

Studyguide

Plucked instruments

Academic year
2025-2026

**Koninklijk Conservatorium
Antwerpen**

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1. BACHELOR 1

1. INSTRUMENT

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Guitar 1	Skills test	100%
Harp 1		

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study programme will take place during class concerts or group lessons by the teacher or teachers.
- The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner. The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skills test worth 100% of the overall score, consisting of one yearly exam of 30 minutes made up of a mixed recital programme.

The student must choose the exam programme in consultation with the principal teacher. The programme must include works from various stylistic periods, from the Renaissance to contemporary repertoire.

Part-time students

Guitar 1/Harp 1 (part 1): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

Guitar 1/Harp 1 (part 2): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

As a part time student it is impossible to obtain all learning outcomes in one year.

2. REPERTOIRE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to important representative works from the repertoire of their main instrument.

During the bachelor's and master's programs, students must study this basic repertoire independently. These works must be read and analyzed on the instrument.

Form of assessment: skills test: the student discusses and performs a selection of two works from the prescribed repertoire list.

Assessment standard: a pass must be obtained for each work.

Criteria: The student performs the works correctly, with accurate knowledge of the text and stylistic performance practice, and is able to situate the works and composers in a cultural-historical context.

See DigitAP > Guitar repertoire 1+2+3+4+5 for specific evaluation criteria for guitar.

3. Practical harmony & improvisation 1

For guitar: Practical Harmony & Improvisation 1 for guitarists focuses on understanding and mastering basic chords, scales, and cadences across the entire neck of the instrument. The assessment consists of a skills test comprising a series of exercises that the student must be able to perform correctly and consistently.

For harp go to the Studyguide General Music Theory Courses

2. BACHELOR 2

1. INSTRUMENT

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Guitar 2	Skills test	100%
Harp 2		

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study programme will take place during class concerts and group lessons by the teacher or teachers.
- The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner. The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skills test worth 100% of the overall score, consisting of one yearly exam of 30 minutes made up of a mixed recital programme.

The student must choose the exam programme in consultation with the principal teacher. The programme must include works from various stylistic periods, from the Renaissance to contemporary repertoire.

Part-time students

Guitar 2/Harp 2 (part 1): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

Guitar 2/Harp 2 (part 2): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score
As a part time student it is impossible to obtain all learning outcomes in one year.

2. AUDITION TRAINING 1 (only for harp students)

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Audition Preparation 2	Skills test	100%

Content:

- Three compulsory modules for all orchestral instruments
- An organized mock-audition for all orchestral instruments on a voluntary basis
- An internal audition per instrument to prepare for the audition exam in January.

Read more about the specific planning of this course on the DigitAP course "Audition Training".

Assessment format:

The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the specified final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score in the very specific context of an audition with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Practical test during the May/June exam period, consisting of 4 specified orchestral excerpts. These excerpts will be given to the student at least 3 months before the exam.

3. REPERTOIRE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to important representative works from the repertoire of their main instrument.

During the bachelor's and master's programs, students must study this basic repertoire independently. These works must be read and analyzed on the instrument.

Form of assessment: skills test: the student discusses and performs a selection of two works from the prescribed repertoire list.

Assessment standard: a pass must be obtained for each work.

Criteria: The student performs the works correctly, with accurate knowledge of the text and stylistic performance practice, and is able to situate the works and composers in a cultural-historical context.

See DigitAP > Guitar repertoire 1+2+3+4+5 for specific evaluation criteria for guitar.

4. LITERATURE STUDY 1

In this course, the student will gain an overview of the history, the building and the development of the instrument. The student will gain an understanding of the circumstances in which the repertoire of the instrument came into existence. The genres, styles and general acoustic theory are explained and illustrated using CDs, scores and study trips. A fixed part of this course is also research into sources, emanating from the following two questions: (i) where can I find interesting literature about the instrument, the composers, and the compositions? (ii) where can I find the scores themselves? Attention is drawn to the need for a critical reading and a correct, scholarly and responsible approach to the source material.

Lessons are taught on an alternating basis: in one year, Bachelor 2 and Bachelor 3 students will take part 1, and in the following year, they will take part 2.

Assessment consists of a knowledge test, which can either be a written or oral test and/or paper. Students who have to re-sit their exam in the second exam period are tested only by way of a knowledge test.

