



Australian
Music
Examinations
Board

2026

Manual of Syllabuses



SPEECH & DRAMA
SYLLABUSES

FOR THE 
OF SPEECH
& DRAMA

REGULATIONS

1. General

Candidates must present for examination using the syllabus listed as available within the current AMEB *Manual of syllabuses*. The syllabus chosen for examination must be presented in its entirety.

A combination of different syllabuses is not accepted for examination.

Subject to these Regulations, arrangements for the examinations in each State will be carried out in accordance with the procedure adopted by the State concerned.

PLACE OF EXAMINATIONS

2. Examination Centres

Practical examinations will be held in centres where an approved number of candidates wish to attend. (See also Regulation 5.)

3. Written Examinations

Written grade exams can be undertaken online at score.ameb.edu.au.

Written diploma exams can be taken on application. Contact your State Office for more information.

4. Local Appointees

Arrangements for examinations in country centres will be carried out by a Local Secretary duly appointed in each State.

5. Examination Centres

Practical examinations may be conducted at places other than a general centre if the number of candidates and the examination conditions are approved by the State Office. Application for special centres must be made before the closing date for receipt of entries. The Board shall reserve the right to call candidates for Associate and Licentiate diploma examinations to the centre which in its opinion is best suited for the examination.

EXAMINATION ENTRIES

6. Entry Requirements

Subject to Regulation 17, candidates may, irrespective of age, enter for any grade of any subject, without having passed a lower grade.

7. Applications

Application for examination shall be made on the prescribed form that must be lodged with the appropriate State Office not later than the date specified in the State Teacher Bulletins, State Enrolment Handbook or State website.

8. Late Entries

Late entries may only be accepted from candidates on payment of a late fee within a specified period as determined by the State Office.

9. Fees Payable by Candidates

For information on the scale of fees please contact your State Office.

Note: Vertical rules alongside text from pp. 7-9 inclusive indicate changes to information published in the 2025 Speech & Drama Manual.

EXAMINATION TIMES

10. Special Examination Times

Candidates should advise the State Office of dates to be avoided in the scheduling of their examination. This advice should be provided in writing at the time of enrolment.

11. Examination Periods

Practical and Written examinations in each State shall be held at times determined by the State Office. Online examinations can be taken at any time, within a year from the purchase date.

12. Notification of Examination

As soon as practicable after the closing date of entries, candidates will be officially notified of their candidate number, and the time and place of their examination.

13. Time allowed for examinations

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

Before the scheduled commencement of all written examinations 10 minutes reading time is allowed.

All Speech and Performance Theory grade exams are taken online at score.ameb.edu.au.

Speech and Performance Theory

Grade 1	45 mins
Grade 2	60 mins
Grade 3	1 hr 30 mins
Grade 4	2 hrs
Grade 5	2 hrs 30 mins
Grade 6	3 hrs
Grade 7	3 hrs

PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS

Drama and Communication

Introductory	30 mins
Grade 1	30 mins
Grade 2	35 mins
Grade 3	40 mins
Grade 4	40 mins
Grade 5	45 mins
Grade 6	50 mins

Voice and Communication

Preliminary	10 mins
Grade 1	12 mins
Grade 2	15 mins
Grade 3	17 mins
Grade 4	20 mins
Grade 5	20 mins
Grade 6	25 mins
Grade 7	30 mins
Grade 8	35 mins
Certificate	40 mins
Associate (Section I): Practical	45 mins
Associate (Section II): Folio	

Speech and Performance

Preliminary	12 mins
Grade 1	14 mins
Grade 2	15 mins
Grade 3	20 mins
Grade 4	20 mins
Grade 5	25 mins
Grade 6	30 mins
Grade 7	30 mins
Grade 8	35 mins

Certificate	40 mins
Associate (Section I) Practical	1 hr 5 mins
Associate (Section II) Written	3 hrs
Licentiate (Section I) Practical	1 hr 20 mins
Licentiate (Section II) Written	3 hrs
Licentiate Section III) Dissertation	

SPECIAL SERVICES

14. Candidates with disabilities

The AMEB makes every effort to accommodate candidates with disabilities by providing reasonable adjustments to the means by which examinations are undertaken (but not the examination requirements themselves). Teachers and candidates should contact the State Office for further details.

EXAMINATIONS

15. Examiners for Diploma Examinations

There shall be two examiners for Associate and Licentiate diploma examinations.

16. Subjects and Grades of Examination

- (a) Grade examinations are offered in the following subjects:
 - Speech and Performance Theory – Grades 1 to 7.
 - Speech and Performance – Preliminary to Grade 8.
 - Drama and Communication – Introductory to Grade 6.
 - Voice and Communication – Preliminary to Grade 8.
- (b) Diploma and Certificate Examinations are offered as follows:
 - Diploma of Associateship:*
 - APCA (Associate in Professional Communication, Australia).
 - ASPA (Associate in Speech and Performance, Australia).
 - Diploma of LicentiateShip:*
 - LSPA (Licentiate in Speech and Performance, Australia).
 - Certificate:*
 - CVCA (Certificate in Voice and Communication, Australia).
 - CSPA (Certificate in Speech and Performance, Australia).

17. Additional and Prerequisite Requirements

Prerequisite requirements – ASPA; LSPA.

For these diploma examinations as set out in the table below, candidates must pass a prerequisite examination, which is regarded as a qualifying examination, before entering for the principal examination. In all cases, the stated prerequisite is the minimum requirement.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to give notification as to:

- the date of passing this prerequisite requirement, and
- the centre at which such examination was held.

