

Year in Review



Australian
Music
Examinations
Board

—
2023 – 2024

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This report presents a synopsis of the activities and outcomes delivered by AMEB Ltd during the 2023–2024 financial year, as well as the Financial Statements, Directors' Report and Audit Report on the Financial Report for AMEB Ltd for that period. Published and Copyright October 2024.

Acknowledgement of Country

We at AMEB respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as the traditional Custodians of the lands on which we live, learn and create. We recognise their continuing connection to country, and draw inspiration from the music, dance, song and storytelling handed down through many generations.

We pay our respects to the Elders who came before us, are with us today and are yet to come.

We commit to a reconciled and shared future.

A message from our Chair



Mike Tyler

Chair
AMEB Ltd

In 2023-2024 AMEB continued its essential work in shaping pedagogical approaches and supporting performing arts educators and students.

Highlights included the release of our groundbreaking new Teaching syllabuses, the launch of the much-anticipated new AMEB Viola syllabus, the creation of AMEB's inaugural First Nations Composers Program, a very successful national clinicians' tour for music educators, growth of the AMEB Award program, and expansion of AMEB's international footprint.

These achievements were made possible through the expertise, forward thinking and commitment of the AMEB team, and were able to be delivered despite ongoing challenges in operating costs and ever increasing cost of living pressures on households.

This demonstrates yet again how synonymous AMEB is with music and performing arts education in Australia and beyond.

On behalf of the Board and members, I would like to thank the excellent team at AMEB, led by CEO Bernard Depasquale.

Finally, I would like to express our gratitude for all the educators, households and students who choose AMEB. We look forward to continuing to inspire and support the current generation, and many more to come.

A message from our CEO



**Bernard
Depasquale**

CEO
AMEB Ltd

AMEB has always focussed on the needs of the educators – those wonderful people who inspire students young and old to step into the studio or classroom, not only for the first time but time and time again, to embrace an instrument or performing art.

As highlighted in this report, 2023-2024 was no different. I am particularly proud that we launched the new AMEB Teaching syllabus, a significant and innovative new approach to music teaching developed through years of research and consultation. Stay tuned for more resources and practical support still to come in this space.

We are also proud to have established the First Nations Composers Program, hopefully the first of many AMEB commissioning programs to enhance diversity and create new opportunities for Australian composers.

My deep-felt thanks to the entire team at AMEB and to the Chair and Board of Directors for their continued support, as well as our colleagues in the independently-operated State Offices and our broader community of examiners, syllabus consultants and specialists, writers, composers, arrangers, proof readers, proof players, and partner organisations. Their expertise, commitment and unique skills are crucial in helping us achieve AMEB's objectives.

About AMEB

The Australian Music Examinations Board Ltd (AMEB) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to education in music, speech and drama, and other performing arts.

AMEB is Australia's leading music exam board. We have a long tradition of inspiring and supporting teachers and learners, principally in Australia and now in a growing number of other countries too.

We create and deliver world-class syllabuses, publications and graded assessments. We have a community of professional performers, pedagogical experts, composers and industry leaders contributing their expertise. We offer programs and events, advocate for, and celebrate music educators and their students.

AMEB is jointly owned by a group of three universities and three state government education departments, representing all states and territories in Australia. Under our federated structure, we work closely with our colleagues in the independently-operated State Offices.

AMEB also owns Encore Music Distributors, a specialist print music distributor offering educational music publications, resources and accessories.

Our work is funded through earned revenue and small amounts of discrete project funding. Income is solely invested back into our educational initiatives and operations.



IMAGE CREDITS – AMEB Viola Consultant Roger Benedict and his student Daniela Edwards, performing at the AMEB Viola Syllabus Celebration Launch, 2024. (Photo: Dan Gray)

Our values

Inclusion

Excellence

Leadership

Community

Creativity

Our strategic priorities

Leadership

Be recognised leaders and advocates in the Australian music sector

Vision

Be future-focused

Reach

Grow our impact and increase participation

Expertise

Engage the best people

Sustainability

Build a sustainable and effective organisation

The educators

Teachers are at the heart of music education.

The skills and strategies they employ are crucial in shaping the learning experience for their students, well beyond technique and performance.

