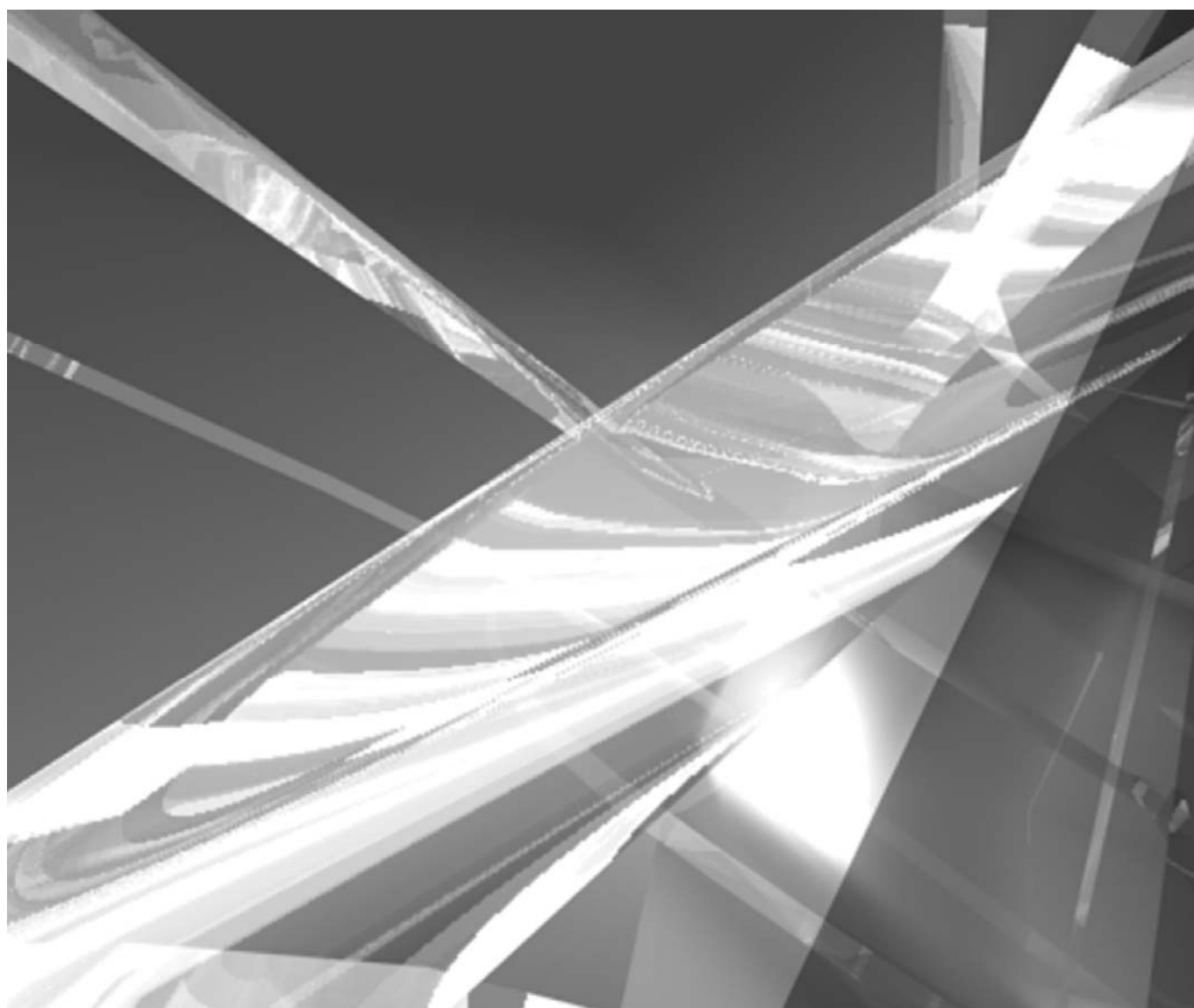


---

# Rock Guitar Playing Syllabus

---

1 October 2011 – 31 December 2014



# **University of West London**

## **London College of Music Examinations / Registry of Guitar Tutors**

### **Syllabus for Initial, Preliminary and Graded Examinations and Performance Awards in Rock Guitar Playing**

**2011 - 2014**

# Registry of Guitar Tutors

---

## 'The specialists in guitar education'

The Registry of Guitar Tutors (RGT) was established in 1992 with the aims of improving standards in guitar education and helping the guitar teaching profession achieve recognition within the mainstream of music education, by the establishment of an accredited range of comprehensive and well-structured teaching programmes. RGT is now the world's largest organisation of guitar teachers and has branches in the UK, North America, Australia, New Zealand and many parts of Europe.

RGT publishes an online directory of registered guitar tutors, and organises regular music education conferences and training seminars. In association with LCM Exams, RGT also organises a full range of graded examinations in electric guitar, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, popular music theory and classical guitar. A range of professional guitar teaching and performance diploma examinations is also available.

### **RGT Board of Honorary Patrons:**

Sir Paul McCartney, David Gilmour, Ronnie Wood, Hank Marvin, Gordon Giltrap,  
John Etheridge, Suzi Quatro, Carlos Bonell, Dave Kelly, John Illsley, Neil Murray, Glenn Tilbrook

**Director: Tony Skinner F.R.S.A.**

For further information about this syllabus contact:

Registry of Guitar Tutors  
Registry Mews  
11-13 Wilton Rd  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
Sussex  
TN40 1HY

Tel: 01424 222222

Fax: 01424 213221

Email: [office@RGT.org](mailto:office@RGT.org)

