

# MUSIC PERFORMANCE DIPLOMAS

## SYLLABUS GUIDE

Diploma in Music Performance **DipRSL(Perf)** at Level 4  
Licentiate in Music Performance **LRSL(Perf)** at Level 6



rockschool

**Music Performance  
Diplomas  
Syllabus Guide**





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# Music Performance Diplomas Syllabus Guide

Diploma in Music Performance  
DipRSL (Perf) at Level 4  
Licentiate in Music Performance  
LRSL (Perf) at Level 6

*Valid From April 2008*

Rockschool Ltd  
Evergreen House  
2-4 King Street  
Twickenham  
Middlesex TW1 3RZ

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Compiled and edited by: Jeremy Ward and Simon Pitt  
Associate editors: Nick Groszek and Peter Scott

Cover design: Drew Cullingham  
Text layout: Bet Ayer

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**Visit the Rockscool website at**  
**[www.rockscool.co.uk](http://www.rockscool.co.uk)**

**0845 460 4747**

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# Syllabus at a Glance

## Diploma in Music Performance DipRSL (Perf) & Licentiate in Music Performance LRS� (Perf)

Qualification Structure			
Qualification Titles	Total no. of units taken	Core units	Optional units
Level 4 Diploma in Music Performance DipRSL (Perf)	1	1	0
Level 6 Licentiate in Music Performance LRS� (Perf)	1	1	0

<b>Forms of Assessment</b>	All assessment is external assessment. Candidates are required to attend a practical examination session run by RockschooL.
<b>Unit Format</b>	Unit specifications contain the title, unit code, credit level, credit value, learning outcomes (what has to be learnt), assessment requirements (evidence on which the candidate is assessed), grading criteria (descriptors of the quality of work produced), and types of evidence required for the unit.
<b>Bands of Assessment</b>	There are three bands of assessment (distinction, pass and unclassified) for each learning outcome and for the qualification as a whole. To achieve a pass, candidates must achieve a pass in all the learning outcomes. To achieve a distinction, candidates must achieve distinction for three out of four learning outcomes and these must include learning outcomes 1.0 and 2.0.
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	Quality Assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RockschooL and the Diploma and Licentiate qualifications conform to the normal quality assurance procedures and processes operated by RockschooL.

<b>Level</b>	<b>Equivalent</b>
Level 1	Grades 1 to 3
Level 2	Grades 4 to 5
Level 3	Grades 6 to 8
Level 4	End of First Year University Degree BA
Level 6	End of Third Year University Degree BA

## SECTION A: Qualification Summary

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Throughout this document, the following shorthand will be applied:

- ‘Diploma’ shall refer to the Level 4 DipRSL (Perf) in Music Performance.
- ‘Licentiate’ shall refer to the Level 6 LRSL (Perf) in Music Performance.
- ‘Qualifications’ shall refer to both of the above where features of the qualifications are common to both.
- ‘Candidate’ shall refer to all learners offering themselves for examination in a Rockscool performance diploma.

### A.1 Aims and Broad Objectives

The aim of both the Diploma at Level 4 DipRSL (Perf) and Licentiate at Level 6 LRSL (Perf) is to provide flexible, vocationally-relevant qualifications for musicians who wish to demonstrate their skills as performers.

These qualifications will be available to players who perform on the following instruments:

- Guitar
- Bass guitar
- Drum kit
- Keyboards
- Piano
- Vocals

The broad objectives are:

- To focus delivery and assessment on music performance skills;
- To make the qualifications as flexible as possible in the spirit of the Framework for Achievement and the new transferable unit-based framework (QCF);
- To link into the work on qualifications and skills development being undertaken by the Music Manifesto and to embrace the guidance of the Creative and Cultural Sector Skills Council (CC Skills) and the National Music Council’s *Music Workforce Development Plan* (Dec 2004).

### A.2 Rationale

With the introduction of the performance diplomas, popular music instrumentalists are able to obtain a recognised professional qualification that has to date been unavailable to them. With the continuing growth of the popular music industry and increasing number of courses offered at further and higher education level, these diplomas are designed to highlight the aspects of performing that are needed to help a performance-based career. These include session work; the ability to perform consistently to a high standard; the necessity to recognise the importance of publicity and self promotion and to understand issues surrounding contracts; legal obligations; and health & safety in the work place. These diplomas are also aimed at professionals already in the field that have, until now, not had the opportunity to gain a professional qualification.

