in the role of music director are lacking and/or irrelevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Specialist terminology is not appropriately used.</li> <li>The submission shows little or no musical understanding and considers few techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians, underpinned by little or no musical understanding.</li> <li>Lacking self-evaluation with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	

## Assessment criteria – Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

Distinction 20–19 marks	Merit 18–17 marks	Pass 16–14 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, sensitive and nuanced awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are confident and highly detailed, demonstrating extensive knowledge and deep understanding; conclusions are supported by strong experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are extensive and convincing, with evidence of detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Strong evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are detailed, demonstrating a breadth of knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by clear experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are convincing, with evidence of detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Clear evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overall awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have some detail, demonstrating good overall knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are good, with evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Some evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>
Below Pass 1 13–10 marks		Below Pass 2 9–7 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are unconvincing and lack detail; conclusions are supported by little experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are unconvincing, with limited evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Limited evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have little or no detail; conclusions are unsupported by experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Lacking insights into music directing, with little or no evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Little or no evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>

# LRSM assessment and marking

## Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The following table describes the level of knowledge and skills required of the candidate. It also shows the specific expertise successful candidates will be able to demonstrate.

### LRSM (RQF Level 6)

Assessment objectives	Learning outcomes
<p>Create a portfolio of evidence based on your own practice, drawing together video clips demonstrating musical progression over time, and supported by plans, resources, activities and self-evaluation. Present persuasively and convincingly the results of your extensive research and reflection and proposed next steps for further development of your practice. <b>40%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Present a portfolio reflecting proficiency in music directing to include planning, a range of musical approaches and rehearsal strategies, and evidence of a range of sophisticated technical skills and musical, verbal and gestural communication strategies.</li> <li>2. Direct music in a way which engages musicians and adapts to their needs, integrating different approaches to inspire them to respond musically.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate an understanding of musical concepts and a range of directing techniques and, through self-evaluation and reflection, target specific areas for development.</li> </ol>
<p>Prepare a submission based on your wider practice, drawing together self-reflective work and different elements of the music directing role. <b>20%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate a deep understanding of the wider context of professional practice in music directing, connecting concepts to a breadth of practical experience.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate an awareness of the underlying principles and values of music directing, including the musical and interpersonal behaviours of a music director.</li> <li>3. Communicate a thorough knowledge of the different techniques and strategies relevant to rehearsing and directing music that motivate and inspire.</li> </ol>
<p>Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of music directing and the rehearsal process by discussing, clearly and in detail, your submitted work, broader themes in music directing and the results of your self-reflection and evaluation, using practical examples where appropriate. <b>40%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate a comprehensive and sophisticated understanding of music directing concepts, techniques and approaches, both musical and interpersonal.</li> <li>2. Articulate and defend approaches to preparing, rehearsing and directing music, supported by evidence, insight and broad experiences.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate, through nuanced and well-supported responses in dialogue with an examiner: directing expertise that integrates different perspectives and concepts, reflective independent thought, critical reflection and self-evaluation.</li> </ol>

### Mark allocation

Marks are allocated for each component of the assessment, as shown in the table below.

Component	Maximum marks	% of total mark
<i>Music Directing in Practice</i>	30	40%
<i>Music Directing in Context</i>	15	20%
<i>Music Directing and Reflective Practice</i>	30	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Result categories

The result categories for the LRSM diploma are set as follows. A Pass in each component of the assessment is not required to pass overall.

Result category	Mark band
<i>Distinction</i>	68-75
<i>Merit</i>	60-67
<i>Pass</i>	50-59
<i>Below Pass 1</i>	37-49
<i>Below Pass 2</i>	25-36

