



UIW Department of Music

(guidelines updated July 2026)

Keyboard Proficiency Exam Guidelines

All music majors are required to pass the Keyboard Proficiency Exam.

There are two sections of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam: I. the **Prepared Section**; II. the **At-Sight Section**. These are described below.

I. Prepared Section of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam:

A. SCALES/ARPEGGIOS: All major and harmonic minor scales and arpeggios played 2 octaves, hands together, in parallel motion, ascending and descending.

Criteria for passing: Prompt and secure rendition, both in structure and fingering; steady rhythm, moderato tempo. No trial and error.

B. REPERTOIRE: A prepared piece chosen from the approved repertoire list. (See p.3)

Criteria for passing: Solid performance, no stops; appropriate tempo; dynamics and other expression marks.

C. HARMONIZATION/TRANSPOSITION: Two prepared harmonizations from the approved list of melodies (See p.3), using secondary dominants: possibly V7/IV, V/V, V/ii, V/vi, & V/iii.

In the original key with RH melody and LH accompaniment pattern. This LH accompaniment must do something beyond just blocking the chord on the main beats. (You can choose from a variety of styles).

Criteria for passing: Solid execution (no stops; generally accurate rendition); proper use of chords and chord progression. Play melody and chords together.

D. TRANSPOSITION/SCORE READING:

1) Play an individual part from a band or orchestral score. Be able a) to transpose B-flat, F, and E-flat instruments to concert pitch, and b) to read alto clef. (See p.4)

2) Play all four parts of an SATB open choral score. (See p.5)

Criteria for passing: Solid execution at marked tempo.

All components of the Prepared Section of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam will be evaluated in class by your Keyboard Skills IV instructor.

Students must successfully pass all parts of the Prepared Section before taking the At-site portion of the final exam for MUSI 2120: Keyboard Skills IV. Those who do not pass every part of the Prepared Section by the start of the final week of classes should withdraw and either retake the course next spring or enroll in MUAP 2146: Keyboard Proficiency Review.

Once the Prepared Section of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam is completed, the student may take the At-Sight Section, described below.

II. At-Sight Section of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam:

A. IMPROVISATION: Improvise a melody based on given chords. (See p.6) You will have 2 minutes to prepare the improvisation.

Criteria for passing: Solid execution; meter accuracy and rhythmic steadiness; evidence of motivic organization and consistency.

B. SIGHT-READING: You will be asked to play a short passage at sight in the written key. This passage will not be given to you in advance. (See p.6) You will have 2 minutes to prepare the example.

Criteria for passing: Solid sight-reading (no stops; generally accurate rendition); play both hands together.

C. HARMONIZATION/SIGHT-TRANSPOSITION: **The student may choose either to harmonize or transpose a passage.**

- You will be asked to harmonize a melody. You will have 2 minutes to prepare the example.
- You will be asked to transpose a short passage at sight. You will have 2 minutes to prepare the example. (See p.6)

Criteria for passing: Solid sight-reading (no stops; generally accurate rendition); play both hands together.

The Keyboard Skills IV (MUSI 2120) final exam is the At-Sight section of the Keyboard Proficiency Exam. To fulfill the university's keyboard proficiency requirement, students must pass all components of this section. Failing any item within the At-Sight Section does not automatically result in a failing grade for MUSI 2120. However, all failed items must be retaken and successfully passed before official keyboard proficiency certification can be granted. Students who need to retake any portion of the At-Sight Section may choose from the following options:

Option 1: Enrollment in Keyboard Proficiency Review (MUAP 2146)

Students who pass MUSI 2120 but do not pass the At-Sight Section may register for private lessons (MUAP 2146) offered by arrangement during the fall, spring, or summer terms.

- **Fall/Spring Semesters/Summer:** Retakes for unpassed portions are administered at the end of the semester.

Option 2: Students who have dropped or failed Keyboard Skills IV (MUSI 2120) for any reason will be advised to enroll in the Proficiency Review Private Lesson (currently MUAP 2146) during the fall semester at arranged times. They will not be eligible to take the proficiency in the fall semester. They must retake Keyboard Skills IV (MUSI 2120) or Keyboard Proficiency Review (MUAP 2146) in the spring.

Once a student successfully passes all components of the At-Sight Section, official notification of completion will be sent to both the student and the Registrar.

