

VOCALS

FOR MALE & FEMALE SINGERS

rockschool



music and backing tracks for grades 1 to 8

Welcome to the Rockschoo! Vocal Syllabus Guide

Welcome to the Rockschoo! examination syllabus for vocals. This Syllabus Guide is designed to give teachers and pupils practical information on the examinations run by Rockschoo! in vocals

If candidates have any queries about the syllabus for vocals, (or any other syllabus run by Rockschoo! in electric guitar, bass, drums and popular piano) then please do not hesitate to call us on **020 8332 6303** or email us at **info@rockschoo!.co.uk**.

The Rockschoo! website, **www.rockschoo!.co.uk**, has detailed information on all aspects of our examinations, including examination regulations, detailed marking schemes and marking criteria, as well as notated and audio example versions of all of the types of tests used in the exams and handy tips on how to get the most out of the performance pieces.

This Syllabus Guide covers the following examinations:

- Grade Examinations offered by Rockschoo! at Grades 1-8; and
- Performance Certificates offered by Rockschoo! at every grade.

In the Guide, the examination requirements for each grade are shown in *italics*.

Grade Examinations

Rockschoo!'s grade exams are made up of the following elements:

- Technical exercises (Grades 1-8)
- General Musicianship (Grades 1-8)
- Ear Tests (Grades 1-8)
- Quick Study Piece (Grades 6-8 only)
- Performance pieces (Grades 1-8) and Unaccompanied Piece (Grades 1-5 only)

Please note that there is no Debut exam in this series.

Repertoire

Rockschool has entered into a joint venture with Music Sales for the presentation of the repertoire used in these grades. As a result, Rockscool is able to publish more than 90 established hits associated with top international vocalists. These have been arranged in the following volumes:

- Grades 1-3: two volumes of 18 songs each;
- Grades 4 and 5: two volumes of 12 songs each;
- Grades 6-8: two volumes of 17 songs each.

The volumes are split into male and female associated repertoire but candidates may mix and match as they wish. The exercises printed in each book are largely identical with some key differences to suit different voices. Further repertoire appropriate for each of the grades (not all published by Music Sales) is given in all of the books. Each book comes with CDs of the backing track featuring music minus one style examples of the songs and the backing tracks for the technical exercises.

Companion Guide

In addition, Rockscool is publishing a *Companion Guide* to the vocal grades. This book is primarily aimed at teachers and contains helpful tips on how to get the best out of the grades as well as containing examples of the 'unseen' tests, such as the aural awareness tests, technical exercises and the Quick Study Pieces taken at grades 6-8. This book also comes with a CD backing track for the example exercises.

A Note about Examination Order

At Rockscool we believe that examinations should build towards the work which students typically excel at: the performances. With this in mind, we have ordered the vocal examinations in such a way that the exams lead towards the performances as the final part of the exam.

This means that candidates will take an exam in the following order:

Grades 1-5

Technical Exercises (4 sets)
 General Musicianship Questions (4)
 Aural Tests (2 tests)
 Performance Pieces (3 songs)
 Unaccompanied Piece (1 excerpt)
 General Musicianship (1)

Grades 6-8

Technical Exercises (2 sets)*
 Aural Tests (2 tests)
 Quick Study Piece*
 Performance Pieces (3 songs)
 General Musicianship Questions (5)
 Items marked () can be taken first

Grades 1-5

In Grades 1-5, candidates start with the four sets of vocal technical exercises. These are:

- A rhythmic test
- Scales
- Intervals
- Phrasing & dynamics

The examiner will then ask the candidate four general musicianship questions. These will be asked about the phrasing & dynamics section of the technical exercises.

The candidate will then undertake two ear tests which incorporate an element of sight recognition.

When these are completed, candidates will sing two of their prepared performance pieces to a backing track.

Candidates will then sing their unaccompanied piece which may be derived from one of their prepared performance pieces.

When this is completed, candidates will perform their final accompanied performance piece.

Finally, the examiner will ask the candidate the remaining General Musicianship Question, which will be directed to the performance pieces.

