

INVITATION TO SUBMIT COMPOSITIONS FOR THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY OF MUSIC PIANO ALBUMS ELEMENTARY TO GRADE V

The Royal Irish Academy of Music piano albums (Elementary–Grade V) are published annually. We are dedicated to including compositions from contemporary composers or from teachers who like to compose for students. If you are interested in submitting your compositions for consideration for inclusion in the piano albums, read the selection process and guidelines below.

Selecting pieces

The selection process incorporates several factors at every level to ensure that the student and teacher have a choice when it comes to tempo, style, character and mood, technical challenges, rhythmical intricacies, articulation, and keys. Although this list is by no means exhaustive, it demonstrates the extent to which the selection process is entwined with the systematic development of the technical and musical component of the student. The desired outcome then is that skills are acquired through pieces rather than the piece being the end goal. Nevertheless, it is equally important for the student to play a piece that he/she enjoys; what might attract different levels and age groups is also taken into consideration.

If composing a piece specifically for submission, or if submitting a piece you have already written, keep in mind the following:

- Typical hand size of the younger student
- Articulation: legato touch, staccato, slurs etc.
- Suitability of the work for the appropriate technical development of each grade
- Time signature/rhythmic values appropriate to the level of each grade
- Dynamic contrasts
- Variety of tempo
- Character and appeal – if the piece is not attractive the student will not want to learn it.

We strongly recommend that you consult the current piano albums by way of assessing the standard expected in each grade, but also to consider it from a pedagogical aspect; often a piece that sounds lovely and is fun to play sits between grades.

Earlier grades

- Arrangements of familiar tunes are acceptable

Guidelines

(this is not an exhaustive list, and not every feature need be included, but should offer some insight into the requirements for each grade)

- **Elementary (8–12 bars):** Left hand and right hand in 5-finger position; mostly key of C but occasionally key signature with one sharp or one flat; mostly crotchets or longer note values but may have occasional quavers; mostly single notes, occasional 2-note chord; simple dynamics; simple time signatures. Hands separate or together.
- **Preliminary (max. 16–20 bars):** mostly 5-finger position, occasional change to nearby 5-finger position; key signature with a maximum of one sharp or one flat;

simple quaver passages if appropriate; mostly hands together though some passages may be hands separate; occasional chords up to 3 notes; dynamic indications; articulation markings such as accents, slurs etc.; simple time signatures.

- **Primary (max. 24 bars):** simple changes of hand position; key signature of up to two sharps or two flats maximum; occasional accidentals; possible quavers; simple syncopation; generally hands together; chords up to three notes; simple or compound duple time signatures; straightforward tempo changes.
- **Grade I (max. 32 bars):** freer movement over a range no more than two octaves in each hand; simple modulations; possible semiquaver movement; occasional chords covering interval of a 6th at most; possible grace notes; simple or compound duple time signatures; growing range of dynamic markings; articulation; tempo indications; simple tempo changes.
- **Grade II (max. 40 bars):** wider range of movement, approximately two octaves in each hand; key signature up to three sharps or flats; possible simple ornamentation; chords spanning the interval of a 7th; possible semiquaver passages; tempo indications; articulation; dynamics; simple or compound duple time signatures.
- **Grade III (max. 60 bars):** approximately two to three octave range in each hand; more rhythmic complexity, possibly triplets; wider range and subtlety in dynamics; possible introduction of basic legato pedal; simple or compound time signatures.
- **Grade IV (max. 80 bars):** no range limit, but at the same time excessive leaps should be avoided; possible wider range in ornamentation; key signature up to four sharps or flats; legato pedalling; simple or compound time signatures.
- **Grade V (max. 100 bars):** more layered textures; quick fingerwork passages; variety of greater use of tempo markings; wider dynamic range.

How to submit

- Submissions may be prepared in Finale or Sibelius. Applicants may submit their work(s) in hard copy to the Senior Examiner of Publications (Dr Majella Boland) Local Centre Exams, RIAM, 36–38 Westland Row, Dublin 2, or by email to LC.publications@riam.ie (all attachments should be in PDF format only)
 - Each submission must be clearly marked with the composer's name, contact details and intended piano grade
 - Applicants may submit more than one composition for any grade, and for as many grades as desired
 - If selected, your work will be printed in the RIAM piano albums and the copyright will remain the property of the RIAM for that publication but will revert to the composer thereafter.
 - Successful submissions will receive the following remuneration, payable on completion of score for printing
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| Elementary, Preliminary, Primary | €100 |
| Grade I, Grade II | €200 |
| Grade III, Grade IV | €300 |
| Grade V | €400 |