Guitar 1 and 2

Overview (2-year course) of the history of the guitar and lute. The student will gain an understanding of the circumstances in which the repertoire for these instruments came into being, and the genres and styles will be explained and illustrated using CDs, scores, studying tablature, study trips, and examining historical instruments.

- Part 1 (first academic year): the origin of plucked instruments, their history up to 1850, practical knowledge of tablature.
- Part 2 (the following academic year): from Francesco Tarrega to contemporary repertoire, introduction to the romantic guitar.

Harp

Part 1: the period from the Renaissance to 1830, which is the period of historical performance practice for the harp. In addition to an overview of the cultural spirit of the times and the way in which the harp took its place in the cultural landscape, harp composers and their repertoire will be discussed (with listening examples) as well as transcriptions and instrument making.

Part 2: the period from 1830. The modern harp came into existence around 1820 and the whole repertoire for this new instrument and its developments in the 20th century will be covered (see Tournier - La harpe, Emmanuel - La harpe, Erard-Dossiers, Salzedo-Modern study of the harp).

5. Practical harmony & improvisation 2

For Guitar go to Studyguide General Music Theory

For harp go to the Studyguide General Music Theory Courses

3. BACHELOR 3

1. INSTRUMENT

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Guitar 3	Skills test	100%
Harp 3		

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study programme will take place during class concerts or group lessons by the teacher or teachers.
- The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal and external jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner. The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skills test worth 100% of the overall score, consisting of one public exam of 45 minutes made up of a mixed recital programme.

The student must choose the exam programme in consultation with the principal teacher. The programme must include works from various stylistic periods, from the Renaissance to contemporary repertoire. Guitar 3 students must also play a specified work.

Part-time students

The part-time study exams for Bachelor 3 consist of the following:

Guitar 3/Harp 3 (part 1): an exam with 50% of the programme to be played for an internal jury.

Guitar 3/Harp 3 (part 2): exam with a presentation of the complete Bachelor's 3 programme (part 1 may be included again) for an internal and external jury.

As a part time student it is impossible to obtain all learning outcomes in one year.

2. AUDITION TRAINING 1 (only for harp students)

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Audition Preparation 1	Skills test	100%

Content:

- Three compulsory modules for all orchestral
- An organized mock-audition for all orchestral instruments on a voluntary basis
- An internal audition per instrument to prepare for the audition exam in January.

Read more about the specific planning of this course on the DigitAP course "Audition Training".

Assessment format:

The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period (May/June) and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the specified final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score in the very specific context of an audition with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skills test: the student must prepare 6 specified orchestral excerpts. These excerpts will be given to the student at least one month before the exam.

3. REPERTOIRE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to important representative works from the repertoire of their main instrument.

During the bachelor's and master's programs, students must study this basic repertoire independently. These works must be read and analyzed on the instrument.

Form of assessment: skills test: the student discusses and performs a selection of two works from the prescribed repertoire list.

Assessment standard: a pass must be obtained for each work.

Criteria: The student performs the works correctly, with accurate knowledge of the text and stylistic performance practice, and is able to situate the works and composers in a cultural-historical context.

See DigitAP > Guitar repertoire 1+2+3+4+5 for specific evaluation criteria for guitar.

4. LITERATURE STUDY 2

In this course, the student will gain an overview of the history, the building and the development of the instrument. The student will gain an understanding of the circumstances in which the repertoire for the instrument originated.

The genres, styles and general acoustic theory are explained and illustrated using CDs, scores and study trips. A fixed part of this course is also research into sources, emanating from the following two questions: (i) where can I find interesting literature about the instrument, the composers, and the compositions? (ii) where can I find the scores themselves? Attention is drawn to the need for a critical reading and a correct, scholarly and responsible approach to the source material.

Lessons are taught on an alternating basis: in one year, Bachelor 2 and Bachelor 3 students will take part 1, and in the following year, they will take part 2.

Assessment consists of a knowledge test, which can either be a written or oral test and/or paper. Students who have to re-sit their exam in the second exam period are tested only by way of a knowledge test.

Guitar 1 and 2:

Overview (2-year course) of the history of the guitar and lute. The student will gain an understanding of the circumstances in which the repertoire for these instruments came into being, and the genres and styles will be explained and illustrated using CDs, scores, studying tablature, study trips, and examining historical instruments.