# Assessment criteria – Unit 1A: Music Directing in Practice

Distinction 30-27 marks	Merit 26-24 marks	Pass 23-20 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, sensitive and nuanced awareness of the context in which the rehearsals/sessions are taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Authoritative musical communication strategies; music is at the forefront of the interaction and there is compelling evidence of musical improvement over time.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is assured; directing techniques and approaches are highly effective and suitable to the repertoire chosen.</li> <li>• Planning, approaches and resources are highly effective and adaptable; musicians are engaged and musically inspired; there is strong evidence that the aims of the rehearsals/sessions have been met in full.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection, identifying substantive next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough awareness of the context in which the rehearsals/sessions are taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Effective musical communication strategies; music is central to the interaction and there is clear evidence of musical improvement over time.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is convincing; directing techniques and approaches are effective and suitable to the repertoire chosen.</li> <li>• Planning, approaches and resources are effective and adaptable; musicians are engaged and musically motivated; there is clear evidence that the aims of the rehearsals/sessions have been met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection, identifying clear next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overall awareness of the context in which the rehearsals/sessions are taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Reliable musical communication strategies; interactions have a musical focus and there is evidence of musical improvement over time.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is good; directing techniques and approaches have impact and are largely suitable to the repertoire chosen.</li> <li>• Planning, approaches and resources are largely effective; musicians are engaged; there is some evidence that the aims of the rehearsals/sessions have been met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection, identifying some next steps for own development.</li> </ul>

*(continued)*



Below Pass 1 19-15 marks	Below Pass 2 14-10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of the context in which the rehearsals/sessions are taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Inconsistently reliable musical communication; music is not central to the interaction and there is inconsistent evidence of musical improvement over time.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is inconsistently clear; directing techniques and approaches lack impact and are not always suitable to the repertoire chosen.</li> <li>• Planning, approaches and resources chosen are only partially suitable and show limited adaptability; there is evidence that the aims of the rehearsals/sessions have been only partly met.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection, and of identifying next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no awareness of the context in which the rehearsals/sessions are taking place, the needs and aspirations of musicians, the demands of the repertoire chosen and the impact on directing choices.</li> <li>• Poor musical communication; music is largely absent from the interaction and there is little or no evidence of musical improvement over time.</li> <li>• Verbal and non-verbal communication with musicians is weak; directing techniques and approaches are unsuitable to the repertoire chosen.</li> <li>• Planning is minimal, and approaches and resources chosen are unsuitable; there is evidence that the aims of the rehearsals/sessions have not been met.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection, nor of identifying next steps for own development.</li> </ul>

# Assessment criteria – Unit 1B: Music Directing in Context

Distinction 15-14 marks	Merit 13-12 marks	Pass 11-10 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles and values of music directing, and the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, are authoritative, nuanced and relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is appropriate throughout; underpinning musical knowledge and understanding is sophisticated and deep.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by deep musical understanding and relevant research, is excellent and considers a broad range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles and values of music directing, and the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, are convincing and relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is mostly appropriate; underpinning musical knowledge and understanding is deep.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by strong musical understanding and relevant research, is convincing and considers a range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles and values of music directing, and the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, are relevant to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is generally appropriate; underpinning musical knowledge and understanding is sufficient.</li> <li>The submission, underpinned by evident musical understanding and relevant research, is well-informed and considers some approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

Below Pass 1 9-7 marks	Below Pass 2 6-5 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles and values of music directing, and the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, are unconvincing with limited relevance to the contexts described.</li> <li>Use of specialist terminology is rarely appropriate; underpinning musical knowledge and understanding is inconsistent.</li> <li>The submission, which shows limited musical understanding and research, is not well-informed and considers a limited range of approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insights into the underlying principles and values of music directing, and the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, are lacking with little or no relevance to the contexts described.</li> <li>Specialist terminology is not appropriately used; underpinning musical knowledge and understanding is patchy.</li> <li>The submission, which shows little or no musical understanding and research, is lacking and considers few approaches, techniques and strategies to include, motivate and inspire musicians.</li> <li>Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

## Assessment criteria – Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

Distinction 30-27 marks	Merit 26-24 marks	Pass 23-20 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, sensitive and nuanced awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are confident and highly detailed, demonstrating extensive knowledge and deep understanding; conclusions are supported by strong experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are extensive and convincing, with evidence of detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Strong evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are detailed, demonstrating a breadth of knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by clear experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are convincing, with evidence of detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Clear evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have some detail, demonstrating good overall knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are good, with knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Some evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>
Below Pass 1 19-15 marks	Below Pass 2 14-10 marks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are unconvincing and lack detail; conclusions are supported by little experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are unconvincing, with limited evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Limited evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have little or no detail; conclusions are unsupported.</li> <li>• Lacking insights into music directing issues, with little or no evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Little or no evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	

# FRSM assessment and marking

## Assessment Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The following table describes the level of knowledge and skills required of candidates taking an FRSM diploma. It also shows the specific expertise successful candidates will be able to demonstrate.