Grades 6-8

In these grades, candidates are asked to perform two sets of vocal technical exercises:

- Scales
 - Backing vocals
- or QSP

These are followed by the Quick Study Piece/or the technical exercises.

Candidates are then given two ear tests by the examiner which incorporate an element of sight recognition.

When this is completed, candidates sing their three prepared performance pieces.

Finally, the examiner will ask the candidate the five general musicianship questions.

General Standards

Rockschool's vocals grades are designed to showcase performances across a range of popular styles. The performances are the benchmark by which the grades are measured and the printed performance repertoire reflects the general standards which players should be able to attain if they are successfully to complete the exam requirements. All the repertoire pieces performed in the exam should be given to the CD backing track provided.

The performance characteristics of each grade are printed in the relevant grade books and are reproduced below. The grade descriptions assume competence in the areas described in grades lower down the sequence:

- **Grade 1:** at this grade there will be an emphasis on notes, rhythm and intonation. Pieces will generally be within a limited range and only require a basic control of tone. Pieces will be of a length appropriate for the grade and there will be no requirement for vocal improvisation. The use of a microphone is not mandatory but candidates may use one if they feel it will enhance their performance.
- **Grade 2:** at this grade there will be an emphasis on basic style awareness in the use of tone and solid voice. There will be limited use of head voice. Pieces will be of slightly longer duration with an extended range and the use of intervallic leaps.
- **Grade 3:** at this grade there will be an increasing level of stylistic awareness with employment of suitable technique to a basic level. There will be solid use of chest voice and a limited requirement for solid voice. Pieces will be of a suitable length to demonstrate appropriate technique and concentration with an extended range and occasional use of wide intervals.
- **Grade 4:** pieces at this grade will be of sufficient length to demonstrate developing stylistic awareness which will include appropriate tone production, awareness of rhythmic shifts, dynamics and phrasing. There will be demonstration of secure chest voice and the ability to move to head voice in a reliable manner. Pieces will require some ornamentation and improvisation to the given line to show a musical understanding. Range will be extended and there will be some use of consistent extended intervals. **One piece is to be memorised and the microphone used for all performance pieces.**
- **Grade 5:** at this grade the candidate will be expected to demonstrate a good understanding of stylistic matters. Pieces will be of a suitable length to reflect this and will be shown by tonal variety, stylistic rhythmic execution, a broader understanding and control of dynamics and phrasing. The candidate will demonstrate both chest and head voice in a secure manner with the ability to cover wide intervals with an even tone. Pieces will have the opportunity for considerable ornamentation and

improvisation. **Two pieces are to be memorised and the microphone used for all performance pieces.**

- **Grade 6:** pieces at this grade will be more complex in construction and content and will require a more solid understanding of stylistic matters. The candidate will require knowledge of suitable tone, delivery and rhythm and be expected to portray the meaning of the song with increasing confidence. The candidate is also expected to demonstrate increasing knowledge of microphone techniques. The candidate will be expected to be able to move effortlessly between registers and to have a wide range of dynamic control and articulation. **All pieces are to be memorised and the microphone used throughout the exam.**
- **Grade 7:** pieces at this grade will be of a substantial length to enable the candidate to demonstrate a thorough working knowledge of suitable stylistic techniques. The pieces will require considerable personal interpretation, with improvisation and ornamentation used to produce a balanced musical result. The candidate is expected to perform the pieces with a considerable sense of commitment and musical integrity and with a well grounded sense of performance and communication. **All pieces are to be memorised and the microphone used throughout the exam.**
- **Grade 8:** at this grade the main emphasis is on performance and this is demonstrated in a complete control of suitable stylistic techniques. The candidate is expected to make full use of microphone techniques to enhance their performance and to demonstrate a secure ability in register and tone. Considerable improvisation and ornamentation is expected to produce an advanced and mature sense of performance with a high degree of personal interpretation. **All pieces are to be memorised and the microphone used throughout the exam.**

Use of Microphones

At grades 1-3 the use of microphone is optional, although candidates may perform with microphone if they feel comfortable. From grade 4 the use of microphone is obligatory for all pieces. From grade 5 for all pieces and technical work. Unprepared work may be given without. From grade 6 all work is to be given with microphone including unprepared work. **The candidate will be required to provide their own microphone for the examination.**

Memory

Rockschool considers that sense of performance and communication is a vital area of the examination. At grade 4 one piece is to be given from memory. At grade 5 two pieces are to be given and from grade 6 all pieces are to be given from memory.

