

## **DBIS Pianist of the Year Judging Criteria**

### **Pre-Grade 1 (Beginner/Early Learner):**

- **Focus:** Establishing a positive first experience with the piano, encouraging exploration and basic coordination.
- **Criteria:**
  - **Accuracy (30%):**
    - Basic Note Recognition: Demonstrates an attempt to play the correct notes.
    - Rhythm Awareness: Maintains a steady beat, even if imperfect.
    - Simple Tempo: Attempts to keep a consistent pace.
  - **Technique (30%):**
    - Finger Exploration: Shows an effort to use individual fingers.
    - Hand Position: Maintains a relatively relaxed hand position.
    - Basic Coordination: Attempts to coordinate both hands.
  - **Musicality (30%):**
    - Engagement: Displays enthusiasm and enjoyment.
    - Dynamic Awareness: Demonstrates a basic understanding of loud and quiet.
    - Simple Phrasing: Shows a slight awareness of musical phrases.
  - **Presentation (10%):**
    - Confidence: Approaches the piano with a sense of confidence.
    - Preparedness: Shows evidence of practice and effort.

*More...*

### **Grades 1-3 (Elementary Level):**

- **Focus:** Building foundational skills, developing musicality, and increasing technical control.
- **Criteria:**
  - **Accuracy (30%):**
    - Note Accuracy: Plays the correct notes with increasing consistency.
    - Rhythmic Precision: Maintains a steady and accurate rhythm.
    - Consistent Tempo: Demonstrates control over tempo.
  - **Technique (30%):**
    - Finger Independence: Shows increasing independence of finger movement.
    - Hand Position and Posture: Maintains good hand position and posture.
    - Basic Articulation: Demonstrates basic articulation like staccato and legato.
  - **Musicality (30%):**
    - Musical Expression: Conveys the mood and character of the piece.
    - Dynamic Variation: Uses a wider range of dynamics.
    - Phrasing Awareness: Demonstrates understanding of musical phrases.
  - **Presentation (10%):**
    - Stage Presence: Shows increasing confidence and stage presence.
    - Memorization (if applicable): Performs from memory with minimal errors.

*More...*

### **Grades 4-6 (Intermediate Level):**

- **Focus:** Refining technical skills, developing musical interpretation, and expanding repertoire.
- **Criteria:**
  - **Accuracy (30%):**
    - Accurate Performance: Plays with minimal errors in notes and rhythm.
    - Tempo Stability: Maintains a consistent and appropriate tempo.
    - Rhythmic Complexity: Handles more complex rhythmic patterns.
  - **Technique (30%):**
    - Technical Fluency: Demonstrates smooth and controlled playing.
    - Advanced Articulation: Uses a variety of articulation techniques.
    - Pedalling (if applicable): Uses pedalling effectively to enhance musicality.
  - **Musicality (30%):**
    - Musical Interpretation: Provides a nuanced and expressive interpretation.
    - Stylistic Awareness: Demonstrates understanding of musical style and form.
    - Dynamic Range: Uses a wide range of dynamics to create musical interest.
  - **Presentation (10%):**
    - Confident Performance: Delivers a confident and engaging performance.
    - Memorization: Performs from memory with accuracy and fluency.

*More...*

## **Grade 7 and Above (Advanced Level):**

**Focus:** Demonstrating advanced technical mastery, artistic maturity, and a deep understanding of musical style.

### **Criteria:**

- **Accuracy (30%):**
  - **Flawless Accuracy:** Plays with exceptional precision in notes, rhythms, and tempo, with virtually no errors.
  - **Secure Performance:** Delivers a performance that is consistent, reliable, and free from any sense of hesitation or insecurity. The performer maintains control even in the most challenging passages.
  - **Complex Rhythms:** Handles extremely intricate rhythmic patterns, including irregular meters, syncopation, and polyrhythms, with accuracy and precision.
- **Technique (30%):**
  - **Advanced Technical Proficiency:** Demonstrates a mastery of advanced piano techniques, such as:
    - Scales and arpeggios (in all forms) at high speed and with evenness.
    - Octaves, chords, and double notes with power, clarity, and control.
    - Complex fingerwork, including rapid passages, intricate ornaments, and demanding passagework.
  - **Complex Articulation:** Employs a wide range of articulation techniques to create expressive nuances, including:
    - Subtle variations in legato, staccato, and accents.
    - The ability to produce a variety of tone colours through touch.
    - Skillful use of phrasing and dynamics to shape the musical line.
  - **Effective Pedalling:** Uses pedalling with sophistication and musicality to enhance the performance, including:
    - Precise control of the damper pedal to create legato, sustain, and resonance.
    - Use of half-pedalling and other advanced pedalling techniques to achieve subtle tonal effects.
- **Musicality (30%):**
  - **Deep Interpretation:** Provides a profound and insightful interpretation of the music, demonstrating a clear understanding of the composer's intentions and the historical context of the piece.
  - **Stylistic Mastery:** Demonstrates a deep understanding of the musical style and form of the piece, with the ability to:
    - Convey the specific characteristics of the Baroque, Classical, Romantic, or 20th-century style.
    - Shape the performance to highlight the structure, harmony, and melody of the composition.
  - **Emotional Depth:** Conveys a wide range of emotions with sensitivity and depth, connecting with the audience on an emotional level. The performance is expressive, nuanced, and engaging.
- **Presentation (10%):**
  - **Professional Stage Presence:** Delivers a polished and professional performance with confidence and poise. Demonstrates effective communication through body language, eye contact, and overall demeanour.
  - **Memorization:** Performs from memory with complete confidence and artistry, conveying a sense of freedom and spontaneity.