



## NZMEB Newsletter April 2020

Dear Music Teacher

This letter covers several areas, which are as follows:

- i. ADMINISTRATOR**
- ii. COVID-19**
  - a. Computers for online music lessons and exams**
  - b. Hybrid rationale and optional solution**
  - c. NZMEB current practical exams**
  - d. NCEA Levels 1, 2 and 3**
- iii. Changes to 2020 examination dates**
- iv. New 'Recital' examinations**

### **i. ADMINISTRATOR**

Belynda Jack, the NZMEB Administrator is no longer in that role. Belynda is pursuing other interests. She really enjoyed meeting and talking to teachers and parents and came away with a great admiration for music teachers, their passion for music and their commitment to their pupils. She wishes everyone well, as do NZMEB wish in her future endeavours.

In the interim Andrew Buchanan-Smart is fulfilling this role. Some of you may know Andrew in his previous extensive and diverse roles within the field of music education, as well as a conductor and composer. Feel free to contact him with your queries on 0800748388 or email [office@nzmeb.org](mailto:office@nzmeb.org)

- ii. COVID-19**
  - a) Computers for online music lessons and exams**

Operating in New Zealand since 2006, NZMEB has gone from strength to strength. Our examinations are embedded in the New Zealand education system and we are the only Music Examinations Board accepted and moderated by NZQA. Our education system is so respected by the world that many overseas students come to study here.

Like all New Zealanders, we have been following closely the NZ Government suggestions and regulations regarding Covid19. The latest announcement at alert Level 4 puts our students at home in lockdown for some weeks.

The disruptions to daily routines can cause extra anxiety in children and to this end we would like all our music teachers to do their best to continue teaching.

We encourage you use the platform Zoom to do this. While we appreciate this will never be as good as face to face lessons, it is an excellent way in the current situation to continue with our students' musical education. Our research suggests this is the easiest and best freely available system with good audio quality. Check it out at [www.zoom.us](http://www.zoom.us). You will need to download the application on computer or phone as per instructions and your students can access it through their web browser or download the app if they want to, via the link invitation you send through their email account. It is also possible to use Skype and we know of teachers using WhatsApp quite successfully.

If you require help to do this NZMEB may be able to help you, however, we are hoping you will all have a computer savvy parent in your midst who can talk you through the steps. It is not difficult to download or use the Zoom app. Please contact us on 0800 388 748 or [office@nzmeb.org](mailto:office@nzmeb.org) if you would like any further information.

We realise that while the current situation of New Zealand being at alert level 4 lockdown is only temporary, it may not be safe for face to face examinations in the near future. To create a level of confidence with our examination entrants and their teachers, NZMEB wishes to advise that we will run our examinations in an "*online*" situation, if necessary. NZMEB currently use over the internet uploads from students for NCEA assessments at Level 3. Many of you may be aware that NZMEB video all their examinations for moderation purposes which are audited to the NZQA standards.

## **b) Hybrid rationale and optional solution**

### **Hybrid rationale**

Instrumental music teaching and therefore many private music teachers have been a significant part in music education in NZ. This has not been done in isolation. It is part of a four-legged or pronged system which is highly successful around the world, with the other three parts being the parent or caregiver, the student and an external examiner or moderator which are provided by the examination boards.

The challenge here is that like a chair having 4 legs if one is missing, the chair is useless as a chair and as such impacts on the remaining three legs.

One of the legs are the examination boards, with their role to assess the level of excellence demonstrated by the student. The assessment or examination can be important for the student as it may act as a goal, provide a purpose and direction when practising and if successful, a sense of achievement and developing self-esteem at a time when students need it.

Another leg is the parent, where the examination system (rightly or wrongly) is informative for the parents to see how well their children are progressing or otherwise.

The student leg is really at the centre because musical tuition provides more than just the ability to play an instrument. It develops the individual student in many other areas which extrinsically have benefits for general education. It can also facilitate an element of friendship and competition between students.

The teacher leg has two elements to it, for some teachers may use the examination results for self-actualisation and esteem reinforcing their purpose as a music teacher. For some the results may be used externally for marketing and promotional purposes for their private teaching practice.

Be rest assured that the NZMEB board thought long about this and they do not see this offer of providing a hybrid examination as a long-term solution. Had NZMEB thought this, they would have advised that other examination board repertoire and technical could not be used.

The reasoned suggestion is to carry on with what is currently being taught is solely to make it easier for both student and teacher to progress with as little disruption as possible in these uncertain and challenging times, and create an assessment which is a temporary four leg to the metaphorical chair.

The way that Covid-19 is developing, it is likely to be disruptive for some time and it may well be 18 months to two years before international travel is back to normal, whatever the new normal will be, and therefore allow the international examination boards grace our shores again.

