

ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS (LONDON)

PUBLIC EXAMINATION in CARNATIC MUSIC

PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS MRIDHANGAM

Grade 1 to 8 Syllabus

Effective from April 2019 Exams

Email: Academyof.finearts@btinternet.com

*The Academy's Percussion Instruments Diploma is recognised by The University of Madras
for further studies*



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NOTES FOR EXAM APPLICATIONS

New Syllabus:

The attached revised syllabus should be used for examinations to be held in and after April 2019 examinations, until further revisions.

Theory Exams:

There will be written theory examinations from Grades 3 to Music Teacher's Diploma in Mridhangam.

Theory Question Papers:

Grades 3 to 7 (Diploma) – Each paper will be set as follows:

Part 1 – Multiple choice questions

Part 2 – Written and essay type questions

Grade 8 (Teacher's Diploma) – 2 papers - will be essay type questions.

Grades 3 to 7 (Diploma) - Each paper will be 1½ hours (90 minutes)

Grade 8 (Teacher's Diploma) – 2 papers – Each paper will be 3 hours (180 minutes)

Referred students who have already sat for Theory examinations will have to re-sit the Theory exams after **(24 months)** had elapsed. This is applicable to all grades from grades 3 to Diploma (New Grade 7 - Old Grade 6).

Audio-Visual Examination for Diploma Year 3 (New Grade 6) and Diploma (New Grade 7 - Old Grade 6):

There will be a half an hour Audio-Visual examination, to be held after the Theory exam. Audio-Visual marks will be awarded as a bonus to candidates Theory exam.

Referred Students who have already sat for Audio-Visual examinations for Diploma Year 3 and Diploma will have to re-sit the Audio-Visual exams after **(24 months)** had elapsed.

Diploma (New Grade 7 - Former Grade 6)

Effective from 2010 April/May exams students who pass New Grade 7 – Former Grade 6 will be issued a Diploma Certificate. This certificate will neither qualify in any way as Academy's Mridhangam Teacher's Diploma (New Grade 8 - Former Grade 7) Diploma nor will it be recognised as a Diploma by University of Madras for further studies.

In order to qualify as Diploma holder to teach as a qualified teacher and for further studies in University of Madras, students should pass the Academy's Mridhangam Teacher's Diploma (New Grade 8 - Former Grade 7) examinations.

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Notes for Exam Applications (contd.)

Rules for Exemptions:

- A. A student appearing for the Academy's examinations for the first time or without previous qualifications from other examination boards can be considered for exemptions from the first two grades only and sit for Grade 3 directly.
- B. A student of other examination boards can be exempted from any grades of the Academy of Fine Arts (London) examinations provided they have passed the corresponding grades of the other examination boards and have covered the Academy syllabus.

NB:

The "corresponding grades" are not necessarily the same number grades. The Academy's grades correspond with higher grades of some examination boards, but with lower grades of North Ceylon Oriental Music Society (NCOMS). Students who possess qualified certificates for Grades 1 to 5 from NCOMS will be allowed to take the Academy's next appropriate Grade Exam.

Transition Period – Year 2019.

The referred students for who sat the examinations under 2007 Syllabus and who will be continuing into 2019 with this new syllabus will have to decide which appropriate grade's syllabus would they be taking next in 2019. They will only have year 2019 to complete their referred grade's exam. This option will not be available from 2020 exams. Thereafter above mentioned referred candidates would be expected to sit the appropriate next grade fully from year 2020. If not sure please call Academy Administrator

All other grades from Diploma Year 1 (Grade 4) - Please consult Academy's Mridhangam Chief Examiner or the Administrator - if confused or in doubt - before deciding to sit for the appropriate grade exam in 2019.

Any Queries and Questions on this Examination Notes should be discussed with Academy's Mridhangam Chief Examiner Mr P Kirupakaran Tel: +44-7956 124 740 or Academy's Administrator Jana Ratnasabapathy Tel: +44-208 886 8320

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Grade One (Grade 1)

Practical examination only

1. Tha ; Thi , ; Thom , ; Nam , ; || - rendering orally and playing on Mridhangam the Mridhanga syllables (Tha Thi Thom Nam) in not less than six (6) exercises.
2. Tha Ki Da (Thaa Tha Ri)
Tha ; Kida Thaka (Tha ; Tha Ri Kida) - rendering orally and playing on Mridhangam the Mridhanga syllables in not less than twelve (12) exercises.
3. Rendering orally and playing on Mridhangam the Mridhanga syllable exercises comprising Thalangu, Thakajanu for 2 Avarthanams and 4 Avarthanams.
4. Ability to play on Mridhangam Purattal (Paran) in Aadhi tala with 8 aksharas.