A degree or diploma in Speech and Drama from a recognised Australian or overseas tertiary institution will be deemed to have met the prerequisite for ASPA Speech and Performance, and LSPA Speech and Performance.

Evidence of such qualification(s) and supporting material are to be supplied to the relevant State Office at the time of entry for the examination.

Examination	Prerequisites		
Associate Diploma (ASPA)	Pass	Grade 7	Speech and Performance Theory OR Theory of Speech and Drama
	AND B or credit grading	Certificate (CDPA) OR (CSPA)	Drama and Performance Speech and Performance
	OR B grading	Grade 7	Speech and Drama (Practical)
Licentiate Diploma (LSPA)	Pass OR Pass OR Pass	Associate Diploma (ASPA) Associate Diploma (ADPA) Associate Diploma (ASDA)	

18. Examinations in Sections

The subjects set out below are divided into sections as shown. Candidates must pass each section of the examination before a certificate is awarded. A separate fee is payable for each section. A certificate may be issued upon the successful completion of all sections of the examination within periods as prescribed – namely, for a two-section examination, within four years; for a three-section examination, within six years.

ASSOCIATE, PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION
Section I
Section II

ASSOCIATE, SPEECH AND PERFORMANCE
Section I
Section II

LICENTIAE, SPEECH AND PERFORMANCE
Section I
Section II
Section III

REPORTS AND CERTIFICATES

19. Examination Reports

A report from the examiner is provided for the information of candidates and teachers. The examiner’s report carries the examination result. In all written examinations, the report will show the total marks obtained, and the marks obtained under each section of the examination.

20. Certificates

Certificates will be awarded to candidates who fulfil the requirements of the award. Certificates specify the subject and grade or diploma of examination and the result obtained.

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

21. Inability to Present for Examination

Candidates who are prevented by illness or other exceptional cause from presenting themselves for examination, should notify the State Office as soon as possible. On payment of a transfer fee, it may be possible to re-schedule the examination. Details can be obtained from the State Office. Dates for written examinations cannot be re-scheduled.

22. Content not in the syllabus

If a candidate includes content which is not in the current syllabus the examiner will indicate this to the candidate and will advise that the item cannot be presented. On the examination report the examiner will note that the omitted section could not be assessed as the item was not in the current syllabus. In arriving at the overall grading the absence of one section reduces the overall result by one grade. If two or more sections are not assessed due to items presented that are not in the current syllabus, the overall result will be noted as 'not able to assess' with an explanation given in the general remarks.

23. Practical Examination Procedure

Examiners may at their discretion hear the whole or any portion of the prescribed works presented for examination.

24. Written Examination Procedure

Unless otherwise specified, candidates should note that no materials other than pens, pencils and erasers are permitted when undertaking written exams.

25. Complaints

Every effort is made to make each examination an enjoyable event. The examiners are professionals in their field and are highly trained to conduct quality assessments and provide informative reports. Each State Office has established procedures for handling complaints. Should you have a concern or complaint about an examination, please contact your State Office.

RESULTS

26. Assessment System

WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

- (a) Diplomas – Associate and Licentiate:
 - Pass – 75 per cent
- (b) Speech and Performance Theory – Grades 1 to 7:
 - Pass – 65 per cent
 - Credit – 75 per cent
 - Honours – 85 per cent
 - High Distinction – 95 per cent

27. Assessment System

PRACTICAL EXAMINATIONS

- (a) Diplomas – Associate and Licentiate:
 - Award with Distinction
 - Award
 - No Award
- (b) Grades and Certificate:
 - A+ High Distinction, outstanding performance in every section
 - A Honours
 - B, B+ Credit
 - C, C+ Satisfactory
 - D Not Satisfactory

The following descriptors outline the Board's requirements for each grading.

A+: In addition to satisfying the criteria for the award of an A grading, the candidate demonstrates outstanding achievement in all areas of performance and preparation. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate outstanding achievement in all areas of teamwork.

A: The candidate demonstrates an overall superior level of achievement in terms of reading accuracy, rhythmic sense, stylistic insight, performing presence, audience awareness, and preparation of topics. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate superior achievement in all areas of teamwork.

B+: In addition to satisfying the criteria for the award of a B grading, the candidate demonstrates meritorious achievement against most criteria. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate meritorious achievement in all areas of teamwork.

B: The candidate demonstrates an overall creditable level of achievement, with appropriate development of reading accuracy, rhythmic sense, stylistic insight, performing presence, audience awareness, and preparation of topics. Some unevenness of achievement between these criteria, or different parts of the examination, may be apparent. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate creditable level achievement in all areas of teamwork.

C+: In addition to satisfying the criteria for the award of a C grading, the candidate demonstrates more than adequate achievement against some of the criteria. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate more than adequate achievement in all areas of teamwork.

C: The candidate demonstrates an overall adequate level of achievement in reading accuracy, rhythmic sense, stylistic insight, performing presence, audience awareness, and preparation of topics. Considerable unevenness in achievement between these criteria, or different parts of the examination, may be apparent. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate adequate achievement in all areas of teamwork.

D: The candidate demonstrates an overall inadequate level of reading accuracy, rhythmic sense, stylistic insight, performing presence, audience awareness, and preparation of topics. Often this resulted from deficiencies in preparation or a hesitant presentation evidencing technical errors and an inappropriate sense of style. For Drama and Communication, where a duo or group, that they demonstrate inadequate achievement in all areas of teamwork.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

28. Academic Dress

Academic dress is available for Associate and Licentiate diplomates. Details can be obtained from AMEB State Offices.