Exam Content

Candidates take the elements in the exam in the following order.

Technical Exercises

The range of technical exercises to be sung by candidates is published in each book. These are sung to a CD backing played by the examiner. The backing tracks are available in each candidate's book.

Exam Requirements for Grades 1-5

In these grades there are four groups of exercises: rhythm, scales, intervals and phrasing & dynamics.

Rhythm

Grade 1: rap style over 16 bars with an 8 bar intro. 160 bpm in 4/4 time. Quarter and eighth notes.

Grades 2: as above; 160 bpm in 4/4 time. Some simple syncopation and semiquavers.

Grade 3: 16 bars with a 4 bar introduction. 110 bpm in 4/4 time. The introduction of semiquavers and more advanced syncopation, with extending of 4 bar phrases.

Grade 4: as above. 115bpm. Further development of extended phrasing.

Grade 5: as above. Introduction of triplet rhythms and advanced syncopation.

Scales

The scale exercises are performed to a backing track. Candidates may start on any note from A to E around middle C at grades 1 to 3 and any notes between A to D at grades 4 and 5.

Grade 1: Candidates perform a major scale, quarter and eighth notes with rests. 100 bpm.

Grade 2: Candidates perform from a choice of major, natural minor and harmonic minor scales, quarter and eighth notes with rests. 100 bpm.

Grade 3: Candidates perform from a choice of major, natural minor, harmonic minor and major pentatonic scale, quarter, dotted quarter and eighth notes with rests. 108 bpm.

Grade 4: Candidates perform from a choice of major, natural minor, and minor pentatonic scales with major and minor arpeggio, quarter, dotted quarter and eighth notes with rests. 112 bpm.

Grade 5: Candidates perform from a choice of major, natural minor, minor pentatonic and blues scale and one major and minor arpeggio and one minor seventh arpeggio, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth, sixteenth notes with rests. 104-112 bpm.

Intervals

Grade 1: Part A: candidates are asked to pitch a major third above the notes I, IV and V of the chosen key in the above scale. The examiner will play the note for four beats on a CD and the candidate will be asked to hold the note for four beats. Part B: candidates are asked to pitch the root note of a perfect fifth chosen from the same notes I, IV and V. The examiner will play the interval for four beats and the candidate will be asked to hold the note for four beats. 84 bpm

Grade 2: Part A: candidates are asked to pitch either a major or a minor third or perfect fifth above the notes I, IV and V of the chosen key in the above scale. The examiner will play the note for four beats on a CD and the candidate will be asked to hold the note for four beats. Part B: candidates are asked to pitch the root note of a perfect fifth chosen from the same notes I, IV and V. The examiner will play the interval for four beats and the candidate will be asked to hold the note for four beats. 84 bpm.

Grade 3: Part A: candidates are asked to pitch major or minor third, perfect fourth and perfect fifth by step above the notes I, IV and V of the chosen key in the above scale. The examiner will play the note for four beats on a CD and the candidate will be asked to sing as indicated. Part B: candidates are asked to pitch a major or minor third to root by step on the same notes I, IV and V. The examiner will play the interval for four beats and the candidate will be asked to sing as indicated. 90 bpm.

Grade 4: Part A: Candidates will be asked to pitch a major or minor third, perfect fourth and perfect fifth by step and back above notes I, IV and V of the chosen key of the above scale. The examiner will play the note for four beats on a CD and candidates will be asked to sing as indicated. Part B: candidates will be asked to pitch the root, second and major or minor third below fifth based on notes I, IV or V of the chosen key of the scale. The examiner will play the note for four beats on a CD and candidates will be asked to sing as indicated. 90 bpm.