All the above exercises should be played on the Mridhangam as required.

Syllabus for Mridhangam

Second Grade (Grade 2)

Practical examination only

1. Purattal (Paran) in Aadhi tala with 16 & 32 aksharas in three (3) speeds (kalam).
Purattal (Paran) in Rupaka tala with 12 & 24 aksharas in three (3) speeds (kalam).
2. Should be able to do the Solkattu exercises of the Saptha Tala (Seven talas) Alankara Jathis in three (3) speeds (kalam) orally (kolupiththal).
3. Knowledge of angas found in the Saptha talas (Lagu, Durutam, Anudurutam) and five (5) Lagu jaathis.

NOTES FOR GRADE 2:

Previous Grade's syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Third Grade (Grade 3)

Practical:

1. Purattal (Paran) in three (3) speeds - each avartha of 14, 20, 28 aksharas respectively.
e.g. 10 Akshara Purattal - Tha, Kida = Tha Kidathaka
OR Tha, Thari = Tha Tharikida

14 Akshara Purattal - Tha, Kidathaka = Tha, Kida Kidathaka
OR Tha, Tharikida = Tha, Thari Tharikida
 - Likewise 20, 24, 28, 32 Akshara Purattal should be formed respectively.
2. Play Thani Avarthanams (solo) in Sama Eduppus for Aadhi Tala and Rupaka Tala. Also to play Panja Jaathi (Five types) of Thathinkinathoms and render the same orally with talas.
3. Student should render orally:
Panja Jaathi Eka Taala Alankara Jathis in three (3) speeds (kalam).
Misra Chappu and Khanda Chappu Alankara Jathis in three (3) speeds (kalam).

Theory:

1. Short Notes with examples on Sangeetham, Nadham, Sruthi, Swaram, Swarastanam, Stayi, Avarthanam.
2. Derivation of 35 Talas from the Seven Talas.
3. Knowledge of Talam, Layam, Angas of Tala (Tri-Angam), Sama - Atheetha - Anagatha Eduppus, Jathi, Jaathi.
3. Definition of Purattal (Paran), Mora, Theermanam, Thathinkinathom.
4. Knowledge of the signs & symbols used in Carnatic music.
5. Ability to write with signs & symbols in Carnatic music:
Thalangu - Thakajanu exercises consisting of 2, 4, Avarthanams for 5 types of Thathinkinathoms in Aadhi and Rupaka Talas.
6. Mridhanga Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
Palghat T S Mani Iyer
Yalpanam Inuvil K Sangarasivam

NOTES:

Previous Grades' syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Diploma Year 1 (Grade 4)

Practical:

1. Play Thani Avarthanams in Sama Eduppus for Misra Chappu and Khanda Chappu talas.
Play Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms for Misra Chappu and Khanda Chappu.
2. Play Thani Avarthanams in Chathusra Jaathi Thiripudai (Aadhi) Tala for the following different Eduppus: ½, Little Finger samam, 1½ Eduppus from samam with Five types (Panja jaathi) of Thathinkinathoms.
3. Play Thani Avarthanams in ½ Ida and Atheetha Eduppu for Rupaka Tala and Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms for the appropriate Eduppus.
4. Accompaniment to kritis in Aadhi Talam 1 Kalai with appropriate Theermanams (Aruthi)

Theory:

1. Knowledge of the Gati Bedham in 175 talas. Brief knowledge of Origin of Tala.
2. Definitions of Maarga Tala, Desiya Tala, Gati.
3. Definitions & details of Shadangam, Shodaashaangam
4. Lakshanas of Thillana, Sulaathi, Padham, Sindhu.
5. Ability to write Thani Avarthanams played in Aadhi, Rupaka (Sama Eduppu) with proper signs & symbols.
6. Musical Instruments: Mridhangam, Kanjira, Tambura and Flute – Knowledge of structure and the art of handling of these Vadhyams (Instruments). Know names of past and present Vidwans of these Vadhyams.
7. Mridhanga Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
Pazhani Subramaniya Pillai
Yalpanam Nachimarkoviladi V Ambalavanar