## A.3 Entry Requirements

**DipRSL (Perf)** candidates of 16 years and over may enter and must have achieved a minimum of Grade 8 or equivalent in an accredited instrumental exam or Level 3 or equivalent in an accredited music qualification.

**LRSL (Perf)** candidates of 16 years and over may enter and should have achieved an accredited performance diploma at Level 4.

*Certain exceptions will be considered.*

## A.4 Accredited Prior Learning

- **DipRSL (Perf)**. Consideration will be given on an individual basis to applicants who can provide alternative performance evidence.
- **LRSL (Perf)**. Consideration will be given to applicants who can provide substantial performance evidence accompanied by a reference from a professional musician.

## A.5 Certification Titles

The Diploma qualification will be shown on the certificate as one of the following:

- RockschooL Level 4 Diploma in Music Performance DipRSL (Perf)
- RockschooL Level 6 Licentiate Diploma in Music Performance LRSL (Perf)

## A.6 Progression

These qualifications are designed to offer direct progression into certain sectors of both the music business as well as music courses in higher education. These qualifications could be used as additional entry requirements leading to undergraduate or postgraduate training in popular music in the UK<sup>1</sup> or overseas.

## A.7 Qualification Structure and Unit Content

The content of each qualification is opposite.

<sup>1</sup>There are currently in excess of 70 undergraduate degree courses which offer popular music performance as part of their curriculum of study. These include BA Commercial Music Degrees offered at Westminster University, Bath Spa University, the University of Sussex (in association with BIMM), the University of Paisley, Salford University, Leeds University.

	<b>DipRSL (Perf)</b>	<b>LRSL (Perf)</b>
<b>Unit Title</b>	<b>MusP401 Music Presentation and Performance</b>	<b>MusP601 Music Presentation and Performance</b>
<b>Quick Study Piece</b>	Candidates are required to master and perform a previously unseen piece of music to a backing track, lasting between 2½ and 3 minutes. The QSP will require the candidate to demonstrate advanced knowledge of style, improvisation and music reading ability. The QSP will be presented to the candidate 45 minutes prior to their performance. Candidates may begin their performance programme with the QSP or may play it at any point in their programme.	Candidates are required to master and perform a previously unseen piece of music to a backing track, lasting between 3 and 3½ minutes. The QSP will require the candidate to demonstrate advanced knowledge of style, improvisation and music reading ability. The QSP will be presented to the candidate 45 minutes prior to their performance. Candidates may begin their performance programme with the QSP or may play it at any point in their programme.
<b>Performance Programme</b>	Candidates are asked to perform a balanced and coherent programme of popular music songs lasting between 20-25 minutes in total. This programme may be performed to backing tracks and will be chosen by the candidate. At least two of the pieces performed should show technical dexterity and soloing ability at an advanced level. Suggested repertoire for performance at this level is available on our website.	Candidates are asked to perform a balanced and coherent programme of popular music songs lasting between 25-30 minutes in total. This programme may be performed to backing tracks and will be chosen by the candidate. A minimum of two pieces must be performed with at least one other musician and at least two pieces must show considerable evidence of technical dexterity and soloing ability at a highly advanced level. Should the complete programme consist of cover material, at least one piece must show considerable reworking of the track to evidence originality. Suggested repertoire for performance at this level is available on our website.
<b>Promotion</b>	Candidates will be required to provide evidence to the examiners of promotion for the performance. Evidence may take the form of flyers, posters, internet sites (such as an artist website or a social networking site) or through any other means. This should be submitted at the time of the practical and given to the examiner prior to the performance.	Candidates will be required to provide evidence to the examiners of promotion for the performance. Evidence may take the form of flyers, posters, internet sites (such as an artist website or a social networking site) or through any other means. This should be submitted at the time of the practical and given to the examiner prior to the performance.
<b>Viva Voce</b>	The examiner will ask a number of questions of the candidate regarding the choice of repertoire, performance aspects of the presentation, the promotion as well as on other topics such as health & safety matters relating to the candidate's instrument.	The examiner will ask a number of questions of the candidate regarding the choice of repertoire, performance aspects of the presentation and promotion, as well as on other topics including liability, insurance, contracts and health & safety information relating to the candidate's instrument.