Grade 5: candidates prepare all three parts of a chord sequence using chords I, IV and V. The examiner will select the part to be given against the other two parts played on a backing track. 100 bpm.

Phrasing & Dynamics

This is performed to a backing track and candidates may use any vocal sound they consider appropriate.

Grade 1: candidates prepare a major exercise of 22 bars singing simple phrases made up of half, quarter and eighth notes and rests, staccato and legato, paying attention to the marked changes in dynamics. Range limited to a fifth; 100 bpm; C major.

Grade 2: candidates prepare a minor exercise of approximately 30 bars singing simple phrases made up of half, quarter and eighth notes and rests staccato and legato, paying attention to the marked changes in dynamics. Some simple syncopation. Range is one octave; 140 bpm; C minor.

Grade 3: candidates prepare a minor exercise of approximately 24 bars singing phrases made up of half, quarter and eighth notes and rests staccato and legato, paying attention to the marked changes in dynamics and more sophisticated syncopations. Range up to a tenth; 70 bpm; female singers C minor; male singers Bb minor. The emphasis will be on intervallic work.

Grade 4: candidates prepare a minor pentatonic exercise of approximately 20 bars singing phrases made up of half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth and dotted notes and rests staccato and legato, paying attention to the marked changes in dynamics, and more sophisticated syncopations. Range of a tenth; 80 bpm; female singers B minor; male singers E minor. The emphasis will be on semiquaver articulation.

Grade 5: candidates prepare a major exercise of approximately 26 bars singing phrases made up of half, quarter, eighth, sixteenth and dotted notes and rests staccato and legato, paying attention to the marked changes in dynamics, and more sophisticated syncopations. 12/8 rhythm; range of a tenth; 67 bpm; female singers Db major; male singers F major. The emphasis will be on sustained notes with controlled gradation of tone.

Exam Requirements for Grade 6-8

In Grades 6-8, candidates undertake two sets of vocal technical exercises: scales and backing vocals.

Scales

Grade 6-8: Candidates will be asked to perform a scale and arpeggio exercise beginning on a note between A and D. Candidates will be asked to give the exercise legato and staccato and with crescendo and diminuendo as directed by the examiner. The majority of the exercise is to be given with rhythmic accompaniment only.

Backing Vocals

Grade 6-8: Candidates prepare all three parts of two backing vocal exercises. The examiner will select the part to be given against the other two parts on a backing track. Two examples to be chosen.

Ear Tests (Grades 1-8)

Candidates will be asked to take two ear tests in their exam. The tests are played on CD. Each test is played to the candidate by the examiner twice unless otherwise stated.

Exam Requirements

Grade 1: Candidates will be given a set of three rhythmic examples that are two bars long each, made up of half, quarter and eighth notes. The examiner will play one of the examples on CD and candidates will be asked to identify the correct answer from the printed examples.

Candidates will then be asked to clap back the rhythm and to continue for two further bars in a simple/repitive manner. 112 bpm

Grade 2: As for Grade 1 but with more complex rhythmic values. Half, quarter and dotted quarter notes. 112 bpm

Grade 3: As for Grade 1. The examiner will then give a two bar melody in the same rhythm as test 1 made up of half, quarter, dotted half and dotted quarter notes, melody ascending and in step only to a fifth. Candidates will be asked to sing back the melody and continue to improvise for a further two bars, returning to the tonic. The melody begins on the tonic. C major. 112 bpm.

The second test will be a simple two chord major key sequence repeated over eight bars and the candidate will be required to improvise a major line, paying attention to rhythmic repetition and shape. C major using chords I, IV, and V. 90-100 bpm. **This test is continuous.**

Grade 4: Candidates will be given a sheet with three rhythmic examples that are two bars long each. The test will include quarter note rests. The examiner will play one of the examples on CD and candidates will be asked to identify the correct answer from the printed examples and clap back the rhythm. Candidates will then be given three melodic examples in the same rhythms as above. These begin on tonic or mediant. Melody ascending and descending by step over the range of a fifth. Candidates will be asked to identify the test with the correct rhythm. Candidates will then be asked to sight sing the examples and continue for two bars, ending on the tonic or the mediant. C major. 112 bpm.