Part 1 (first academic year): the origin of plucked instruments, their history up to 1850, practical knowledge of French tablature, introduction to the vihuela and baroque guitar.

Part 2 (following academic year): from Francesco Tarrega to contemporary repertoire, introduction to the romantic guitar.

Harp

Part 1: the period from the Renaissance to 1830, which is the period of historical performance practice for the harp. In addition to an overview of the cultural spirit of the times and the way in which the harp took its place in the cultural landscape, harp composers and their repertoire will be discussed (with listening examples) as well as transcriptions and instrument making.

Part 2: the period from 1830. The modern harp came into existence around 1820 and the whole repertoire for this new instrument and its developments in the 20th century will be covered (see Tournier - La harpe, Emmanuel - La harpe, Erard-Dossiers, Salzedo-Modern study of the harp).

5. Practical harmony & improvisation 1-3

For Guitar go to the Study guide General Music Theory Courses
For harp go to the Studyguide General Music Theory Courses

4. MASTER 1

1. INSTRUMENT

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Guitar 4	Skills test	100%
Harp 4		

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study programme will take place during class concerts or group lessons by the teacher or teachers.
- The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner. The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skills test worth 100% of the overall score, consisting of one yearly exam of 35 minutes made up of a mixed recital programme.

The student must choose the exam programme in consultation with the principal teacher. The programme must include works from various stylistic periods, from the Renaissance to contemporary repertoire.

Part-time students

Guitar 4/ Harp 4 (part 1): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

Guitar 4/ Harp 4 (part 2): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

As a part time student it is impossible to obtain all learning outcomes in one year.

2. AUDITION TRAINING 3 (only for harp students)

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Audition Training 2	Skills test	100%

Content:

- Three compulsory modules for all orchestral instruments
- An organized mock-audition for all orchestral instruments on a voluntary basis
- An internal audition per instrument to prepare for the audition exam in January.

Read more about the specific planning of this course on the DigitAP course "Audition Training".

Assessment format:

The skills test will take place during the exam period in May/June before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the specified final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score in the very specific context of an audition with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Practical test during the May/June exam period, consisting of 8 specified orchestral excerpts. These excerpts will be given to the student at least one month before the exam.

Part-time students

Audition Training 2 and Audition Training (Orchestral Playing option) 1 cannot be taken as a part-time course. The skills tests for these courses must therefore be completed in their entirety with part 1 or part 2 of Instrument 4.

3. REPERTOIRE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to important representative works from the repertoire of their main instrument.

During the bachelor's and master's programs, students must study this basic repertoire independently. These works must be read and analyzed on the instrument.

Form of assessment: skills test: the student discusses and performs a selection of two works from the prescribed repertoire list.

Assessment standard: a pass must be obtained for each work.

Criteria: The student performs the works correctly, with accurate knowledge of the text and stylistic performance practice, and is able to situate the works and composers in a cultural-historical context.

See DigitAP > Guitar repertoire 1+2+3+4+5 for specific evaluation criteria for guitar.

4. Guitar practice 1

For guitar: see Study guide General Music Theory Courses

5. MASTER 2

1. MASTER'S EXAM INSTRUMENT

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Master's Exam Instrument	Final assignment	100%

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study course will take place during lessons and during the discussions with the relevant teachers about the reflective portion of the master's exam.
- The public master's exam will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal and external jury.

Assessment standards:

For the master's exam, the student must have acquired the specified final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The student must pass each component of the master's exam in order to pass the whole master's exam.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

The final assignment consists of one public master's exam of 50 minutes' duration made up of works of the student's choosing. The student can use this as an opportunity to delve deeper into the repertoire in which he or she wishes to specialise. The student can present mixed repertoire from a diverse range of stylistic periods from the Renaissance to contemporary repertoire, or can focus on a very specific part of the instrument's repertoire.

The following competencies are taken into consideration:

Competencies in relation to the principal subject: rhythm, melodic line, understanding of harmony, ensemble playing, analytical thinking skills, stylistic matters, interpretation, musical maturity, artistic drive, individuality, independence, originality, vision, stage presentation, progress, and potential.