Website: [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

# Contents

	<b>Page</b>
Registry of Guitar Tutors .....	2
London College of Music .....	4
London College of Music Examinations .....	4
<b>1. Syllabus introduction</b>	
1.1 Coverage of this syllabus .....	5
1.2 Validity of this syllabus .....	5
1.3 Rationale .....	5
1.4 Syllabus aims .....	5
1.5 Syllabus objectives .....	6
1.6 Availability of examinations and entry details .....	6
1.7 Duration of examinations .....	6
1.8 Target groups .....	6
1.9 Candidates with particular needs .....	6
1.10 Progression routes .....	7
1.11 Accreditation .....	7
1.12 UCAS tariff points .....	8
<b>2. Syllabus content</b>	
2.1 Syllabus overview .....	9
2.2 Summary of subject content and description of components .....	9
2.3 Weightings for examination components .....	10
2.4 Grade descriptions .....	11
<b>3. Assessment</b>	
3.1 Assessment objectives .....	12
3.2 Coverage of the assessment domains .....	12
3.3 Approximate weightings for assessment domains .....	12
3.4 How marks are awarded during the examination .....	13
<b>4. Awarding and reporting</b>	
4.1 Issue of results .....	14
4.2 Repeats of examinations .....	14
4.3 Awards of Pass, Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction .....	14
4.4 Attainment band descriptions .....	15
<b>5. Performance Awards</b> .....	17
<b>6. Regulations and information</b> .....	18

---

# London College of Music

---

The London College of Music (LCM) is the largest specialist Music and Performing Arts institute in the UK. It has a long history of music education dating back to 1887, when it was situated in Great Marlborough Street, London, where the college began as an examination body. In 1991 LCM became part of Thames Valley University, which was renamed the University of West London in 2011.

The London College of Music offers an impressive range of innovative courses, respected worldwide and delivered with creativity and passion by practising industry experts. Courses include Performance and Composition, Popular Music Performance and Recording, Performing Arts, Music Management, Music Technology and Theatre Production.

Further information about full-time programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate students, in addition to the Junior College, is available from:

- the UWL Learning Advice Centre - tel: 020 8579 5000; email: [learning.advice@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:learning.advice@uwl.ac.uk)
- the Faculty of the Arts office - tel: 020 8231 2304; email: [music@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:music@uwl.ac.uk)
- [uwl.ac.uk/music](http://uwl.ac.uk/music)

---

## London College of Music Examinations

---

External examinations have been awarded by the London College of Music since the institution's founding in 1887. Today, examinations are held throughout the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland and at many overseas centres, and are unique in the graded examinations world in being awarded by a university.

LCM's graded and diploma examinations in most subjects are accredited by Ofqual (formerly the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, QCA), which serves as a UK governmental stamp of approval and quality assurance, confirming parity of standards with other similar examinations boards. Furthermore, the resulting mapping of LCM Examinations onto the QCF (Qualifications and Credit Framework) means that candidates applying to UK universities through the UCAS system can increase their points tariff if they have been awarded a Pass or higher at Grades 6-8 in an accredited subject.

LCM Examinations are distinctive, both in the qualifications offered and in the administration and running of the exams. We have retained the well-known traditional atmosphere and qualities of the London College of Music: informality, friendliness and approachability, although set in a fully professional and modern context. We are small enough that enquiries to the head office can be dealt with speedily and efficiently, and we are able to get to know many of our representatives and teachers personally by name. Examiners pride themselves on being friendly and approachable, ensuring candidates are put at their ease and are thus able to perform to their full potential; yet they are professional, applying thorough and objective assessment criteria in forming their judgements.

Our range of syllabuses and exam formats is exceptionally wide. Examinations may be taken in piano, all orchestral instruments, classical singing, music theatre, popular music vocals, guitar, electronic keyboard, electronic organ, drum kit, percussion, church music, Irish and Scottish traditional music, jazz (piano, wind and brass), ensemble, early learning, theory (both classical and popular) and composition. Examinations in acoustic, electric and bass guitars are offered in partnership with the Registry of Guitar Tutors (RGT). Our diplomas are internationally recognised and include composition, conducting, thesis and theoretical diplomas as well as performing and teaching diplomas in all instruments, across four levels.

Graded and diploma syllabuses are available free of charge via our website, or on request from the LCM Examinations office.

LCM Examinations  
University of West London  
St Mary's Road  
Ealing  
London W5 5RF  
tel: 020 8231 2364  
fax: 020 8231 2433  
email: [lcm.exams@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:lcm.exams@uwl.ac.uk)  
[uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams](http://uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams)

---

# 1. Syllabus introduction

---

## 1.1 Coverage of this syllabus

---

This syllabus is designed to prepare students for the Graded Examinations in Rock Guitar Playing awarded by the University of West London. It should be read in conjunction with the RGT Rock Guitar Playing Exam Information Booklet that details the specific requirements for the subject. The Exam Information Booklet is available free of charge from LCM Examinations (tel: 020 8231 2364), from the Registry of Guitar Tutors (tel: 01424 222222) or from local representatives. It can also be downloaded at [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

## 1.2 Validity of this syllabus

---

This syllabus is valid from 1 October 2011 until 31 December 2014.

## 1.3 Rationale

---

LCM's graded and diploma qualifications make a distinctive contribution to education in and through music because of the emphasis placed upon the following combination of characteristics:

- creative thinking;
- practical skills;
- encouragement to think, both technically and critically, about the pieces performed;
- the provision of assessment in areas not traditionally included within the scope of graded examinations;
- a strong emphasis towards the acquisition and demonstration of skills and understandings that are of contemporary relevance to the performing arts.

In the standards set, in structure, and organisation, LCM's graded and diploma qualifications are broadly comparable with those of other awarding bodies offering qualifications in music and in drama & communication. However, these syllabuses offer the opportunity to develop pathways into learning that both complement and provide genuine alternatives to the study of the arts within school, FE and HE curricula, and within the context of life-long learning. Because of this, they are capable of being used to extend and enrich full-time education and individual tuition and offer alternative routes that enable teachers to achieve the objective of equipping young people and adults with highly relevant creative, expressive and technological concepts and skills.