The second test will be an eight bar minor key sequence made up of a four bar chord pattern repeated. The candidate is required to improvise a minor pentatonic melody, paying attention to rhythmic idea, style and shape. Ami, Dmi and Cmi using chords I, IV, V, and VI. 90-110 bpm **This test is continuous.**

Grade 5: Test one is as for Grade 4 with eighth note rests. Melody ascending to a fifth, with descending intervals of a major or minor third. The melody begins on the tonic, mediant or fifth. C major. 112 bpm.

The second test will be an eight bar minor key sequence made up of a four bar chord pattern repeated. The candidate will be required to improvise a minor pentatonic or blues melody paying attention to style, rhythmic idea and shape. Ami, Dmi, Cmi and Gmi using chords I, II, IV, V and VI. 92-110 bpm. **This test is continuous.**

Grade 6: Candidates will be given a four bar melodic phrase made up of notes and quarter and eighth note rests. Candidates will also be given a set of rhythmic examples. One of these corresponds to the rests in the melodic phrase. Candidates will select the appropriate test and candidates will be asked to clap the rest rhythm. The rests will fall on the beat and consist of quarter and eighth note values.

Next candidates will be given a four bar melodic phrase with chord symbols and chordal accompaniment. Candidates will be asked to harmonise a line on the third hearing. Keys A-D, major or minor. 90 bpm.

Grade 7: Candidates will be given a four bar melodic phrase made up of notes and quarter and eighth note rests. Candidates will also be given a set of rhythmic

examples. One of these corresponds to the rests in the melodic phrase. Candidates will select the appropriate test and candidates will be asked to clap the rest rhythm. The rests will fall on and off the beat and consist of quarter and eighth note values. There will be some combining of two note values into one rest ie. two 16th notes into one 8th note rest.

The second test will be a major key chord chart using chords I, II, IV, V, VI, with 7ths and 1st inversions. The candidate will hear the complete test once and asked to sing the bass line on the repeat. Keys A-D, major or minor. **This test is continuous.**

Grade 8: Candidates will hear an eight bar melody in major or minor twice. They will be asked to harmonise a moving line on the third hearing. Some use of rests and syncopation. Keys A-D, major or minor.

The second test will be a major or minor key chord chart in a rhythm, using chords I, II, IV, V, VI, with 7ths and inversions. The candidate will hear the complete test once and asked to sing the bass line on the repeat. **This test is continuous.**

Quick Study Pieces (Grade 6-8 only)

Candidates attempting these grades will be asked to perform a Quick Study Piece (QSP). This is given to the candidate 20 minutes before they enter an exam room and candidates attempting these grades are asked to arrive at the exam center sufficiently early to allow them time to practice their QSP.

Candidates will hear a full band version, including the vocal line played on piano twice. The melody will be given in the basic notated rhythm and the candidate is required to employ rhythmic changes to demonstrate stylistic awareness and understanding of the lyrics. Candidates will have 20 minutes with CD backing and use of piano or keyboard.

Exam Requirements: Quick Study Piece

Grade 6: the QSP will consist of up to 48 bars. Range is a tenth. Female range is Ab-C and the male range is D-F in a ballad style with a verse and chorus. The rhythms, vocal line and lyrics will be indicated along with some written notation. 80-100 bpm. Some vocal improvisation required over chord sequences either at the beginning or the end will be expected.

Grade 7: the QSP will consist of up to 50 bars. Range is an eleventh. The female range is G-C and the male range is C-F in a ballad/R&B/motown style. The rhythms, vocal line and lyrics will be indicated along with some written notation. 75-120 bpm. Some vocal improvisation required over chord sequences either at the beginning or the end will be expected.