## SECTION B: Assessment Information

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### B.1 Assessment

The underlying philosophy for assessment is that candidates should receive credit for positive achievement, and that all should be encouraged to reach their fullest potential in each aspect of the qualification for which they are registered.

Candidates are expected to be self-supporting in the creation of the programmes for performance and of any materials to be submitted for assessment. Candidates are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning processes. Successful candidates will therefore show a high level of initiative and self-motivation.

All assessment of these qualifications is external and is undertaken by member(s) of the Rockschooll examiners panel. All examiners appointed by Rockschooll for this purpose are trained and moderated by Rockschooll according to the principles and processes laid down in the *Examiners' Handbook*.

### B.2 Unit Format

Each unit includes:

- **Unit Title.** The name given to the unit taken.
- **Credit Level.** See Section J Unit Specification tables.
- **Credit Value.** One credit equals 10 learning hours.  
DipRSL (Perf) (20 credits) = 200 learning hours.  
LRSL (Perf) (40 credits) = 400 learning hours.
- **Unit Code.** Reference given to unit taken.
- **Learning Outcomes.** A statement of what has been learnt as a result of the successful completion of the assessment requirements.
- **Assessment Requirements.** The evidence upon which the candidate is assessed.
- **Grading Criteria.** See below.

### B.3 Learning Outcomes

See Section J Unit Specification tables.

### B.4 Assessment Requirements

See Section J Unit Specification tables.

### B.5 Grading Criteria

The three bands of assessment (distinction, pass, unclassified) are detailed in the following table.

The result awarded to each candidate will depend upon the extent to which the candidate has met the grading criteria overall. Candidates will need to fulfil all of the learning outcomes contained within the unit in order to be eligible for grading at pass level or above.

Rockschool examiner(s) will reference the grading criteria as required, but are not bound to the language as written below.

<b>Grading Criteria</b>	
<b>Distinction</b>	The candidate can perform an unseen piece to a consistently high standard, with thorough stylistic understanding and technical control consistently evident. They will be able to perform a set of music pieces convincingly to a professional level, demonstrating substantial improvisational and soloing ability. They will be able to show evidence to promote the event that is thoroughly comprehensive, convincing and appropriate and presented to a high quality. The candidate will demonstrate full understanding of the related issues surrounding the performance, be able to fully assess their performance and be able to acknowledge areas that were successful and areas that require development. They will be able to demonstrate a professional understanding regarding the quality of their performance overall.
<b>Pass</b>	The candidate can perform an unseen piece to an adequate standard, with some stylistic understanding and technical control evident. They will be able to perform a set of music pieces convincingly and to a good level, demonstrating good improvisational and soloing ability. They will be able to show evidence to promote the event that is convincing and appropriate and presented at a high quality. The candidate will demonstrate an understanding of the related issues surrounding the performance, be able to assess their performance and be able to acknowledge areas that were successful and areas that require development. They will be able to demonstrate an understanding regarding the quality of their performance overall.
<b>Unclassified</b>	The candidate performance of an unseen piece is limited in conviction and shows little stylistic understanding or technical control. The performance of a set of music pieces will be unbalanced and lacking conviction. It may demonstrate little or no improvisational or soloing ability. They will show little evidence to promote the event that is convincing and appropriate and work will be presented at a questionable quality. The candidate will demonstrate little understanding of the related issues surrounding the performance. They will show limited ability to assess their performance or be able to acknowledge areas that were successful or areas that require development. Their understanding regarding the quality of their performance overall will be limited.

## B.6 Grading Formula

The qualifications will be graded according to the following formula:

### DipRSL (Perf) and LRSL (Perf)

- **Distinction.** Candidates must achieve distinction in three out of four learning outcomes and must include learning outcomes one and two.
- **Pass.** Candidates must secure a pass in each learning outcome in order to pass the qualification overall.
- **Unclassified.** Candidates have not achieved a minimum of a pass in all learning outcomes.