## 1.4 Syllabus aims

---

A course of study based on LCM's graded and diploma syllabuses is intended to provide:

- a progressive and unified assessment system, enabling candidates to plan and obtain an effective education in and through the arts;
- skills of organisation, planning, problem-solving and communication, through the study of the arts in performance and theory;
- enhanced ability in acquiring the personal disciplines and motivation necessary for life-long learning;
- an enduring love, enjoyment and understanding of the performing arts, from the perspective of both participants and audience;
- an assessment system equipping candidates with added-value to enhance career routes, educational opportunities and decision-making.

## 1.5 Syllabus objectives

---

A course of study based on this syllabus is intended to provide:

- a balanced combination of performing skills and the supporting literacy;
- opportunities for learning and assessment that are both creatively challenging and relevant;
- opportunities for mastery learning that are structured and directly related to the course material published for each grade;
- the basis for study and practice to develop relevant and usable skills and concepts.

## 1.6 Availability of examinations and entry details

---

Practical examinations take place throughout the year according to location. In the UK, practical examinations are held three times a year: Spring (March/April), Summer (June/July) and Winter (November/December). Entry forms are found at the back of each official RGT course handbook. Completed entry forms, together with full fees, must be submitted to the RGT head office on or before the closing date for each examination period. For UK entrants, electronic online entry and payment can be made via the RGT website.

## 1.7 Duration of examinations

---

Initial Stage	Preliminary	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
10 mins	12 mins	13 mins	14 mins	16 mins	18 mins	20 mins	26 mins	30 mins	32 mins

## 1.8 Target groups

---

These examinations are open to all. There are no minimum age restrictions, and the choice of learning material is intended to appeal to candidates of all ages. However, in practice, whilst candidates of all ages enter for Initial Stage to Grade 5 examinations, it is fairly rare for candidates below the age of 16 to possess the musical maturity required for success at Grades 6-8.

**Graded Examinations in Rock Guitar Playing: *Likely* age groups**

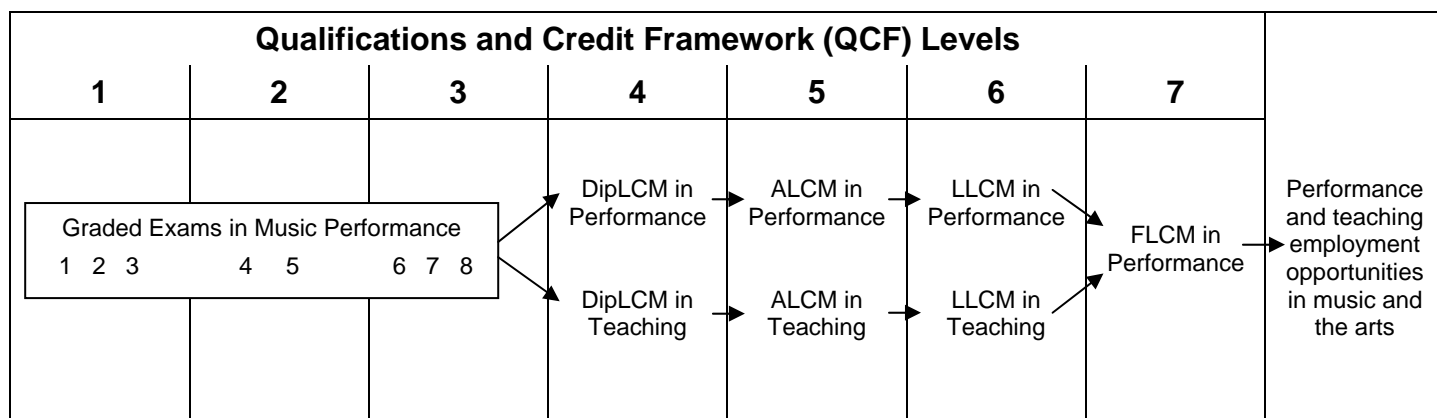
Age	Grades	OCF Level
7 – 18+	Initial and Preliminary	-
10 – 18+	1-3	1
13 – 18+	4-5	2
16 – 18+	6-8	3

## 1.9 Candidates with particular needs

---

Information on assessment, examination and entry requirements for candidates with particular needs is published in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*. Copies are available free of charge via [www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams](http://www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams), or on request from the LCM Exams office (tel: 020 8231 2364).

## 1.10 Progression routes



Progression from Music Performance Grades:

- Performance route: DipLCM in Performance, ALCM in Performance, LLCM in Performance, FLCM in Performance
- Teaching route: DipLCM in Teaching, ALCM in Teaching, LLCM in Teaching, FLCM in Performance

LCM music diplomas are mapped against the University of West London BMus and MMus degrees, and are awarded automatic credit value. For more information, please contact LCM Examinations.

## 1.11 Accreditation

UWL's graded examinations in Rock Guitar Playing are regulated in England by Ofqual (formerly QCA), and by the corresponding authorities in Wales (DfES) and Northern Ireland (CCEA). They have been placed on the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

The table below shows the qualification number, QCF title and credit value of each grade. The awarding organisation is University of West London Qualifications (UWLO).

Please contact us, or consult the Register of Regulated Qualifications (<http://register.ofqual.gov.uk>), for further details, including unit numbers.