### **Optional solution**

For this year and until the international examination boards (ABRSM and Trinity) are able to revisit New Zealand, NZMEB is providing a hybrid solution, whereby teachers and students have to change as little as possible in the delivery of their music examinations and assessments. This hybrid solution would allow both teachers and students to prepare for exams taking into account the following requirements:

- 1) The *Repertoire or Pieces* performed from International Syllabuses will be accepted by NZMEB
- 2) The *Technical Work* (scales etc. or specific studies) from International Syllabuses will be accepted by NZMEB
- 3) The *Musical Knowledge* areas are very similar but may need a slight adjustment in this area
- 4) The *Musicianship* requirements (aural tests and sight reading) will need to meet the requirements of the NZMEB syllabus.

If you feel it would be beneficial for your students to continue with their learning plan to have a practical examination please take this opportunity to enter your students.

If you take up this offer via the online entry form there will be space for you to name the International Board for which your student is currently preparing repertoire and technical work. This will enable NZMEB examiners to be aware of the syllabus requirement differences and be prepared for the technical work being presented.

In addition to the original music, a copy of the repertoire played must be handed to the examiner at the beginning of the exam.

Please note that students entering would need to enter for the NZMEB "Standard" examination.

### **c) NZMEB current practical examinations**

Currently NZMEB offer examinations in the following instruments:

- a) Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Saxophone, Trumpet, Trombone, Singing and Musical Theatre at all Grades and Diplomas.
- b) Classical Guitar (from August)
- c) Recorder to Grade 4
- d) Chamber Music (duets and trios) these can be used for NCEA ensemble assessments.

There are some instruments such as Double Bass, Bassoon, French Horn and other Brass Band instruments not currently included within the NZMEB suite of examinations.

To facilitate teacher's delivery plans and to ensure that students learning on these instruments are not disadvantaged, NZMEB are offering teachers to have their students examined using the hybrid provisions outlined above in items 1-4.

### **d) NCEA Levels 1, 2 and 3**

With School education being disrupted it is possible that NCEA scheduling may be affected. NZMEB would like to remind music teachers that that they are New Zealand's only recognised independent Examination Board approved and accredited by NZQA to assess NCEA at Levels 1, 2 and 3 we offer our entrants this possibility when doing an NCEA assessment with us (minimum level required is grade 3).

It is possible, when entering for an NZMEB exam to at the same time enter to have an NCEA assessment held at the same time. See below for an indication of equivalency levels for choosing appropriate repertoire.

<i>NZMEB Grade Examination Level</i>	<i>NCEA Assessment Level</i>
Grade 3	Level 1
Grades 4 and 5	Level 2
Grade 6 or above	Level 3

Please note that the entry for the NCEA option is also on the NZMEB website. Because the examination and assessment are taken simultaneously it is not possible for NZMEB to assess NCEA Levels without entering for the appropriate level NZMEB grade examination.

### **iii. Changes to 2020 examination dates**

NZMEB are postponing the theory exams for a month to help out with any disruptions from the Covid-19 Alert Level 4 Lock Down.

- a) Theory Exams will be held on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> June or as close to then as practicable. We are asking teachers to arrange a few small groups of students rather than one large group and for teachers to help with venues and supervision.
- b) There will be no late fee category. These are being cancelled in light of the disruption. We will take entries up to and including Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May.

- c) *Practical Exams* will be held from 1 August until 25<sup>th</sup> September. Entries for these exams currently close Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June. However, this may be extended depending the situation regarding Covid-19. There will be updates regarding this date on the NZMEB website [www.nzmeb.org](http://www.nzmeb.org). We are asking teachers to submit their entries without payment. Following the acceptance of the programme by teachers and parents, NZMEB will send an invoice for payment.
- d) If your region has schools closed then your practical session will be shifted to a later time to be negotiated on a case by case basis with NZMEB and subject to examiner availability.
- e) If a student is unable to sit a practical or theory exam because they or a close family member has been sick with Covid-19, or if they have been required to be in isolation, the NZMEB will give a 100% credit for a future exam or an 80% monetary refund (Doctor's Certificates required).
- f) We will be asking teachers if they can run exams in their studios to minimise cross infection.

The NZMEB syllabuses, closing dates for all exams, entry forms and fees are on the NZMEB website [www.nzmeb.org](http://www.nzmeb.org).

#### **iv. New 'Recital' examinations**

NZMEB are pleased to announce that there will be a new 'Recital' examination syllabus which will be available for teachers and entrants from the Practical Exam session in December. We will advise you on the details of this exciting development when the syllabus is released on our website and in the next NZMEB newsletter.

For much more information refer to our website [www.nzmeb.org](http://www.nzmeb.org), and please do not hesitate to contact us at our home office: phone 0800 388 748, or email [office@nzmeb.org](mailto:office@nzmeb.org).

Yours faithfully



PAULINE ALEXANDER

New Zealand Music Examination Board

*Some of you may have received some of this information previously, if this is the case we apologise. If you do not wish to receive NZMEB Newsletters in the future, please email us and ask to be taken off our mailing list.*