NOTES:

Previous Grades' syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Diploma Year 2 (Grade 5)

Practical:

1. Play Thani Avarthanams in Atheetha Eduppu for Rupaka Tala and Panja jaathi Thathinkinathom for the appropriate Eduppus.
2. Play Thani Avarthanams with 5 types (Panja jaathi) of Thathinkinathoms for:
 - a. Misra Chappu Talam with 2 Mathiras and 4 Mathiras away from Sama Eduppu.
 - b. Kanda Chappu Talam with 2 Mathiras away from Sama Eduppu.
3. Ability to play for singing of musical pieces eg. kirtanas, kritis or songs based in Aadhi, Rupaka talas.
4. Play Thani Avarthanams in Sama Eduppus for Thisra, Khanda jaathi Thiripudai Talas and also Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms for the Thiripudai Talas.

Theory:

1. Ability to write Thani Avarthanas played in Aadhi, Roopaka, Kanda Chappu, Misra Chappu talas (Sama Eduppu) and Panja jaathi (5 types of) Thathinkinathom with proper signs & symbols.
2. Knowledge of structure of Violin, Morsing and Ghatam the art of handling of these Vadhyams (Instruments). Know names of past and present Vidwans of these Vadhyam.

Musical instruments: Compare and contrast between Mridhangam, Ghatam, Thavil, Kanjira, Morsing, Dolak and Thabla.

3. Percussion Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
Thavil Vidwaan Laya Gnana Kubera Poobathy V Thadhshanamoorthy
Vellore G. Ramabhadran

NOTES:

Previous Grades' syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Diploma Year 3 (Grade 6)

Practical:

1. Play Thani Avarthanams in Sama Eduppus for Misra, Sankirna jaathi Thiripudai Talas and also Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms for these Thiripudai Talas.
2. Play Thani Avarthanams for Thisra, Chathusra and Thiripudai talas Irandu kalai with $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ away from Sama Eduppus including Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms.
3. Ability to play for singing of musical pieces in Aadhi, Rupaka, Misra Chappu & Kanda Chappu talas and also be able to play Thani Avarthanams at any points of Eduppus in these musical pieces.
4. Ability to handle creative (Mano dharma) Thani Avarthanam in Aadhi Tala using:
 - a. 5 speeds (Panja Gati)
 - b. a big Mora with the appropriate conclusion Thathinkinathoms, for the respective Panja Gatis.

Theory:

1. The advantages of learning percussion instruments.
2. Knowledge of Percussion instruments used for Nattu Padal (folk song), Kadhakalakshebham, Nattyam (Dance), Nattu Kooththu and Light Music.
3. Musical Instruments: Veena - Knowledge of structure and the art of handling of this Vadhyam (Instrument). Know names of past and present Vidwans of this Vadhyam.
Compare and contrast between Chendai, Suddha Mathalam, Udukkai, Panchamuka Vadhyam & Parai.
4. Percussion Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
Thanjavur Vaidhyanatha Iyer **or** Guruvayoor Dorai
Ramanathapuram C. S. Murugabhoopathy
A S Ramanathan

NOTES:

Previous Grades' syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Diploma (Grade 7)

Practical:

1. Ability to play for Chauka kala (Irandu kalai) Pallavi in Thiripudai talams (Thisra, Chathusra, Khanda jaathis respectively) and play same in Thiri kala, including Thisra Gati.
2. Play Thani Avarthanams for, Khanda Jaathi and Misra Jaathi Thiripudai talas Irandu kalai with $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$ away from Sama Eduppus including Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms.
3. Play Thani Avarthanam in Sama Eduppus (1 kalai) preferably for 35 Talams, including the Panja jaathi Thathinkinathoms.
4. Play given jathis for a given Tala Eduppu or Graha.
5. Play with mora respectively for Aadhi and Rupaka Panja gati talas.