Grade 8: the QSP will consist of up to 60 bars. Range is a twelfth. Female range is F-C and male range is Bb-F, in a R&B, ballad, dance or rock style. The rhythms, vocal line and lyrics will be indicated along with some written notation. 75-130 bpm. Some vocal improvisation required over chord sequences will be expected.

General Musicianship

Each Rockschooll grade exam has five General Musicianship questions. These are asked of the candidate orally by the examiner, after the phrasing & dynamics exercise.

Exam Requirements for Grades 1-5

Candidates will be asked four questions immediately after the phrasing & dynamics exercise. These questions will focus on aspects of music notation. The final question will be asked after the completion of the performance pieces and will focus on performance aspects of the piece and the interpretation of the song.

Grade 1: 4 questions on dynamic markings and meanings, note values and time signature. 1 question on meaning of lyrics of 1 song.

Grade 2: 4 questions on above and pitch names, cresc/decresc, rest values. 1 question on expression and performance of 1 song.

Grade 3: 4 questions on above and recognition of intervals of 2nd and 3rd between 2 adjacent notes. (the candidate will not be required to state major or minor), staccato marks, slurs, pitch names within a bar (ie: bar 5, 3rd beat what is the pitch name of that note). 1 question on expression and performance of 1 song.

Grade 4: 4 questions on above and recognition of intervals to a fifth between 2 adjacent notes (the candidate will not be required to identify maj/min/perfect). 1 question on differences or relationships of styles and performance between 2 songs.

Grade 5: 4 questions on above and recognition of intervals to a perfect fifth between 2 adjacent notes (the candidate **will be** required to identify as maj/min or perfect. 1 question on performance differences between 2 songs and reason for the choice. (to include style, voice quality and lyrics).

Grade 6: 3 questions on any of the above and intervals to an octave within a piece (the candidate **will be** required to identify as maj/min or perfect). 1 question on how to produce basic dynamics and what is involved. 1 question on performance intentions and communication of 2 songs.

Grade 7: 3 questions on any of the above. 1 question on how to produce dynamics and crescendos/diminuendos, legato/staccato. 1 question on performance and communication of the three songs.

Grade 8: 3 questions on any of the above and intervals to a tenth (the candidate **will be** required to identify as maj/ min or perfect). 1 question on how to produce dynamics, crescendo/diminuendo, articulation, and change between registers. 1 question on performance and communication of the three songs.

Performance Pieces

Each candidate book contains six songs per grade (apart from Grade 8 for both male and female voices, where there are five songs). This makes a total of 94 printed songs. In addition, Rockschoo! has also graded other songs generally not owned by Music Sales but which are available with backing tracks. Candidates may also bring in their own pieces to perform in the exam according to our Free Choice Piece criteria (see below).

The published repertoire for each grade is arranged according to male and female voices. The backing tracks in the level 1 one book, covering grades 1-3, are in two keys, allowing candidates of differing vocal ranges to sing them effectively.

Grade	Female	Male
One	Eternal Flame Never Ever Ain't It Funny Constant Craving Out Of Reach Get The Party Started	She Loves You Teenage Kicks Rave On Fields Of Gold Swear It Again Disco 2000
Two	Can't Get You Out Of My Head Killing Me Softly With His Song Gonna Getcha Good Search For Hero Waterloo The Tide Is High	When You Say Nothing At All Wonderwall Help! Your Song Unchained Melody That'll Be The Day
Three	Mamma Mia Beautiful Hand In My Pocket Complicated Better The Devil You Know What Can I Do?	Rock DJ Yellow (Sittin' On) The Dock Of The Bay Blue Suede Shoes Roll With It Why Does It Always Rain On Me?
Four	Son Of A Preacher Man I'm Not A Girl, Not Yet A Woman A Thousand Miles Don't Speak Whenever Wherever Torn	Light My Fire She's The One Stereotypes Back In The USSR In The Midnight Hour A Little Less Conversation
Five	I Turn To You Ironic Kiss Kiss	Let Me Entertain You Stand By Me Livin' La Vida Loca

