

# Unisa Jazz Theory Syllabus

## Grades 6 – 8

(2023 until further notice)

**For Pregrade 1 – Grade 5 Classical and Jazz students write the same Theory of Music examinations.**

**Please refer the *Theory of Music syllabus (Pregrade 1 – Grade 5)*.**

**In preparation for the Jazz Theory examinations, please consult the list of recommended books available online at the link *Jazz Theory Resources*.**

# **GRADE 6:**

## **GRADE 6 PAPER 1 (T61-J)**

### **Harmony**

#### **Syllabus Content:**

- Major Scale Harmony (seventh chords)
- Modes of the Major Scale.

#### **Outcomes:**

Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of major scale harmony. They must be able to identify diatonic chords (sevenths) from the major scale, construct chords, construct and identify modes of the major scale.

### **Jazz Form and Structure**

#### **Syllabus Content:**

- 12 Bar Jazz Blues
- Minor Blues
- Rhythm Changes and harmonic substitution principles (Tritone sub, Secondary Dominants).

#### **Outcomes:**

Students must be able to construct a 12 Bar Jazz Blues, construct a Minor Blues progression, construct a Rhythm Changes progression and be able to superimpose harmonic substitutions over standard harmonic changes.

## **GRADE 6 PAPER 2 (T61-J):**

### **Jazz Improvisation: Theory & Concepts**

#### **Syllabus Content:**

- Language of Jazz Improvisation
- Swing Feel
- Swing eighth notes
- Extended chords (construction and function)
- Chord-Scale relationships.

#### **Outcomes:**

Students must demonstrate a good knowledge of the language of jazz improvisation appropriate for the grade, demonstrate an understanding of swing feel, swing eighth notes; understand extended chord construction and function.

### **Jazz History**

#### **Syllabus Content:**

- Precursors to Jazz and New Orleans Jazz (Proto Blues, Buddy Bolden, Jelly Roll Morton, King Oliver and Louis Armstrong and others)
- Swing Era (Benny Goodman, Count Basie, Duke Ellington and others)
- Bebop (Minton's Jazz Club, Charlie Christian, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Bud Powell and others)
- Early South African Music (Marabi, Kwela, and musicians such as Kippie Moeketsi).

**Outcomes:**

Students must demonstrate a thorough understanding of the precursors to jazz and the history of New Orleans Jazz, the Swing Era, Bebop and Early South African Music.

**MARK ALLOCATION:**

<b>PAPER</b>	<b>PASS MARK</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MARKS</b>
Paper 1 (T61-J)	50	100
Paper 2 (T62-J)	50	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>
	<b>Roll of Honour</b>	170
	<b>Distinction</b>	160
	<b>Pass</b>	100

## **GRADE 7:**

### **PAPER ONE (T71-J):**

#### **Melodic Minor Harmony**

##### **Syllabus Content:**

- Jazz melodic scale harmony (seventh chords)
- Modes of the jazz melodic minor Scale
- Application of modes and chords from the jazz melodic minor scale
- Interchangeability of jazz melodic minor harmony.

##### **Outcomes:**

Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of jazz melodic minor scale harmony. They must be able to construct and name all seven modes of the jazz melodic minor scale. They must be able to construct and identify chords (quartads) from the jazz melodic minor scale. They must be able to apply their knowledge of jazz melodic minor harmony to relevant chord-scale relationships, in the context of progressions. They must be able to demonstrate the interchangeability of jazz melodic minor harmony.

### **PAPER TWO (T72-J):**

#### **Four-part Harmony:**

##### **Syllabus Content:**

- 4-way close voicing techniques.
- Construction and identification of 4-way close voicings with altered tensions
- Guidelines for effective voicings
- Construction of 5-note voicings using the 4-way close, doubled lead voicing technique
- Available tensions for appropriate substitution.

##### **Outcomes:**

Students must be able to determine the category of the lead (melody) voice as one of the primary “note categories:” root, 7<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or an available substitution (from available tensions). They must be able to fill the other three note categories below a given melody or lead note, using primary notes or substitutions. They must be able to identify as well as create effective 4-way close voicings.

#### **MARK ALLOCATION:**

<b>PAPER</b>	<b>PASS MARK</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MARKS</b>
Paper 1 (T71-J)	50	100
Paper 2 (T72-J)	50	100
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>
	<b>Roll of Honour</b>	170
	<b>Distinction</b>	150
	<b>Pass</b>	100

## **GRADE 8:**

### **PAPER ONE (T81-J):**

#### **“Coltrane” Matrix and Harmonic Cycles**

##### **Syllabus Content:**

- Analysis of *Giants Steps* by John Coltrane
- An analysis of Bheki Mseleku’s compositions *Cycle (Celebration)* and *Monwabisi (Home at Last)*

##### **Outcomes:**

Students should be able to provide an in-depth analysis of John Coltrane’s composition, *Giant Steps*. They must be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of the Coltrane matrix by substituting/super-imposing Coltrane changes on standard jazz progressions. Students must also provide a thorough analysis of harmonic cycles in Bheki Mseleku’s compositions *Cycle* and *Monwabisi*.

### **PAPER TWO (T82-J):**

#### **Harmonisation Techniques:**

##### **Syllabus Content:**

- 4-way close voicings extended
- Drop voicing techniques
- Drop 2 technique
- Drop 2, Doubled Lead (five-note voicing)
- Drop 3
- Drop 2 & 4

##### **Outcomes:**

Students must be able to demonstrate a thorough understanding of 4-way close voicing techniques with special emphasis on the substitution of available unaltered and altered tensions.

They must be able to:

- construct slightly open and fuller sounding voicings, using the drop 2 technique
- construct more open 5-note voicings using the drop 2-and-doubled lead technique
- construct semi-open voicings using the drop 3 technique
- construct very open and fuller voicings using the drop 2 & 4 technique.

They must also be able to demonstrate each voicing technique in isolated situations as well as be able to apply all of the above voicing techniques to harmonise a given piece of music.

### **MARK ALLOCATION:**

<b>PAPER</b>	<b>PASS MARK</b>	<b>MAXIMUM MARKS</b>
Paper 1 (T81-J)	50	100
Paper 2 (T82-J)	50	100

	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>
	<b>Roll of Honour</b>	170
	<b>Distinction</b>	150
	<b>Pass</b>	100

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