Theory:

1. Methods of playing Mridhangam for: Varṇam, Kirtanas and Pallavi.
2. Methods of playing Mridhangam for: Vocal music, Instrumental music, Pannisai, Bharatha Natyam, Natyam (dance music), Light music, Bhajans and for dramas.
3. Write for given jathis in given talams with tala signs and symbols.
4. A brief History of Carnatic Music.
5. Musical Instrument: Knowledge of structure Thavil and Nagaswaram and the art of handling of these Vadhyams (Instruments). Know names of past and present Vidwans.
6. Percussion Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
Yalpanam N Thangam
Thanjavur R. Ramamoorthy **or** Palghat R. Raghu
Umayalpuram K Sivaraman **or** Karaikudi Mani

NOTES:

Previous Grades' syllabus should be covered when sitting for this grade.

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Final year leading to Music Teacher's Diploma in Mridhangam (Grade 8)
Students who successfully complete this examination will be bestowed with a title
“Nadha Mani”

(Minimum age to sit for exam 15 years - After completion of G.C.S.E or equivalent exam)
NOTE: Students should sit for main course and a subsidiary subject. Students should take another instrument or vocal as subsidiary subject. Bharatha Natyam also can be taken as subsidiary subject.

Practical

Practical Part One:

An exam concert (Kacheri format) playing Mridhangam for a vocalist. The concert will be made up of the following musical pieces totalling for not more than 90 minutes. The candidate should time each item to make up the total 90 mins including the gaps (expected to be not more than 2 minutes) between each item.

Musical pieces for the exam concert programme: One (1) of each of the following pieces should be chosen for the programme.

- 1. Varnam – Adi, Ata, Jampai or any other talam (2 speeds)**
- 2. Madhyama kala kriti or kirtana with five or more Sangathis set in Adi talam in 1 kalai, should be able to accompany to Kalpana Swarams, Swaras Korvais followed by a short Thani Avarthanam consisting of minimum 3 nadais to an appropriate Eduppu.**
- 3. Chauka kala kriti or kirtana not less than five Sangathis set to either Rupaka Talam or Misra Chappu Talam or Kanda Chappu Talam.**
- 4. Ragam-Thanam-Pallavi: Rendering a Pallavi in Aadhi talam set to 2 kalai in the traditional style. Raga Alapana, Thanam and Pallavi (in Tri kala with Tisram), Niraval & Kalpana swaras. Play a short “Thani Avarthanam” of minimum 2 nadais (Thisra, Chathusra, Kanda Triputa Talam) at any point of Eduppu.**
- 5. Accompany any one of the following: Folk Song (eg. Kavadi chinthu), Padham, Thevaram, Semi-classical song, Ashtapati or Javali**
- 6. Thillana
Mangalam (only for the last candidate for the exam day but all candidates should be prepared)**

NOTES

- 1. All students sitting for this exam should submit a list of all musical pieces at least a month before the exam.**
- 2. Candidate should prepare an invitation and programme sheet for the exam concert which should be made available to all the examiners and to all invited and present at the exam. Bonus marks will be given for this.**

(Continued on next page)

Grade 8 - Practical: (continued)

3. Academy will be responsible only for the hire of hall and providing the examiners. The candidate is responsible for providing the singer and the violinist as an accompaniment (Pakka Vadhyam), the sound, the lighting for the hall, video recordings and any other related costs for the exam concert. The Academy will not meet any of these costs. The exam concert will be held under examination conditions; not as a public concert. Candidate could invite minimum number of non-participating spectators with prior agreement with the Academy. Absolute silence is expected from all outsiders (if present) while the examination is in progress.

Practical: Part Two

1. Conduct a model lesson: Examinee will be requested to conduct a practical lesson to a student or students in Mridhngam ***after sitting for the theory exams***. The practical lesson's duration will be maximum 40 mins. These students to be provided by the examinee. If the Examinee cannot provide the students, he or she should inform the Academy in advance and the Academy will provide the students.
2. Able to identify three (3) common ragas played or sung.
3. Subsidiary Subject for Teacher's Diploma: The candidate should offer Vocal or an instrument – Veena, Violin, Flute, (excluding Harmonium and Keyboard) or Bharatha Natyam as subsidiary subject. The candidate should have either sat and passed the practical element of Grade 3 of the subsidiary subject ***or sit for a practical examination of Grade 3 of the subsidiary at the Teacher's Diploma Practical Part 2 examination.***

Theory:

Candidates will be given at least 2 weeks prior to the exam, the topics selected by the examiner for the papers.