Qualification Number	Qualification Title	QCF Credits
501/1985/0	UWLO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 1) (QCF)	6
501/2002/5	UWLO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 2) (QCF)	9
501/2004/9	UWLO Level 1 Award in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 3) (QCF)	12
501/2003/7	UWLO Level 2 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 4) (QCF)	15
501/2006/2	UWLO Level 2 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 5) (QCF)	18
501/2083/9	UWLO Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 6) (QCF)	22
501/2082/7	UWLO Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 7) (QCF)	27
501/2066/9	UWLO Level 3 Certificate in Graded Examination in Music Performance (Grade 8) (QCF)	32



## 1.12 UCAS tariff points

The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) now includes accredited graded music examinations in its tariff. Holders of LCM Grade 6-8 music qualifications applying for any course of study at a UK Higher Education institution are entitled to tariff points as detailed below:

UCAS Points	A Levels (Grades A-E)		LCM Practical Examinations (Pass, Merit, Distinction)			LCM Theory Examinations (Pass, Merit, Distinction)		
	AS Level	A2 Level	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
120		A						
110								
100		B						
90								
80		C						
75					D			
70					M			
65								
60	A	D		D				
55				M	P			
50	B							
45			D					
40	C	E	M	P				
35								
30	D							D
25			P					M
20	E						D	P
15						D	M	
10						M	P	
5						P		

---

## 2. Syllabus content

---

### 2.1 Syllabus overview

---

This syllabus is designed to prepare students for the graded examinations in Rock Guitar Playing awarded by the University of West London. It provides a structured approach that enables students to master progressively the understanding, knowledge and skills necessary to play rock guitar and to develop capability both as a performer and as an informed listener. The syllabus clearly describes what is expected and how the achievements of the candidate are to be assessed, so that students can be taught to master the requirements and to perform these in a practical examination. Examinations are conducted by trained external examiners and are held at approved centres in the UK and overseas.

In addition to Grades 1-8, beginner level Initial Stage and Preliminary Grade examinations are also available.

### 2.2 Summary of subject content and description of examination components

---

These summaries should be read in conjunction with the Grade Descriptions (Section 2.4) and the Pass Band Descriptions (Section 4.3). In-depth details of all examination requirements and specifications are included in the official RGT course handbooks and in the Exam Information Booklet.

Further information and advice on syllabus requirements is available from the Registry of Guitar Tutors (tel: 01424 222222; email: office@RGT.org; website: www.RGT.org).

#### Areas of Study

Teachers preparing candidates for graded music examinations need to ensure that students are able to demonstrate appropriate levels of mastery as described in the Grade Descriptions in each of the following areas of study.

#### Component 1: Prepared Performances

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to choose and perform a selection of pieces as specified in the relevant grade handbook (the number and combination of pieces varies between the different grades). The principal area of study is the technical mastery of the instrument, including performing the pieces accurately and fluently in terms of both pitch and rhythm.
2. the ability to utilise both technical ability and specialist playing techniques to enhance the performance and interpretation of the pieces.
3. increasing evidence of a sense of musicality and an awareness of rock guitar styles as the grades progress.
4. increasing ability to communicate effectively to the listener as the grades progress.

**Explicit ability:** Perform a number of pieces, using music selected by the candidate in accordance with the grade handbook, appropriate to the grade, with accuracy and fluency.

**Implied ability:** Demonstrate basic technical fluency, secure timing, adequate picking-hand technique and fret-hand control, dexterity in changing between chords, awareness of style, melodic and rhythmic security, a sense of musicality and communication.

## Component 2 (Grades 1 to 8 only): Improvisation

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to improvise a lead guitar solo over a previously unseen chord progression, similar to the examples specified in the relevant grade handbook and, in addition, the ability to improvise a rhythm guitar part over the progression. The principal area of study is the technical mastery of the instrument, including accuracy, fluency and clarity, with phrasing, inventiveness and application of specialist techniques also being important.
2. increasing evidence of a sense of musicality as the grades progress. In particular there should be an awareness of the style of the backing track with appropriate lead and rhythm playing techniques being adopted in response to this.
3. familiarity with the necessary scales and chord symbols as appropriate to the grade.
4. increasing ability to communicate effectively to the listener as the grades progress.

**Explicit ability:** Improvise a lead guitar solo and then a rhythm guitar part over a given chord progression, appropriate to the grade, with accuracy, fluency and musicality.

**Implied ability:** Demonstrate basic technical fluency (including movement across the fingerboard, melodic inventiveness and shaping, application of specialist techniques, dexterity in changing between chords and inventiveness in creating rhythm patterns), a sense of the interrelatedness between lead-lines and the accompaniment chords, the ability to interpret chord symbols accurately, awareness of style, and a sense of musicality and communication.

## Component 3 (Preliminary & Grades 1-8 only): Aural Assessment

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate the ability to:

1. provide accurate musical or verbal responses to questions set by the examiner, based on the question types specified in each grade handbook. The primary areas of study are the knowledge and understanding of the required parameters of pitch and rhythm. Grades 1 to 8 will also include questions on chord recognition.
2. communicate these answers to the examiner either practically or by means of appropriate terminology, as required.
3. understand the specific test formats as published in the relevant grade handbook.

**Explicit ability:** Provide accurate musical or verbal responses to questions set by the examiner, based on published examples of question types, relating to discrimination of such musical aspects as pitch, rhythm and harmony.

**Implied ability:** Aurally discriminate between a variety of musical elements and parameters, such as those outlined above; communicate this to the examiner either practically or by means of appropriate terminology, as required; demonstrate an understanding of the specific test formats as published in the relevant grade handbook.

## 2.3 Weightings for examination components

	Prepared Performances	Improvisation	Aural Assessment
Initial	100%	-	-
Preliminary	90%	-	10%
Grades 1-8	60%	30%	10%

## **2.4 Grade descriptions**

---

The standard expected of a candidate at any particular grade is defined by the repertoire of tasks prescribed for that grade. The performance of the candidate in relation to these tasks determines the attainment band that he/she is awarded as a result of the examination. The level of mastery implicit in these tasks and the more general expectations of the candidate are defined by the following grade descriptions.

