Frequently Asked Questions about the Aural Skills Exam

The Aural Skills Exam, or Aliferis Test, is a three part listening exam required for students auditioning for the School of Music. It includes a harmonic, melodic, and rhythmic section. There are 64 multiple choice questions. The test is recorded on a CD and takes approximately 35 minutes.

Do you have to take this test to be admitted to the School of Music?

Yes. The only way you are exempt from this test is if you have taken the AP Music Theory test and received a 4 or higher on the aural portion of the Exam. If you wish to waive the test, please fax a copy of your AP Score Sheet to us at 801-422-0533. A good score on the Aliferis Test is often helpful in making a decision between close candidates for admittance. It is also required before you can register for any music major classes.

When do I have to take the exam?

In order for your scores to be considered with your School of Music application, we need to receive your scores on or before the last Saturday in January.

What is a passing score for the exam?

There is not a specific passing score, but students accepted to the School of Music typically get at least half of the questions correct (out of 64 questions).

How many times can I take the exam?

You may take the exam as many times as you would like. We keep only your highest score.

How do I take the exam?

There are three ways you can take the test:

1. On audition day (the last Saturday in January). It is offered twice: at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. You do not need to sign up in advance and it is offered at these times free of charge. All the materials for the test are provided. Ask at check-in where the test will be held, and please arrive a few minutes early.

2. Through the BYU Testing Center by appointment only. You must call 801-422-6147 to schedule an appointment. Appointments are only scheduled Monday – Friday between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. There is a $5 charge and you must bring headphones and a current photo ID.
3. Through a proctor. You may request to take the test through a proctor if you meet all the following criteria:

- You are NOT coming to campus for a live audition
- You live outside of Utah County
- You are unable to come to BYU Campus and take the test in the Testing Center

If you meet ALL these criteria, you may request a proctored exam. The proctor should be a music teacher, either from a school or from private lessons. To arrange to take the test through a proctor, call 801-422-2660 or send an email to musicadmissions@byu.edu with the following information:

- Proctor's name, mailing address, phone number and/or email address
- Student's name, phone number, and email address

The test will be mailed directly to your proctor as soon as an exam becomes available. This process takes at least two weeks and may take over a month, so you will want to do this as far in advance of auditions as possible.

How can I prepare for this exam?

- Enrolling in Music 190 at BYU (if you are a current BYU student).

- Studying a good beginning music theory text, such as Paul O. Harder and Greg A. Steinke's Basic Materials in Music Theory: A Programmed Course, 9th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999).

- Practicing your ear training with such computer programs as Musica Practica and Guido.

- Studying at an appropriate web site, such as:
  - www.musictheory.net

For more questions about the Aural Skills Exam, please contact us at 801-422-8903, or send an email to musicadmissions@byu.edu.