SAMPLES OF THE KEYBOARD PROFICIENCY COMPONENTS

I. Prepared Section:

B. REPERTOIRE: Approved Repertoire List

Choose **one** from the following list for the Keyboard Proficiency Exam:

Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Book I:

Beethoven, Ludwig van	<i>Ecossaise</i>	(p. 317)
	<i>German Dance</i>	(p. 129)
Beyer, Ferdinand	<i>Allegretto, Op. 101, No. 43</i>	(p. 342)
Couperin, François	<i>The Cuckoo</i>	(p. 224)
Grieg, Edvard	<i>In the Hall of the Mountain King</i>	(p. 338)
Haydn, Franz Joseph	<i>German Dance (D Major)</i>	(p. 331)
	<i>German Dance (G Major)</i>	(p. 335)
Lully, Jean-Baptiste	<i>Minuet in D Minor</i>	(p. 336)
Neeffe, Christian Gottlob	<i>Dance</i>	(p. 238)
Rollin, Catherine	<i>Prelude No. 1</i>	(p. 346)

Alfred's Group Piano for Adults, Book II:

Bach Johann Sebastian	<i>Musette in D Major</i>	(p. 349)
Bach Wilhelm Friedmann	<i>Minuet in G Major</i>	(p. 137)
Burgmüller Johann	<i>Arabesque</i>	(p.362)
Diabelli Anton	<i>Bagatelle</i>	(p.186-187)
Haydn Franz Joseph	<i>Minuet in G Major</i>	(p.121)
Krieger Johann	<i>Minuet in A Minor</i>	(p.345)
Mozart Leopold	<i>Minuet in D Minor</i>	(p.208)
Streabbog Jean Louis	<i>A Pleasant Morning</i>	(p.58-59)
Tingley George Peter	<i>Giga</i>	(p.174-175)

C. HARMONIZATION:

Choose **two** tunes from the following list for the Keyboard Proficiency Exam. (The tunes will be provided during Keyboard Skills IV.)

1. Roses from the South
2. Yankee Doodle Boy
3. Amazing Grace
4. Cassion Song
5. I've Been Working on the Railroad
6. Comin' Round the Mountain

E. TRANPOSITION/SCORE READING

1. Transposition (SAMPLE ONLY – YOU WILL BE GIVEN A DIFFERENT PASSAGE)

1. B $\flat$ Clarinet

MERRY WIDOW WALTZ

2-22

Franz Lehár (1870–1948)
Arr. John Kinyon and John O'Reilly

Moderato

mp

POMP AND CIRCUMSTANCE

6-35

Edward Elgar (1857–1934)
Arr. John O'Reilly and Mark Williams

Andante

f *mf*

(From *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults*, Book 2, by E.L. Lancaster and Kenon D Renfrow, 2004)

2. Four-Part Score Reading (SAMPLE ONLY – YOU WILL BE GIVEN A DIFFERENT PASSAGE):

CREDO
(EXCERPT FROM MASS IN G)

♩ 14-32 (65) Franz Peter Schubert (1797–1828)
D. 167

Allegro moderato

pp

S
A
T
B

pp *pp* *pp* *pp*

RH LH RH LH RH LH

11

S
A
T
B

LH RH LH RH

Modes Related to Minor ■ Unit 29 329

(From *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults*, Book 2, by E.L. Lancaster and Kenon D Renfrow, 2004)

II. At-Sight Section

A. IMPROVISATION (SAMPLE ONLY – YOU WILL BE GIVEN A DIFFERENT PASSAGE):

Two systems of musical notation for improvisation exercise A. The first system contains measures 1-4, and the second system contains measures 5-8. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand (treble clef) has whole rests in all measures. The left hand (bass clef) plays chords and eighth-note patterns. Measure 5 begins with a '5' above the staff, indicating a fifth finger starting point.

B. SIGHT-READING (SAMPLE ONLY – YOU WILL BE GIVEN A DIFFERENT PASSAGE):

Two systems of musical notation for sight-reading exercise B. The first system contains measures 1-4, and the second system contains measures 5-8. The tempo is marked 'Allegro moderato' and the dynamic is 'mf'. The key signature is one flat (Bb), and the time signature is 3/4. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melodic line with slurs and fingerings (1, 3, 1, 5, 3, 2, 1). The left hand (bass clef) plays a supporting bass line with slurs and fingerings (5, 3, 1, 5, 2, 1). A box with the number '5' is placed above the first measure of the second system.

(From *Alfred's Group Piano for Adults*, Book 2, by E.L. Lancaster and Kenon D Renfrow, 2004)

C. SIGHT-TRANSPOSITION (SAMPLE ONLY – YOU WILL BE GIVEN A DIFFERENT PASSAGE):

A single system of musical notation for sight-transposition exercise C, measures 1-8. The key signature is three flats (Bb, Eb, and Ab), and the time signature is 4/4. The right hand (treble clef) plays a melodic line with eighth-note patterns. The left hand (bass clef) plays a supporting bass line with chords and eighth-note patterns.