### **Initial Stage, Preliminary and Grades 1-2**

The musical material selected for these grades, and hence the standard of performance expected, is of an essentially elementary nature. Only the most basic, and hence most common, chords and structures are used. Melodic and rhythmic material will be relatively simple. Expectations of dynamics are limited to occasional use. The scales and chords required are limited to the least demanding examples. Technical accomplishment is a more important element of assessment than is musicality, and expectations of communication are limited.

### **Grades 3-4**

The musical material selected for these grades, and hence the standard of performance expected, is of a more demanding nature. Melodic and rhythmic material will be more complex than earlier grades. Expectations of dynamics and phrasing will extend to a wider variety of type and degree of use. The range of scales and chords required is expanded in number and includes more taxing examples. Musicality is an increasingly important element of assessment in relation to technical accomplishment, and expectations of communication are higher.

### **Grade 5**

The musical material selected for Grade 5 is of a more demanding nature than for previous grades and performance expectations are raised - so that it is the first grade where one might expect to encounter a standard of performance which might conceivably be suitable for small local rock gigs. Melodic and rhythmic material will include a moderate degree of complexity. It is expected that dynamics and phrasing will be varied and will often demonstrate a degree of subtlety. The range of scales and chords required is expanded in number to include more taxing examples. Musicality is judged to be an extremely important element of assessment, and expectations of communication are higher.

### **Grades 6-7**

The musical material selected for these grades is technically demanding, and the standard of performance expected will be higher than that of preceding grades. Melodic and rhythmic material will include a significant degree of complexity. It is expected that the performances will include passages that demonstrate considerable dexterity and fluency. The range of scales and chords required is expanded in type and fingerboard positions. Musicality is judged to be almost as important as technical accomplishment in the assessment, and the candidate is expected to communicate with an emerging sense of musical personality.

### **Grade 8**

The musical material selected for this grade, and the standard of performance expected, may be described as being of a level that would enable creditable performance at a reasonably-sized local rock music venue. Performances may include a significant degree of melodic and rhythmic complexity. The range of scales and chords required is expanded to include different fingerboard positions to exploit the full range of the instrument. Musicality is judged to be almost as important as technical accomplishment in the assessment, and the candidate is expected to communicate with a clear sense of musical personality.

## 3. Assessment

---

The marking scheme is comprised of a balanced structure of examination components and assessment categories. Taken together they form a matrix that enables the performance of each candidate to be systematically assessed and marked.

### 3.1 Assessment objectives

---

During an examination, candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate mastery of:

<b>Domain 1: Technical Accomplishment</b> The extent to which the instrument is effectively controlled, assessed via the candidate's performance.	<b>Domain 2: Musicality</b> The ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions.
<b>Domain 3: Musical Knowledge</b> The synthesis of theoretical, notational and contextual knowledge.	<b>Domain 4: Communication</b> The degree to which the performer communicates with and engages the listener through musical performance on their instrument.

### 3.2 Coverage of the assessment domains

---

	Technical Accomplishment	Musicality	Musical Knowledge	Communication
Prepared Performances	✓	✓	✓	✓
Improvisation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aural Assessment			✓	

### 3.3 Approximate weightings for assessment domains

---

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Initial, Preliminary, Grades 1-2	60	10	20	10
Grades 3-4	50	14	24	12
Grade 5	43	18	26	13
Grades 6-8	38	20	27	15

### 3.4 How marks are awarded during the examination

#### Component 1: Prepared Performances

The examiner will consider the performance of the prepared pieces and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domains	Approximate weightings		
	Initial Prelim. Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8
<b>Technical Accomplishment:</b> accuracy of pitch and rhythm, and the ability to manipulate the instrument with respect to fluency and clarity.	55%	45%	35%
<b>Musicality:</b> the ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions, resulting in a confident, engaging and increasingly individual performance, so that the music is performed with an appropriate display of expressive qualities that demonstrate an emerging musical personality; the ability to play with a sense of stylistic awareness.	10%	15%	20%
<b>Musical Knowledge:</b> an understanding of the notation occurring in the repertoire; evidence of a sense of established performance practice and an understanding of the stylistic content.	25%	25%	25%
<b>Communication:</b> the ability to engage the listener, and to communicate a sense of style and personality.	10%	15%	20%

#### Component 2: Improvisation

The examiner will consider the performance of the improvising lead and rhythm playing, and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domains	Approximate weightings		
	Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8
<b>Technical Accomplishment:</b> the ability to manipulate the instrument with respect to accuracy, fluency, articulation, dexterity, tempo, dynamics, clarity, rhythmic invention, tone control and variation, and application of specialist techniques.	55%	45%	35%
<b>Musicality:</b> the ability to play with a sense of stylistic awareness. The ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions, resulting in a sense of individual interpretative skill, so that the music is performed in an inventive manner that reflects a degree of sensitivity and empathy, as well as an emerging musical personality.	10%	15%	20%
<b>Musical Knowledge:</b> an understanding of how to create and perform both an appropriate lead guitar solo and a rhythm guitar part in relation to the chord progression.	25%	25%	25%
<b>Communication:</b> the ability to engage the listener, and to communicate a sense of style and personality.	10%	15%	20%

#### Component 3 : Aural Assessment

The examiner will consider the candidate's responses to the tests, and will award a mark based on the following:

Assessment Domain	Weighting
<b>Musical Knowledge:</b> the ability to discriminate aurally a variety of musical elements and parameters, such as pitch, rhythm and harmony, and to reproduce these practically.	100%

---

## 4. Awarding and reporting

---

### 4.1 Issue of results

---

A written report will be compiled for each examination. Candidates will be informed of the result of examinations as soon as possible, and not normally later than four weeks after the examination date, by post. Certificates for successful candidates (achieving a Pass or higher) are *normally* dispatched within eight weeks of the date of the examination. This time is necessary to ensure that all results are properly standardised and have been checked. (See *Regulation 19.*)

### 4.2 Repeats of examinations

---

Where a candidate is not able to reach the minimum standard for a pass in an examination, application for re-examination at that grade is permitted, upon payment of the current entry fee. A re-entry form is available from the RGT office. All examination components must be completed on re-examination. Marks from examination components may not be carried forward or credited.