With this in mind, for some years AMEB has been researching and investing in the creation of an inspiring new approach to professional development for music teachers, especially those working in an independent studio environment. In 2023 this culminated in the much-anticipated launch of our new Teaching syllabuses: the Certificate Teacher of Music Australia (CTMusA) and the Associate Teacher of Music Australia (ATMusA).

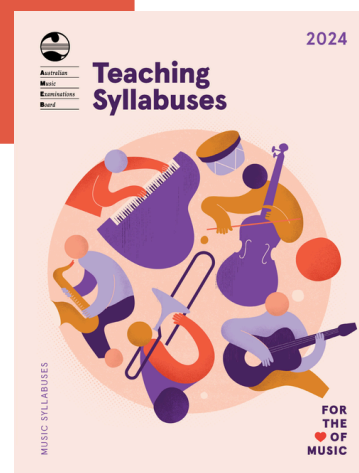
These groundbreaking syllabuses have been developed by leading Australian and international researchers and practitioners in music education. Each syllabus applies the latest pedagogical research to the studio music setting, focussing on helping teachers improve their students' engagement, motivation and achievement.

Teachers studying the syllabuses will gain the knowledge and tools to build or deepen their practice and establish self-reflective skills to continue growing as a teacher. Ultimately this will help increase the satisfaction gained from teaching, and in turn the student's experience.

The syllabuses are complemented by a wonderful new resource, the Companion text. The text comprises a series of articles by leading international authorities, academics and practitioners who together represent the cutting edge of studio music pedagogy.

ameb.edu.au/ameb-teaching

Because the best
teachers never
stop learning.





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Our main priority in crafting these new syllabuses was to make sure there was a focus on being both evidence-based and practically useful.

Like many studio teachers, I started my teaching career without any real instruction on how to teach lessons, and thus I simply did what I believed was best.

In these syllabuses, we have sought to take the guesswork out of what works and clearly connect research to practical recommendations for teaching so that teachers are empowered to teach with clarity and confidence.

**Dr Jennifer Blackwell, Syllabus consultant,
AMEB Teaching**



Continuing on this theme, we also delivered a range of events and workshops for music educators in 2023-2024, providing unique development opportunities and access to specialist insights.

AMEB Flute Consultant Jocelyn Fazzone gave a workshop at the Australian Flute Festival on teaching repertoire and performance skills to young flute players.

In July 2023 we brought international clinicians Dr Andrew Boysen Jr, Dean Sorenson (both Kjos, USA) and Paul Harris (Faber, UK) to the Maryborough Music Conference, Australia's premier music educator's event. Andrew, Dean and Paul shared their expertise and many years of experience in band and ensemble teaching with the nearly 500 attendees.

AMEB Theory Specialist Andrew Raiskums joined music education icon Paul Harris for an entertaining webinar explaining why sight-reading matters and how to teach it.

We delivered a highly successful nation-wide tour with respected international clinicians Lisa Bastien (Kjos, USA) and Paul Harris (Faber, UK) in June-July 2024. Reaching over 600 music teachers, the tour included professional development workshops in multiple cities and regional centres, run in partnership with our State Office colleagues, as well as headline presentations at the Australian National Band & Orchestra Conference (ANBOC) and the Australasian Piano Pedagogy Conference (APPC) in Melbourne.



New syllabuses and publications

AMEB syllabuses offer a structured system of study and recognition of achievement, widely viewed as best practice for music and other performing arts education.

Syllabuses are made up of grades from beginner level to highly advanced. The objectives described in each grade encourage learners to work towards specific technical and artistic goals in their area of study. Teachers and students can choose from a range of repertoire options, offering a diversity of composers, genres and styles. Many syllabuses are supported by educational resources including grade books and technical work.

Each year AMEB reviews a selection of syllabuses and supporting resources.

Viola Series 2: New syllabus and publications

In 2023–2024 we released a long-awaited total revision of the AMEB Viola syllabus. The syllabus was crafted by acclaimed violists and AMEB Consultants Janet Fernandez, Raquel Bastos and Roger Benedict under the supervision of AMEB Principal Consultant Helen Tuckey. The team also worked in collaboration with the broader community of viola teachers.