Part-time students

Guitar / Harp Master's exam (part 1): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

Guitar / Harp Master's exam (part 2): 50% of the duration of the exam programme, which is worth 50% of the overall score

As a part time student it is impossible to obtain all learning outcomes in one year.

2. MASTER'S EXAM Research & lecture performance

Read the Studyguide Master's exam Research & lecture performance.

3. MASTER'S EXAM creative final project

Read the Studyguide Creative project.

4. Guitar practice 2

For Guitar see Study Guide General Music Theory courses

5. AUDITION TRAINING 4 (only for Harp students)

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Audition Training 3	Skills test	100%

Content:

- Three compulsory modules for all orchestral instruments
- An organized mock-audition for all orchestral instruments on a voluntary basis
- An internal audition per instrument to prepare for the audition exam in January.

Read more about the specific planning of this course on the DigitAP course "Audition Training".

Assessment format:

The skills test will take place during the specified exam period before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score in the very specific context of an audition with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

During the exam period in May/June:

- 8 specified orchestral excerpts, which will be given to students at least one month before the exam.
- One audition work, to be chosen in consultation with the principal subject teacher.

Part-time students

Audition Training 3 cannot be taken as a part-time course.

6. REPERTOIRE

The aim of this course is to introduce students to important representative works from the repertoire of their main instrument.

During the bachelor's and master's programs, students must study this basic repertoire independently. These works must be read and analyzed on the instrument.

Form of assessment: skills test: the student discusses and performs a selection of two works from the prescribed repertoire list.

Assessment standard: a pass must be obtained for each work.

Criteria: The student performs the works correctly, with accurate knowledge of the text and stylistic performance practice, and is able to situate the works and composers in a cultural-historical context.

See DigitAP > Guitar repertoire 1+2+3+4+5 for specific evaluation criteria for guitar.

7. INSTRUMENT 5 (only in combination with Master's Exam Creative Final Project)

Course	Assessment format	% of overall score
Guitar 5	Skills test	100%
Harp 5		

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study course will take place at class recitals and group lessons by the teacher(s).
- The skills test will take place during the specified examination period provided for that purpose before an internal+external jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

Skill test, worth 100% of overall score, consisting of one 50-minute public exam with a mixed recital program. The student chooses the program in consultation with the principal teacher. The program will include works from various style periods, from Renaissance to contemporary repertoire.

Part-time students

Instrument 5 (part 1): annual exam with 50% of the program

Instrument 5 (part 2): public exam with presentation of the entire instrument 5 program (part 1 may be retaken).

A student who studies part-time cannot achieve all the final competencies in one year.

6. POSTGRADUATE

The student must formulate a learning pathway at the start of the academic year, stimulated by his or her specific motivations, such as an orchestral audition, taking part in a competition, or exploration of a specific chamber music discipline. On the basis of the student's motivations, the student and teacher together make a choice of the works which the student will study. This learning pathway will be noted and given to the responsible member of the artistic direction before the start of the lessons.

1. INSTRUMENT (Postgraduate Soloist and Orchestra Instrument)

Course	Assessment format	% of the overall score
Instrument	Skills test	100%

Assessment format:

- Internal assessments of the study course will take place during class concerts or group lessons by the teacher or teachers.
- The public skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period and before an internal and external jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit, and the result is not open for negotiation.

Specifications as to exam repertoire:

Skills test, worth 100% of the overall score, consisting of one public exam of a minimum of 60 minutes' duration, made up of a mixed recital programme which is customized to the chosen specialization. The student must choose the programme in consultation with the principal subject teacher.

2. AUDITIONING (Postgraduate Orchestra Instrument: only for Harp)

Course	Assessment format	% of the overall score
Auditioning (Postgraduate Orchestra Instrument)	Skills test	100%

Assessment format:

The skills test will take place during the scheduled exam period (May/June) and before an internal jury.

Assessment standards:

The student must have acquired the specified final competencies, must be able to demonstrate that he or she has mastered the instrument and that he or she can perform a score in the very specific context of an audition with understanding, stylistic knowledge and in an artistic manner.

The minimum pass mark is 10/20 for this course unit.

Specifications as to the exam repertoire:

During the exam period in May/June:

- 8 specified orchestral excerpts, which will be given to students at least one month before the exam.
- One audition work, to be chosen in consultation with the principal subject teacher.

For substantive questions, please consult Nico Couck (Section Coordinator).