### 4.3 Awards of Pass, Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction

---

The pass awards are differentiated by outcome. Depending on the level of mastery demonstrated during the examination performance, a candidate may be awarded either a Pass, or a Pass with Merit, or a Pass with Distinction. Each award broadly corresponds with the following descriptions of achievement and requires that the candidate obtains or exceeds the minimum number of marks set as the boundary for the award.

#### **Distinction (85 - 100%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass with Distinction will have offered a highly accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated secure technical accomplishment on their instrument, and will have shown evidence of excellent musicality. They will have demonstrated a thorough knowledge and understanding of topics as specified for the grade. At higher grades, they will have communicated, through performance, a sense of real engagement and understanding, and clear sense of individual personality.

#### **Merit (75 - 84.5%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass with Merit will have offered an accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated a good standard of technical accomplishment on their instrument, and will have shown significant evidence of musicality. They will have demonstrated a largely assured knowledge and understanding of topics as specified for the grade. They will have communicated, through performance, some sense of engagement and understanding and, at higher grades, an emerging sense of individual personality.

#### **Pass (65 - 74.5%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass will have offered a mostly accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated an acceptable standard of technical accomplishment on their instrument, and will have shown some evidence of musicality. They will have demonstrated some knowledge and understanding of topics as specified for the grade. They will have communicated, through performance, a basic sense of understanding and ability to engage the listener.

### **Below pass, upper level (55 - 64.5%)**

A candidate who achieves a mark in this band will have demonstrated some inaccuracy, lack of fluency, and lack of musicality in all or most of the components. They will not have demonstrated an acceptable standard of technical accomplishment on their instrument, nor will they have shown much evidence of musical instinct. Their knowledge and understanding of topics as specified for the grade will have been judged to be below the standard required to pass. They will have failed to communicate, through performance, any significant degree of understanding or ability to engage the listener.

### **Below pass, lower level (0 - 54.5%)**

A candidate who achieves a mark in this band will have demonstrated significant inaccuracy, lack of fluency and lack of musicality in all or most of the components. Their standard of technical accomplishment on their instrument will have been judged as significantly below that required for the grade, and they will not have shown any significant evidence of sufficient musicality. Their knowledge and understanding of topics as specified for the grade will have been minimal in relation to the requirements of the grade. They will have failed to communicate, through performance, a sense of understanding or ability to engage the listener.

## **4.4 Attainment band descriptions**

---

The guidelines below are not intended to be mutually exclusive, but should function inter-relatedly. Thus for any particular attainment band, one or more criteria might exceed those specified, while one or more others might fail to meet the requirements. The specific criteria for each component of the examination are as follows.

### **Component 1: Prepared Performances**

#### Full Marks

Performances should be fully accurate and very confidently presented. Timing, clarity and technical control should be totally secure throughout. As the grades progress, a high level of expressive qualities and (at advanced grades) versatility should be clearly displayed.

#### Distinction

Highly accurate, rhythmically secure, fluent and assured performances with a high level of clarity and technical control – with only small and very occasional lapses in any of these. As the grades progress, expressive qualities and some versatility should be clearly displayed.

#### Merit

Accuracy, timing, clarity and technical control should be generally secure, although there may be some lapses in these compared to Distinction. As the grades progress, the performance should display some confidence and musical expression.

#### Pass

Accuracy and timing should be mostly secure but, compared to Merit, there may be some lapses in technical control and clarity, and musical expression may be limited.

#### Below Pass – Upper Level

Serious or numerous lapses in accuracy or timing. Frequent lapses in technical control and clarity. Limited evidence of musical expression and style. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a Pass at this level.

#### Below Pass – Lower Level

Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing. Overall the performance demonstrated a fundamental lack of musical awareness, technical control and fluency.



## **Component 2: Improvisation**

### Full Marks

A fully accurate and very assured performance. A high level of clarity and fluency appropriate to the grade. Effective stylistic interpretation with, as the grades progress, a high level of inventiveness and creativity.

### Distinction

A highly accurate and confident performance – with only small and very occasional lapses in accuracy, fluency, timing or clarity. Stylistic interpretation, inventiveness and creativity should be clearly displayed as the grades progress.

### Merit

Accuracy, timing and clarity should be generally secure, although there may be some lapses and less fluency compared to Distinction. The performance should display some confidence and stylistic interpretation and creativity, particularly as the grades progress.

### Pass

Despite lapses in places, accuracy and timing should be mostly secure. There may be some lapses in clarity and fluency. Stylistic interpretation and creativity may be rather limited.

### Below Pass – Upper Level

Serious or numerous lapses in either accuracy or timing. Clarity, fluency, stylistic interpretation and inventiveness are limited. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a Pass at this level.

### Below Pass – Lower Level

Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing. Overall the performance demonstrated a lack of technical control and any appropriate degree of fluency.

## **Component 3: Aural Assessment**

### Full Marks

All responses were fully accurate and presented with confidence and clarity.

### Distinction

Apart from occasional small slips, responses were generally accurate.

### Merit

Despite one or more incorrect or partially incorrect responses, responses were mostly accurate.

### Pass

A sufficient degree of accuracy across the tests to achieve a Pass, nonetheless containing some errors in places.

### Below Pass – Upper Level

A variety of errors in the responses, however demonstrating some potential to attain a Pass at this level.

### Below Pass – Lower Level

Most or all of the responses were inaccurate.