### FRSM (RQF Level 7)

Assessment objectives	Learning outcomes																								
<p><b>Unit 1: Option A</b> Prepare a portfolio of evidence based on your own practice as a music director that evidences skills, knowledge and understanding of music direction that is at the forefront of the field, underpinned by profound and penetrating personal research and reflection. <b>60%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate the ability to plan, research, prepare and present a public performance, underpinned by highly-effective skills in music direction and communication.</li> <li>2. Possess the expertise to inspire musicians with original and creative music direction, responding appropriately to both the demands of the repertoire chosen and the context of live performance. Enable the musicians to gain new perspectives and insights.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate deep understanding of musical concepts and a range of directing techniques and, through self-evaluation and reflection, target specific areas for development.</li> </ol>																								
<p><b>Unit 1: Option B</b> Prepare an extended piece of work that evidences skills, knowledge and understanding of music direction that is at the forefront of the field, underpinned by profound and penetrating personal research and reflection. <b>60%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demonstrate the ability to conduct independent, creative and original research using methodology appropriate to the topic chosen and interpret findings in the context of music directing.</li> <li>2. Possess the expertise to inspire and persuade others through creative research or resources to discover new perspectives and achieve new insights.</li> <li>3. Demonstrate sophisticated critical, evaluative, analytical, reflective and communication skills, connecting concepts to a breadth of practical experience.</li> </ol>																								
<p><b>Unit 2</b> Demonstrate knowledge and understanding at the forefront of the field of music direction by discussing in detail: the original work submitted, the conclusions reached based on significant experience in a wide range of musical contexts, the results of ongoing self-reflection and self-evaluation, and the insights you have synthesised and have to share. <b>40%</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Articulate a consummate understanding of the field of music direction, its theories, principles, techniques and practices, and of the music sector more broadly.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate both highly-developed directing skills and sophisticated thinking skills in defence of your own original work.</li> <li>3. Communicate authoritatively, through whatever medium you have chosen, with the ability to synthesise wide-ranging research and reflection into detailed and creative responses.</li> </ol>																								
<p><b>Mark allocation</b> Marks are allocated for each component of the assessment, as shown in the table below.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Component</th> <th>Maximum marks</th> <th>% of total mark</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Music Directing in Practice</i></td> <td>45</td> <td>60%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Music Directing and Reflective Practice</i></td> <td>30</td> <td>40%</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>75</b></td> <td><b>100%</b></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Component	Maximum marks	% of total mark	<i>Music Directing in Practice</i>	45	60%	<i>Music Directing and Reflective Practice</i>	30	40%	<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>	<p><b>Result categories</b> The result categories for the FRSM diploma are set as follows. A Pass in each component of the assessment is not required to pass overall.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Result category</th> <th>Mark band</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td><i>Distinction</i></td> <td>68-75</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Merit</i></td> <td>60-67</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Pass</i></td> <td>50-59</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Below Pass 1</i></td> <td>37-49</td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Below Pass 2</i></td> <td>25-36</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Result category	Mark band	<i>Distinction</i>	68-75	<i>Merit</i>	60-67	<i>Pass</i>	50-59	<i>Below Pass 1</i>	37-49	<i>Below Pass 2</i>	25-36
Component	Maximum marks	% of total mark																							
<i>Music Directing in Practice</i>	45	60%																							
<i>Music Directing and Reflective Practice</i>	30	40%																							
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100%</b>																							
Result category	Mark band																								
<i>Distinction</i>	68-75																								
<i>Merit</i>	60-67																								
<i>Pass</i>	50-59																								
<i>Below Pass 1</i>	37-49																								
<i>Below Pass 2</i>	25-36																								