## **B.7 Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding**

**Level 4** It is expected that candidates will have well-developed and well-structured musical skills which will form the basis of their performance expertise. The candidate's musical abilities will be supplemented by a clear and objective understanding of how those talents can be used most effectively in the context of music performance, allied to an understanding of how these skills may be used in a professional context. It is appropriate for candidates who wish to proceed to university, work independently or, in some areas, supervise and train others in their field of work.

**Level 6** learning recognises the ability to gain and apply a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding. Learning at this level involves obtaining and demonstrating highly detailed knowledge and skills. It is appropriate for candidates who wish to proceed into the professional workplace, work independently or supervise and train others in their field of work.

## **B.8 Quality Assurance**

All externally assessed units are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by RockschooL. These are found in the *Quality Assurance Handbook*.

## **B.9 Authenticity of work**

Candidates are expected to take all necessary steps to ensure that the work submitted for assessment is authentic and original.

## SECTION C: Procedure

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### C.1 Entry Procedure

In order to enter for either qualification, candidates are required to download the appropriate form from our website, and follow the instructions online.

### C.2 Registration Dates

Candidates may enter for either qualification at three points in the calendar year. These are:

- Closing date of 1st December for examination between 1st February to 31st March
- Closing date of 1st April for examination between 23rd May to 31st July
- Closing date of 1st October for examination between 23rd October and 15th December

### C.3 Notification of Results

Candidates will receive a written report and a provisional result within four weeks after they have taken the exam. A final result will be issued following the ratification process, which takes place at the end of each examination period.

## SECTION D: Examination – What You Need to Bring

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### D.1 Music Scores

- Scores must be presented to the examiner.
- Candidates must ensure that they provide an original score.
- ALL performance pieces must be played from memory.
- **Guitar and drum tab without full notation is not acceptable.**

### D.2 Audio

- Backing tracks are the responsibility of the candidate.
- Audio must be made available on CD in WAV format.

### D.3 Equipment

- Please see website for instrument specific requirements.

### D.4 Promotional Material

- All supporting promotional material must be presented to the examiner, including evidence of web-based promotion, which should take the form of screen shots.

## SECTION E: Suggested Repertoire

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Please see website for instrument specific repertoire choices. No abridged versions or simplified arrangements may be used.

## SECTION F: Complaints and Appeals

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All complaints and appeals are dealt with by Rockschooll according to the protocols laid down in the *Policies and Procedures* document.

### F.1 Complaints

Candidates who feel they have a complaint to make should make contact with Rockschooll via the Diploma Co-ordinator. This must be done in writing.

Rockschooll aims to resolve all complaints within seven days and appeals arising from the operation of these qualifications within 21 days.

### F.2 Appeals

There are two grounds upon which an appeal will be considered.

1. Errors in Procedure
2. Mismatch in marks and comments

#### First Level of Appeal

- The first level of appeal is free of charge.
- Appeals must be made in writing and sent to the Chief Examiner by the person who signed the original entry form.
- The grounds of appeal should be set out, and the original (not a photocopy) of the report form should be sent by post.
- Appeals cannot be discussed or considered over the telephone.
- Appeals should be postmarked not later than 14 days after the candidate has received the provisional results.
- Rockschooll will send an acknowledgement within seven days and the appeal will be referred to the examiner(s).
- The Chief Examiner will reach a decision after receiving the comments of the examiner(s).
- Appeals will in general be resolved within 28 days from the date of receipt.
- The outcome of a successful appeal may be a revision to the result awarded or the opportunity of a free re-examination.

#### Second Level of Appeal

- The second level of appeal is £25 per candidate.
- Those who are not satisfied with the decision of the Chief Examiner may proceed to a second level of appeal addressed to the Director of Academic Affairs. Such appeals should state the grounds on which the Chief Examiner's decision is challenged, and should be postmarked not later than 14 days from the date of receipt of the previous decision.
- The original report form is not required.
- A second stage appeal will be handled in the same way as above.
- Where the appeal is upheld the fee will be returned.