Paper One: History & Development of Music

1. Compare and contrast Pannisai and Carnatic Music
2. Carnatic Music - its development and propagation through temples.
3. Knowledge of musical and percussion instruments used in temple rituals.
4. History and Geography - Influence of these in Carnatic Music and its Percussion instruments.
5. Musical Instruments: Magudi & Muha-veena - Structure and the art of handling of these Vadhyams (Instruments). Know names of past & present Vidwans.
6. Knowledge of the following:
Panja Talam (5), Navasandhi Talam (9), Aboorva Talam (52) of these first 10 Talas and the first 10 Talas of 108 Talas.
7. Write with signs and symbols for 2 or 4 - kalai Pallavi in Aadhi Talam. Also write it in Thisram and Thiri kalam.
8. Knowledge of: Structure of music concert hall & acoustics.
9. Short notes on Audio-Visual Equipments for the propagation of Carnatic Music: Gramophone, CD Player, Hi-Fi System, Radio, Video Recorder, Tape Recorder, Television, Computer, etc.

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Grade 8 - Theory: (continued)

10. Compare & contrast: Western Percussion instruments and Carnatic Percussion instruments.
11. Definitions of: Anulomam, Pirathilomam, Vilomam, Pirathamangam, Thvithiyangam, Padhakarppam.
12. Percussion & Music Vidwans - their life-history and their contributions to Carnatic music.
 - (a) A Mridhanga Vidwan who is currently very popular in India.
 - (b) Late K Kanapathiyapillai from Sri Lanka
 - (c) Nadhaswara Vidwan Mavitapuram Uruthirapathy
 - (d) Thavil Vidwan Inuvil N R Sinnarajah

Paper Two: Teaching Methods

1. Characteristics necessary for an exemplary Mridhanga Teacher. The responsibilities, job description, procedures to be followed in teaching, preparation of syllabus, preparation of scheme notes for each grade.
2. Write exercise notes for a Mridhanga lesson (1 hour)
3. Procedures to identify the students' interests and abilities in Miruthangam or any other percussion instruments.
4. Procedures and exercises to create knowledge of Talam. Layam (Rhythm), Sruthi (Pitch) in Students.
5. Brief knowledge of:
 - a. Suitable environment for a Mridhanga lesson / class.
 - b. Instruments and items require for a Mridhanga lesson.
 - c. Modern Carnatic percussion instruments.
6. Knowledge of conducting monthly, quarterly and annual examinations in Mridhangam.
7. Brief knowledge of Orchestration:
 - a. Brindha Ganam: Gayaka Brindha, Vadhya Brindha (Multiple instruments or groups), Nirithya Brindha (Multiple groups of dancers)
 - b. Vadhya Brindha - Thatha - Vamsaka - Avanatha Orchestra
8. Conducting Carnatic music competitions.
9. Care of Percussion instruments.

Recommended Reading:

Miruthanga Pada Murai by Mailatoor V Samy Iyer (Annamalai University Publication)
"Miruthangam" Churuka Vilakkam by Inuvil K Sangarasivam
Miruthanga Sangeetha Sasthiram by Brahmasri A N Somaskanda Sharma
Layavadyas by Prof. P Sambamurthy
Thala Samudhram by K Vasudeva Sasthirikal (Saraswathy Mahal Publication)
Thala Thivikai by K Ramachandran (Indian Sangeetha Publication)
Miruthanga Sanjeevi by Mr M N Sellathurai
Miruthanga Bodhini by Sri S Harihara Sharma (Chennai Jeyaganesha Thala Vidhyalaya Publication)
Pallavi Ratnamalika by Konnakol Mannarkudi Vaithilingam Pillai
Thala Sangirakam by B Sundaram
South Indian Music (Books 1 to 6) by Prof. P Sambamurthy
Dictionary of South Indian Music (3 Volumes) by Prof. P Sambamurthy
Aids to the Teaching of Music by Prof. P Sambamurthy
Pictures of famous Composers, Musicians by Prof. P Sambamurthy