# Assessment criteria – Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice

## Option A: Video and Supporting Commentary

Distinction 45–41 marks	Merit 40–36 marks	Pass 35–30 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive and convincing skills, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• Profound and highly-developed contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music and of live performance and rehearsal contexts.</li> <li>• Musical communication is thoroughly engaging and technically highly-accomplished.</li> <li>• Direction demonstrates individuality and profound stylistic insight; an excellent connection with, and musical impact upon, the group.</li> <li>• Directing decisions are wholly appropriate to the repertoire chosen, meeting its demands creatively and providing authoritative musical leadership.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad and convincing skills, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• Substantial and well-developed contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music and of live performance and rehearsal contexts.</li> <li>• Musical communication is strongly engaging and technically assured.</li> <li>• Direction demonstrates individuality and assured stylistic insight; a strong connection with, and musical impact upon, the group.</li> <li>• Directing decisions are appropriate to the repertoire chosen, meeting its demands competently and providing strong musical leadership.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad skills, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• Good contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music and of live performance context and rehearsal contexts.</li> <li>• Musical communication is sufficiently engaging and technically accomplished.</li> <li>• Direction is good, demonstrating some individuality and stylistic insight; a good connection with, and musical impact upon, the group.</li> <li>• Directing decisions are mainly appropriate to the repertoire chosen, meeting its demands and providing good musical leadership.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

Below Pass 1 29–22 marks	Below Pass 2 21–15 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills, knowledge and understanding of music directing are inconsistent and unconvincing.</li> <li>• Inconsistent contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music and of live performance and rehearsal contexts.</li> <li>• Musical communication is inconsistently engaging and lacking in technical assurance.</li> <li>• Direction is inconsistent; intermittent sense of individuality and stylistic insight, and limited connection with the group.</li> <li>• Directing decisions are not consistently appropriate to the repertoire chosen, and sometimes fail to meet its demands, providing limited musical leadership.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skills, knowledge and understanding of music directing are insufficient.</li> <li>• Insufficient contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music and of live performance and rehearsal contexts.</li> <li>• Musical communication is insecure, demonstrating little engagement or technical accomplishment.</li> <li>• Direction is ineffective; little sense of individuality and stylistic insight, and minimal connection with the group.</li> <li>• Directing decisions are not appropriate to the repertoire chosen, failing to meet its demands and providing unconvincing musical leadership.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

# Assessment criteria – Unit 1: Music Directing in Practice

## Option B: Extended Research

Distinction 45-41 marks	Merit 40-36 marks	Pass 35-30 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehensive, convincing knowledge and understanding of music directing and the role of director.</li> <li>• Profound and highly-developed contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• The submission is highly original with evidence of substantial and extensive research, supported by a wide range of relevant references and broad, deep experience.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation skills and communication are excellent, resulting in comprehensive and convincing conclusions that represent a significant contribution to the field of music directing.</li> <li>• Methodology is systematically and effectively applied throughout the submission, and ideally suited to the subject.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad, convincing knowledge and understanding of music directing and the role of director.</li> <li>• Substantial and well-developed contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• The submission is original, with evidence of substantial research, supported by a range of relevant references and broad experience.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation skills and communication are strong, resulting in convincing conclusions that represent a useful contribution to the field of music directing.</li> <li>• Methodology is systematically applied throughout the submission, and highly suited to the subject.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad knowledge and understanding of music directing and the role of director.</li> <li>• Good contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• The submission contains original elements with evidence of suitable research, supported by relevant references and experience.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation skills and communication are good, resulting in conclusions that represent an appropriate contribution to the field of music directing.</li> <li>• Methodology is systematically applied through much of the submission, and largely suited to the subject.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

Below Pass 1 29-22 marks	Below Pass 2 21-15 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of music directing and the role of director is inconsistent and unconvincing.</li> <li>• Inconsistent contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• The submission is not sufficiently original, with little evidence of suitable research and/or is not supported by relevant references and experience.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation skills and communication are relatively undeveloped, resulting in unconvincing conclusions that represent a limited contribution to the field of music directing.</li> <li>• Methodology is only systematically applied in part of the submission, and not fully suited to the subject.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and understanding of music directing and the role of director is insufficient.</li> <li>• Limited contextual awareness, knowledge and understanding of music directing.</li> <li>• The submission lacks originality, evidence of research and/or relevant references and experience.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation skills and communication are undeveloped, resulting in conclusions that lack rigour and do not constitute a contribution to the field of music directing.</li> <li>• Methodology is not systematically applied to the submission and/or is not suited to the subject.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> </ul>