### **Third Level of Appeal**

- The third level of appeal is £50 per candidate.
- Those who are not satisfied with the decision of the Director of Academic Affairs may proceed to a third level of appeal addressed to the Chief Executive.
- Such appeals should state the grounds on which the Director's decision is challenged, and should be postmarked no later than 14 days from the date of the previous decision.
- The original report form is not required.
- A third level of appeal will be handled by the Chief Executive in association with an independent member of the Qualifications Review Board in the same way as above.
- Where the appeal is upheld the fee will be returned.

## SECTION G: Equal Opportunities Policy

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Rockschool Ltd is committed to providing equality of opportunity and treatment for all, and will not unlawfully or unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly on the basis of gender, age, ethnic origin or disability in its dealings with candidates, their parents/guardians, teachers, examiners or stewards. For full details of our Equal Opportunities Policy please visit our website.

## SECTION H: Special Needs

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The specific condition(s) and any request(s) for special tests should be clearly notified on the application form. Supporting doctor's documentation must be supplied to Rockschool Ltd.

Due to the extra preparation time required to provide individual tests for disabled candidates, late entries or entry forms which do not contain full details of the nature of the disability may not be able to be processed in time for the examination.

All provision for special needs candidates is tailored to the particular needs of each candidate. It is therefore very important to give as full an explanation as possible of the nature of the condition, and the requirements for special tests.

Rockschool Ltd reserves the right to turn down requests for provision if this information is not provided. In case of doubt, please contact the Diploma Co-ordinator.

## SECTION I: Contacts & Support

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The following contacts may be made at Rockscool:

Chief Executive:	<b>Dr Simon Pitt</b>
Director of Academic Affairs:	<b>Jeremy Ward</b>
Diploma Co-ordinator:	<b>Nick Groszek</b>

All can be contacted on **0845 460 4747**

All correspondence should be directed to:

Rockscool Ltd  
Evergreen House  
2-4 King Street  
Twickenham  
Middlesex TW1 3RZ

Or **diplomas@rockscool.co.uk**

<b>Unit Title: Music Presentation and Performance</b>	
<b>Credit Level: Four</b>	
<b>Credit Value: 20</b>	
<b>Unit Code: MusP401</b>	
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>The candidate will be able to:</b>	
<b>1.0</b>	Demonstrate the ability to interpret and perform from an unprepared chart (Quick Study Piece)
<b>1.1</b>	Master and perform an unfamiliar piece of music lasting between 2 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> -3 minutes in length from a lead sheet provided to the candidate 45 minutes before the start of the examination. The lead sheet will contain musical information relating to length and style and will be accompanied by a backing track. Candidates will be assessed on the following criteria where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylistic understanding</li> <li>• Ability to understand and interpret a musical score</li> <li>• Technical mastery of the instrument</li> <li>• Musical interpretation skills</li> <li>• Improvisational skills</li> <li>• Ability to play to a backing track</li> </ul>
<b>2.0</b>	Demonstrate own skills in performance
<b>2.1</b>	Perform a balanced and coherent programme using backing tracks or as member of a band lasting between 20-25 mins. The assessment will be made on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of cohesion</li> <li>• Stylistic understanding</li> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Evidence of advanced technical skills</li> <li>• Evidence of advanced improvisation</li> <li>• Evidence of effective and convincing soloing</li> <li>• Ability to play from memory</li> </ul>

Following are specifications for each unit of the learning outcomes and assessment requirements.

## SECTION J: Unit Specifications

3.0	Understand how to promote themselves as performers	3.1	Promote the event in a convincing and relevant way. Assessment will be made on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of material</li> <li>• Relevance of material</li> <li>• Comprehensiveness of material</li> </ul>
4.0	Understand how to assess their own musical presentational skills, and understand issues surrounding a public performance (viva voce)	4.1	Evaluate their performance and assess the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of strength</li> <li>• Areas for development</li> <li>• Overall effectiveness of the performance</li> </ul>
		4.2	Show evidence of planning of the event evidencing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and evidence of instrument health &amp; safety requirements</li> <li>• Knowledge and evidence of contracts</li> <li>• Knowledge of liabilities and insurance</li> </ul>