The new syllabus reflects current international best practice in viola pedagogy. Underlying principles include consideration of the musical landscape for the instrument, resolution of discrepancies between past viola and violin syllabuses, and development of well-rounded, skilled and adaptive musicians. The syllabus offers fresh and exciting repertoire reflecting a broad range of musical styles, contemporary works, and diverse representation including First Nations, female and Australian composers and arrangers.

Supporting the syllabus are new grade books for Preliminary to Grade 4 along with Technical work and Sight-reading publications.

Viola teachers and students alike are embracing the opportunity to enhance their growth and development through this new collection.





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From the start, consultants Janet Fernandes, Raquel Bastos, Roger Benedict, and I agreed we wanted the new Viola Syllabus to inspire candidates via a rich smorgasbord of offerings.

I’m thrilled new Australian and international works sit beside staples of the repertoire, so learners at every level will enjoy exploring the unique, expansive and expressive potential of the Viola.

Helen Tuckey, Syllabus consultant, Viola Series 2



Flute Series 4: New grade books for Grades 5 and 6

Completing the series that was launched last year, we released the Grade 5 and Grade 6 grade books for Flute Series 4 in 2023-2024.

The books feature repertoire researched and selected by AMEB consultant and acclaimed Australian flautist and educator Jocelyn Fazzone.

Works by female and Australian composers and arrangers feature in every book, and the inclusion of a wider variety of musical styles provides new challenges and introduces students to various skills and techniques. This ensures the series is enjoyable to play and teach, inspiring students and educators at a higher level.

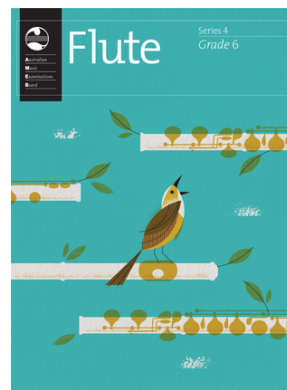
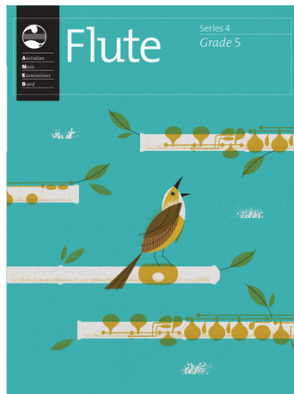


IMAGE CREDITS – AMEB Consultant, Jocelyn Fazzone, at the AMEB Flute Series 4 Celebration Launch, 2023. (Photo: Kate Dishar-Quill)

Rockschool new syllabuses

Our contemporary program, AMEB Rockschool, caters for teachers and students interested in popular genres and instruments.

In 2023–2024 we launched two new Rockschool syllabuses in Australia and New Zealand.

A new Public Speaking syllabus was added to the Rockschool Performance Arts Awards (PAA) suite of syllabuses, which also includes Musical Theatre, Jazz Dance, Street Dance, Acting and Screen Acting. The Public Speaking syllabus is designed to support and encourage learners of all abilities to communicate effectively and confidently, regardless of age, level or background.

In addition, enrolments opened for the Level 3 Certificate in Supporting Music and Performing Arts Learning qualification which is suitable for aspiring or new educators. This qualification is designed for learners aged 16 and up beginning their teaching journey, helping to develop teaching skills specific to music or performing arts. Candidates work with a more experienced teacher observing, supporting and mentoring the candidate as they complete coursework.



First Nations Composers Program

For many years, AMEB has been working to improve the diversity of the composers and arrangers represented in our syllabuses and publications.

Thousands of Australian households, studios and classrooms use our syllabuses and publications, placing AMEB in a unique position to connect people with music and composers they might not otherwise encounter. AMEB can also offer the opportunity for developing and local composers to reach a significant audience.

We actively encourage compositions from present-day Australian composers, including typically under-represented groups such as female and First Nations people. However there is a particular challenge in composing repertoire that meets specific pedagogical requirements and this often proves too great a barrier.

In 2023–2024 AMEB took the important next step in helping overcome these challenges, embarking on a commissioning program.



Australian Government



AMEB secured funding in late 2023 through Creative Australia, the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body (formerly Australia Council), under the Arts Projects for Organisations grant, to undertake the inaugural AMEB First Nations Composers Program. The objective of the program is to enhance the representation of First Nations composers amongst pedagogical repertoire, and to establish a development opportunity for composers in the pedagogical setting.