## Assessment criteria – Unit 2: Music Directing and Reflective Practice

Distinction 30-27 marks	Merit 26-24 marks	Pass 23-20 marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough, sensitive and nuanced awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are confident and highly detailed, demonstrating extensive knowledge and deep understanding; conclusions are supported by strong experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are extensive and convincing, with evidence of relevant and highly detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is comprehensive, with compelling evidence of significant personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Strong evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thorough awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are detailed, demonstrating a breadth of knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by clear experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are convincing, with evidence of relevant and detailed knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is thorough, with detailed evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Clear evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good overall awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have some detail, demonstrating good overall knowledge and understanding; conclusions are supported by experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are good, with evidence of relevant knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is sufficient, with evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Some evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>
Below Pass 1 19-15 marks	Below Pass 2 14-10 marks	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses are unconvincing and lack detail; conclusions are supported by little experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Insights into music directing are unconvincing, with limited evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Self-evaluation is unconvincing, with limited evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Limited evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no awareness of the context in which music directing takes place, the responsibilities inherent in the role of music director, and the underpinning technical and musical skills required to be successful.</li> <li>• Responses have little or no detail; conclusions are unsupported by experience-based evidence.</li> <li>• Lacking insights into music directing, with little or no evidence of knowledge and understanding.</li> <li>• Lacking self-evaluation, with little or no evidence of personal commitment and reflection.</li> <li>• Little or no evidence is provided of next steps for own development.</li> </ul>	

---

# Grading and awarding

In order to achieve either the ARSM, LRSM or FRSM, candidates must:

- complete all tasks relevant to the qualification;
- achieve the minimum mark required across the totality of the qualification.

## Marking

The evidence submitted by candidates is measured using the assessment criteria found on the preceding pages.

## Awarding

An examiner's assessment will be based on the evidence given at that time towards the diploma.

A recording of music directing or any spoken work can only be submitted as evidence for any diploma once. It cannot be re-used for the same or a different level of diploma at any point in time. If a previously submitted video is uploaded as evidence a second time, this will be discounted and the candidate disqualified from that assessment.

## Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment is a form of assessment that requires candidates to demonstrate that they can identify and effectively use a selection of skills, techniques, concepts and knowledge to carry out a key task. The diploma allows candidates to demonstrate their ability to draw together different musical and directing skills, knowledge and understanding, and apply these collectively throughout the evidence they produce.

## Results

All candidates receive a copy of their mark form. Successful candidates also receive a certificate that shows the qualification title as well as the subject and level that they have been examined in. We aim to release results for diplomas in line with the schedules at <http://www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/results-and-certificates>; however, some results may take longer if selected for random sampling. We regret that we are not able to give any results by telephone, nor can we accept any responsibility for the loss of certificates in the post.

Unless otherwise requested at the time of booking, mark forms and certificates are issued to the applicant, whose responsibility it is to pass them on to candidates.

## Postnominals

Candidates awarded the diploma can use the relevant ARSM, LRSM or FRSM letters after their name.

## Appeals and feedback

### Appeals

If a candidate has received an unexpected exam result, this can be appealed by requesting a Results Review. This process allows us to revisit the marks awarded by an examiner and, subject to the outcome of the review, may result in a mark amendment.

### Feedback

In addition to a Results Review, we also welcome feedback about other matters, such as the overall exam experience or the mark form. All feedback is logged and plays a valuable part in our commitment to continuous improvement and quality assurance procedures.

For further information on our processes and deadlines for appealing a result, or submitting feedback, visit [www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/results-and-certificates/appeals-and-feedback](http://www.abrsm.org/about-our-exams/results-and-certificates/appeals-and-feedback).



---

Copyright © 2024

ABRSM retains the copyright on all its publications, including the specifications. However, candidates and teachers are permitted to copy from this specification for personal use.