## 5. Performance Awards

Candidates who prefer not to take a full grade exam can instead opt for a *Rock Guitar Performance Award*.

Performance Awards focus entirely on the performance of prepared pieces.

There are ten levels of Performance Award. The table below shows their titles, and the grade standard they are equivalent to.

Performance Award	Equivalent Grade
Initial Level	Initial Stage
Preliminary Level	Preliminary Grade
Level 1	Grade 1
Level 2	Grade 2
Level 3	Grade 3

Performance Award	Equivalent Grade
Level 4	Grade 4
Level 5	Grade 5
Level 6	Grade 6
Level 7	Grade 7
Level 8	Grade 8

Up to and including Performance Award Level 5, candidates will be assessed solely on the performance of THREE prepared pieces, FOUR pieces for Levels 6 to 8. There are no other components in Performance Awards.

At least one of the pieces must be chosen from those listed for the equivalent grades, but the other pieces can be free choices, providing they are of a similar standard. Candidates should be aware that if the standard of a free choice piece is significantly easier than that of those listed for the equivalent grade, this may be reflected in the marking. The programme should contain a variety of rock styles and techniques.

Performance Awards provide an ideal opportunity for developing rock musicians, who do not wish to take the more comprehensive grade exam, to have their playing professionally assessed and to receive independent feedback on their playing from an experienced examiner. As well as being qualifications in their own right, Performance Awards also offer candidates the opportunity to have their Prepared Performances assessed prior to entering for a full grade exam. Performance Awards are not Ofqual accredited, but are accredited by London College of Music Exams and successful candidates will receive a Performance Award certificate from the University of West London.

### Types of Performance Awards

There are three types of Performance Award:

**Live Performance Award:** Candidates attend an exam venue and perform their chosen set of pieces, as described above.

**Filmed Performance Award:** This follows exactly the same format as a Live Performance Award, except that candidates submit a video recording of their performance rather than attending an exam venue. The video may be submitted on DVD or uploaded via the RGT website. A slightly higher standard of performance will be expected than for a Live Performance Award.

**Recorded Performance Award:** This follows exactly the same format as a Live Performance Award, except that candidates submit an audio recording of their performance rather than attending an exam venue. The recording may be submitted on CD or uploaded via the RGT website. A significantly higher standard of performance will be expected than for a Live Performance Award.

### Performance Award Marking Scheme

Performance Award Level	Marking Scheme
Initial Level to Level 5	up to 30 marks each for the first two pieces performed, up to 40 marks for the last piece performed.
Levels 6-8	up to 25 marks for each piece performed.

65-74.5 = Pass

75-84.5 = Merit

85-100 = Distinction

Entry forms and more information about Performance Awards can be downloaded from [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)

---

## 6. Regulations and information

---

1. **Validity of syllabus:** This syllabus is valid from 1 October 2011 until 31 December 2014.
2. **Examination dates:** Practical examinations take place throughout the year according to location. In the UK, practical examinations are held three times a year: Spring (March/April), Summer (June/July) and Winter (November/December). Overseas candidates should contact their RGT representative for details of examination dates.
3. **Entry procedure:** Closing dates for entry, for each examination session, are listed on the examination fee lists available on the RGT website [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org). Overseas candidates should consult their national RGT representative for the closing dates. Please note that, while every effort will be made to accommodate requests for practical exam dates, no guarantee can be made that such requests will be met. Examination entries must be submitted to RGT head office either using an original RGT entry form from the appropriate examination handbook or (for UK entries) via the RGT website using the individual entry code printed within each examination handbook. Special forms are available from RGT for 'siblings' and 're-entry'.
4. **Late entries:** These may be accepted up to seven days after the last date of entry. Each entry must be accompanied by the current late fee for each candidate. No entry will be accepted if it is received at a later date.
5. **Conditions of entry:** The right to refuse, postpone or cancel the entry of any candidate is reserved. Entries are accepted subject to the regulations stated in this syllabus. Entry for examination constitutes an agreement on the part of the candidate to abide by the regulations.
6. **Fees:** A table of UK examination fees is printed each year and can be viewed on the RGT website [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org). Overseas fees are obtainable from the regional RGT representative. Cheques, bankers' drafts, etc. must be made payable to RGT. Fees cannot be refunded, nor entries postponed to a later examination session. Candidates not attending examinations for which they have entered, unless for a reason covered under the Special Consideration policy (*see Regulation 23*), will forfeit their fees.
7. **Substitutions:** Only candidates officially entered will be accepted for examination. Substitution of a candidate in place of a candidate originally entered will not be allowed.
8. **Transfers:** Transfer of candidates from one centre to another will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been approved prior to the transfer by RGT *in writing*. An administration charge will be made.
9. **Examination appointments:** An Attendance Notice detailing the date, time and venue of the examination will be issued to each candidate via Email (where this is provided on the entry form), or via the teacher or via the correspondence address on the entry form, not later than ten days before the date of the examination. This should be retained by the candidate, and handed to the examiner on the day of the examination. RGT should be informed immediately if there are any errors on the Attendance Notice. An incorrect grade or subject cannot be changed on the day of the exam, and spelling corrections will incur a fee if notified after the issue of the certificate. Examiners will do their best to start examinations at the stated appointment times, but examiners reserve the right to start an examination slightly earlier or later than the stated time. Candidates should ensure that they arrive at the venue no later than 10 minutes before the scheduled time of the examination.
10. **Conditions at exam centres:** A quiet room will be provided. Every effort will be made to ensure that the candidate is not disturbed by outside noise. The room will be of sufficient size to enable candidates to perform effectively. A chair and music stand will be provided. A waiting area will be provided.
11. **Examination procedure:** The examination components will be conducted in the order shown in the syllabus.
12. **Admission to the examination room:** Practical examinations are conducted in closed conditions. No-one, apart from the candidate and the examiner(s), is allowed into the examination room *with the following exception:*
  - an approved person, such as a parent or teacher, or a language interpreter, where this concession has been granted prior to the examination as the result of a request for reasonable adjustments for a candidate with particular needs (*see Regulation 24*).
13. **Fingering:** Specified fingerings in RGT publications or other recommended publications should be taken as suggested guidelines only. Alternative systematic and effective fingerings will be accepted by examiners, unless they adversely affect the musical result.