The program is being completed over two years and four First Nations composers are involved: Brenda Gifford (Yuin), James Henry (Yuwaalaraay, Gamilaraay, Yorta Yorta and Yuin), Christopher Sainsbury (Dharug), and Aaron Wyatt (Noongar). Each composer is writing four short works for a variety of instrumentation and grades, with the intent that the works are included in AMEB's forthcoming grade book publications. Specialist instrumental teachers are assisting the composers to refine their compositions and ensure they meet pedagogical requirements.

Dr Candace Kruger is engaged as Cultural Advisor for the project, providing guidance on any cultural matters that arise and acting as a trusted intermediary if needed.

The program represents another step in our ongoing journey of listening, learning and taking action in support of First Nations people. We are grateful to the composers for their willingness to be involved, and to our friend and colleague Aunty Candace for her support and advice.

We are also grateful for the support of Creative Australia, the first time AMEB has been successful in securing funding through this highly competitive national grant program.

Ultimately it is hoped that this project will become the foundation of an ongoing AMEB composers program involving multiple commissioning rounds and varying selection criteria to further improve the diversity of the composers and repertoire represented in AMEB publications.

The AMEB Award

Launched in 2023, the AMEB Award program continued to grow and Award recipients were celebrated around Australia in 2023-2024 for their achievements.

The AMEB Award is a development program that supports and acknowledges each participant's effort, achievement and contribution to their performing arts community.

The program encourages participants to try new things, work collaboratively, gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of their chosen art form, give back to the community, and grow as a performer.

ameb.edu.au/award
#ShiningASpotlight



Shining a spotlight on
achievement in the
performing arts



IMAGE CREDIT - Victoria, the first AMEB Award recipient in Victoria (pictured on the right) with Jodi, her teacher and mother (left). (Photo: supplied)

AMEB Award Program structure

AMEB Award
participants
must complete



Performances

Contribution



Activities

Substantial



Contribution
Gold Award
(only)



Grades
3+*

**Bronze
Award**



Grades
5+*

**Silver
Award**



Grades
7+*

**Gold
Award**



AMEB Award Values

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Community
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Entrepreneurship
- ✓ Assistance & support
- ✓ Collaboration



IMAGE CREDIT - Louie, the first Queensland recipient of an AMEB Award (pictured on the left), with his flute teacher Katherine (right). (Photo: supplied)

International footprint

AMEB is a proudly Australian organisation, serving the Australian performing arts community for more than a century.

Communities in other countries also recognise the quality, integrity and value of our qualifications and nowadays AMEB has an increasing international presence.

In 2023–2024, our online theory courses and exams were taken by students around the world.

We continued to deliver AMEB Rockschool music exams in New Zealand.

The AMEB Vietnam team further expanded the support and resources being offered to educators, schools and students across that country.

We also continued to explore opportunities in other markets where there is significant interest in AMEB.



IMAGE CREDIT - Teachers being acknowledged following their successful completion of the AMEB-Vietnam National Academy of Music Teaching Course. (Photo: supplied)

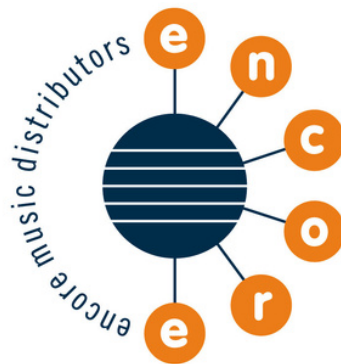
Encore Music Distributors

Complementing our music education objectives, AMEB owns Encore Music Distributors, a specialist in the distribution of educational and print music.

Encore specialises in distributing educational sheet music, songbooks, educational music resources and music accessories. In addition, Encore supports the distribution of AMEB publications.

We stock more than 135,000 music publications at Encore across a wide variety of instrumentation and genres, from band, strings and piano to choral and specialist classical repertoire works. The range is of particular interest to educators in studio and classroom settings, as well as performers, conductors, clinicians and students.

In 2023-2024 we announced some exciting developments and enhanced offerings. Encore was appointed as a distributor for Manhasset, producer of quality concert-style music stands and accessories. A new partnership with Alfred Music was also launched to complement the existing catalogue, with Encore becoming exclusive distributor for a range of performance, method and instructional publications by Alfred.





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