**IMPORTANT**

- **Candidates must ensure they bring copies of scores and backing tracks for the examiner(s).**
- **Candidates must ensure they are able to play pieces from memory.**
- **Guitar and drum tab without full notation is not acceptable.**
- **All audio must be on a CD (in WAV format).**

<b>Unit Title: Music Presentation and Performance</b>	
<b>Credit Level: Six</b>	
<b>Credit Value: 40</b>	
<b>Unit Code: MusP601</b>	
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES</b>	
<b>The candidate will be able to:</b>	
<b>ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT</b>	
<b>The candidate can:</b>	
1.0	Demonstrate the ability to interpret and perform from an unprepared chart (Quick Study Piece)
1.1	Master and perform an unfamiliar piece of music lasting 3 -3½ minutes in length from a lead sheet provided to the candidate 45 minutes before the start of the examination. The lead sheet will contain musical information relating to length and style and will be accompanied by a backing track. Candidates will be assessed on the following criteria where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stylistic understanding</li> <li>• Ability to understand and interpret a musical score</li> <li>• Technical mastery of the instrument</li> <li>• Musical interpretation skills</li> <li>• Improvisational skills</li> <li>• Ability to play to a backing track</li> </ul>
2.0	Demonstrate own skills in performance
2.1	Perform a balanced and coherent programme lasting between 25-30 mins. The assessment will be made on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least two pieces must be performed with at least one other musician.</li> <li>• In the case of the complete programme consisting of cover material, at least one piece must show a considerable reworking of the track</li> <li>• Cohesion of programme</li> <li>• Effectiveness of programme</li> <li>• Stylistic understanding, control and projection</li> <li>• Communication with other band member/s</li> <li>• Evidence of advanced technical skills</li> <li>• Evidence of advanced improvisation</li> <li>• Evidence of effective and convincing soloing</li> <li>• Ability to play from memory</li> </ul>

3.0	Understand how to promote themselves as performers	3.1	Promote the event in a convincing and relevant way. Assessment will be made on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of material</li> <li>• Relevance of material</li> <li>• Comprehensiveness of material</li> <li>• Quality of material</li> </ul>
4.0	Understand how to assess their own musical presentational skills, and understand issues surrounding a public performance (viva voce)	4.1	Evaluate their performance and assess the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Areas of strength</li> <li>• Areas for development</li> <li>• Overall effectiveness of the performance</li> </ul>
		4.2	Show evidence of planning of the event evidencing the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and evidence of instrument health &amp; safety requirements</li> <li>• Knowledge and evidence of contracts</li> <li>• Knowledge of liabilities and insurance</li> </ul>

**IMPORTANT**

- **Candidates must ensure they bring copies of scores and backing tracks for the examiner(s).**
- **Candidates must ensure they are able to play pieces from memory.**
- **Guitar and drum tab without full notation is not acceptable.**
- **All audio must be on a CD (in WAV format).**



*Also available*

# MUSIC TEACHING DIPLOMAS

## MUSIC TEACHING DIPLOMAS

SYLLABUS GUIDE



Teaching Diploma  
**DipRSL** at Level 4

Teaching Diploma  
**LRS�** at Level 6

The new Rockschool Teaching Diplomas (DipRSL at Level 4 and LRS� at Level 6) have been devised for instrumentalists, vocalists and music technologists who would like to attain a teaching qualification without having to attend a course or write essays. The diplomas focus on the practicalities of teaching and are neither genre nor instrument specific.

The **DipRSL** is geared towards music professionals who are at the earliest stages of building a teaching practice.

The **LRS�** is aimed principally at teachers whose practice is more established.

No formal qualifications are required.

Please contact Rockschool on [diplomas@rockschool.co.uk](mailto:diplomas@rockschool.co.uk) for a syllabus guide

*supported by the Musicians' Union*

**Rockschool Ltd**

Evergreen House

2-4 King Street

Twickenham

Middlesex TW1 3RZ

Tel: 0845 460 4747

Email: [info@rockschool.co.uk](mailto:info@rockschool.co.uk)

Web: [www.rockschool.co.uk](http://www.rockschool.co.uk)



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