14. **Tuning:** Candidates should tune their own instruments; the use of electronic tuners is permitted.
15. **Use of photocopies:** The use of photocopied music by candidates, unless authorised by the publisher or copyright holder, will not be permitted in the examination *with the following exceptions*:
- a photocopy of a page of a work for ease of performance due to a difficult page turn;
  - a photocopy of a piece for the examiner's reference, provided the performer is using his or her own published edition;
  - an enlarged or modified photocopy for candidates with particular needs, provided the original edition is also brought to the examination and presented to the examiner (*see Regulation 24*).
- All such photocopies will be retained by the examiner, and destroyed at the end of the day's examinations. Compliance with copyright law is the responsibility of the candidate and failure to comply may lead to disqualification and no marks or certificate being awarded.
16. **Stopping candidates:** Examiners may, at their discretion, stop a candidate at any part of a practical examination if the candidate has exceeded the time allowed for that part of the examination.
17. **Exemptions:** No exemptions are allowed from any part of any examination. Where an examination component is not attempted, a mark of 0 will be awarded. However, where all elements of a component are at least attempted, a mark of at least 33% will be awarded for that component.
18. **Recording of examinations:** A random selection of examinations is recorded for purposes of archiving, standardisation and examiner training. RGT and LCM Examinations undertake not to disseminate such recordings in any way whatsoever beyond these purposes. The recording equipment used is unobtrusive and does not affect the examination procedure. Such recordings may not be used or referred to at any stage in connection with any enquiry, appeal or complaint about the examination, either by the candidate or by RGT or LCM Examinations.
19. **Examination results and certificates:** A written report will be compiled for each examination. Candidates will be informed of the result of practical examinations as soon as possible, and not normally later than four weeks after the examination date, by post. Results cannot be issued over the telephone. Certificates for successful candidates are *normally* dispatched within eight weeks of the date of the examination. Replacements of lost or destroyed certificates can normally be provided by LCM Examinations, subject to proof of the result, the applicant's identity, and payment of the appropriate fee.
20. **Graded qualifications:** Certificates issued for graded examinations are not intended to imply that the holder is qualified to teach, nor do they give the holder the right to use any letters after his or her name.
21. **Enquiries and appeals:** Information about lodging enquiries and appeals against results is contained in the document *LCM Examinations Appeals Procedure*, available via the LCM Examinations website or on request from the LCM Examinations office. Initial enquiries must be made in writing to RGT, enclosing a copy of the candidate's report sheet.
22. **Equal opportunities:** Entry for examinations is available, and assessment is carried out, on an equal and fair basis to all candidates, regardless of origin, status or background. The full policy is contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available via the LCM Examinations website or on request from the LCM Examinations office.
23. **Special consideration (including absence through illness):** Candidates who are unable to take an examination at the scheduled time, for medical reasons, are invited to submit a signed doctor's letter indicating the reason, and accompanied by the Attendance notice, to the RGT office. The letter must be submitted within two weeks of the examination date, and must make clear that the candidate was incapacitated on the day of the scheduled examination. The candidate will then be permitted to re-enter for the same examination on payment of half the current fee. Candidates who are unwell on the day of the examination, but elect to take the exam nonetheless, will not be granted any special consideration in terms of assessment, and will not be eligible for a half-fee re-entry. Candidates who are unable to take an examination for compassionate reasons (e.g. death of a relative) are also covered under this policy. The full policy is contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available via the LCM Examinations website or on request from the LCM Examinations office.
24. **Reasonable adjustments (candidates with particular needs):** RGT and LCM Examinations are particularly sensitive to the requirements of candidates with particular needs, and encourage them to enter for examinations. There is a wide range of special procedures that can be put in place for such candidates. Full details and accompanying documentation **MUST** be included *at the time of entry*; examiners are not able to consider such documents if submitted for the first time on the day of the examination. Full details of this policy are contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available via the LCM Examinations website or on request from the LCM Examinations office.

25. **Language:** All examinations are conducted in English.
26. **Syllabus requirements and infringements:** It is the candidate's responsibility to obtain, and comply with, the current syllabus. Where candidates are entered for examinations by teachers, the teacher should ensure that candidates are entered in accordance with the current grade handbook, Exam Information Booklet and syllabus requirements. Where there are variations without prior agreement, marks may be adjusted or deducted, and in serious cases, candidates may be disqualified.
27. **Changes to syllabuses:** RGT and LCM Examinations follow a policy of consistent improvement and development and may, without notice, update regulations, grade handbooks, Exam Information Booklets, syllabuses and other publications. Where alterations, additions and/or deletions to Exam Information Booklets and syllabuses take place, RGT and LCM Examinations cannot accept responsibility for informing candidates and teachers of such changes except through *Guitar Tutor* (the RGT magazine), *Forte* (the LCM Examinations newsletter) and the normal reprinting process.
28. **Availability of syllabuses:** A wide range of examinations and subjects is offered by LCM Examinations, across the full range of Music, and Drama & Communication. All syllabuses and exam information booklets are available free of charge from LCM Examinations, and from local representatives. RGT also organises a full range of graded examinations in electric guitar, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, popular music theory and classical guitar, as well as a range of professional guitar teaching and performance diplomas; syllabuses and exam information booklets for all of these are available from the RGT website [www.RGT.org](http://www.RGT.org)