Keyboard Placement Tests for Non Piano Majors

The objective is to determine the level best suited for each individual, whereby ideally he/she can be placed in a class of consistent level of keyboard competency. These tests are by no means a measure of one’s shortcomings and any decisions are made in the student’s best interests and provide an optimal learning environment for all.

Classes offered

Elementary      for students with no prior experience with piano
Intermediate    for students with some piano skills
Accelerated     for students with fairly advanced piano skills

Textbooks

Elementary and intermediate classes will use Alfred’s Group Piano for Adults by Lancaster/Renfrow while accelerated classes will use Harmonization at the Piano by Frackenpohl.

Placement Tests

Every student needs to sign up for a short individual test. He/she will fill up a form discussing briefly about previous piano experience. For example, the number of years of piano studies, piano exams taken (ABRSM, Trinity, Guildhall etc.) and highest grade attained. The practical test will consist of scales, interval reading, simple chord progressions, sight reading and a prepared classical piece (optional). Students with no piano background will automatically be placed in an elementary class, but would still need to fill up the form and hand it to either of the teachers-in-charge. Also note that some students who already have some piano skills may be placed in the elementary class to review the basics.

Sample placement tests

To be placed in the intermediate class, students should be able to do the following and may be tested on some or all of them:

1) Play a prepared classical piece (optional)
2) Play major scales up to and including one sharp or one flat, one octave, legato, hands separately, using correct fingerings.
3) Sight read a series of intervals, which may be perfect, major or minor and spanning up to a fifth.
4) Sight read about eight measures of music in five finger patterns.

To be placed in the accelerated class, students should be able to do the following and may be tested on some or all of them:
1) Play a prepared classical piece (optional)
2) Play major and harmonic minor scales up to and including three sharps or three flats, two octaves, legato or staccato, hands separately or together, using correct fingerings.
3) Play primary or secondary chord progressions using left hand alone or in keyboard style. (three voices in the R.H. and one voice in the L.H) Example, I-IV-I-V-I using good voice leading.
4) Harmonize a melody and provide a suitable accompaniment for it.
5) Sight read about eight measures of music that may consist of harmonic intervals in either right or left hand.
SAMPLE KEYBOARD TESTS

TESTS FOR INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

1) Play the scale of F major, right hand only, one octave

2) Sight read the following intervals

3) Play the following chord progressions, using left hand only
   a) I V I in C major
   b) I IV I V in G major

4) Harmonize the following melody with appropriate chords
   and use an accompaniment of your choice or as given
5) Sight read the melody

TESTS FOR ACCELERATED LEVEL

1) Play the scale of Bb major, two octaves, hands together.

2) Play the following chord progressions, left hand alone or three voices in right hand and one voice in left hand.
   a) I IV I V I in D major
   b) I IV ii V I in Bb major

3) Harmonize the melody and use an appropriate accompaniment
4) Sight read the music below