Grade	Female	Male
Five (cont)	Save The Best For Last My Love Is Your Love Say A Little Prayer	A Thousand Trees Cum On Feel The Noize (Everything I Do) I Do It For You
Six	Rescue Me All Mine Man! I Feel Like A Woman! Against All Odds Survivor The Winner Takes It All	The Boys Are Back In Town Can't Buy Me Love Brand New Day Summer Of 69 Babylon Sunburn
Seven	Saving All My Love For You That Don't Impress Me Much Midnight Train To Georgia Respect All I Really Want Emotion	Supreme Suspicious Minds I Can't Make You Love Me This Year's Love Trouble I Saw Her Standing There
Eight	How Come You Don't Call Me Hero Shoulda Woulda Coulda The Reason I Will Always Love You	All Right Now If You're Not The One Stan If I Ever Lose My Faith In You Angels

In addition, Rockschoool has graded the following repertoire for both male and female singers. These songs can be found quite easily in the publications in which they are listed and all come with backing tracks.

Female Singers

The following additional repertoire can be used in the exams shown below.

Grade 1

Walking On Sunshine	<i>Be A Popstar: Holiday Hits</i>	IMP9053A
Heaven	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 11</i>	AM959156
Sing It Back	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
It's My Party	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Lovefool	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
Baby Love	<i>All Woman 4</i>	IMP9255A
Take My Breath Away	<i>All Woman 3</i>	IMP9187A

Grade 2

Holiday	<i>Be A Popstar: Holiday Hits</i>	IMP9053A
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Genie In A Bottle	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Divas</i>	IMP7769A
Beautiful Stranger	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Divas</i>	IMP7769A
Thank You	<i>All Woman: Songbirds</i>	IMP9914A
I Only Want To Be With You	<i>All Woman 1</i>	IMP7077A
Almaz	<i>All Woman 3</i>	IMP9187A

Grade 3

Can't Fight The Moonlight	<i>Stars In Your Eyes: Number 1 Hits</i>	IMP9028A
Music	<i>Number 1 Hits</i>	IMP9028A
Oops! I Did It Again	<i>Sing With Britney</i>	AM974644
Stay With Me	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Fame	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 2</i>	AM950224
Crazy For You	<i>All Woman 3</i>	IMP9187A

Grade 4

Hungry	<i>Sing 16 Hits</i>	AM976800
Walk On By	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP6939A
I Will Survive	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 1</i>	AM92587
Promise Me	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP6939A
The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Perfect Moment	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
Breathless	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
Black Velvet	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
Road Rage	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers</i>	AM966658
From A Distance	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
That Ole Devil Called Love	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 3</i>	AM955284
You Gotta Be	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 6</i>	AM963776
Superwoman	<i>All Woman 1</i>	IMP7077A

Grade 5

Without You	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Divas</i>	IMP7769A
Natural Woman	<i>The Voice: Carole King</i>	IMP9700A
Family Affair	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578
You Don't Have To Say You Love Me	<i>All Woman 2</i>	IMP7628A
Piece Of My Heart	<i>Audition songs For Female Singers 9</i>	AM966670
Believe	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Divas</i>	IMP7769A
American Pie	<i>Audition Songs For Professional Singers</i>	AM974578

Grade 6

Chain Of Fools	<i>All Woman Soul</i>	IMP9668A
Flashdance... What A Feeling	<i>All Woman 2</i>	IMP7268A

My Baby Just Cares for Me	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Jazz Standards</i>	IMP7021A
My Heart Will Go On	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP6939A
Get Here	<i>All Woman 1</i>	IMP7077A
Evergreen	<i>All Woman 4</i>	IMP9255A
What's Love Got To Do With It?	<i>All Woman 1</i>	IMP7077A
Touch Me In The Morning	<i>All Woman 4</i>	IMP9255A
Don't Know Why	<i>All Woman Songbirds</i>	IMP9914A
Out Here On My Own	<i>Professional Singer's Audition Book</i>	AM966680
Walk On By	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP6939A
If I Could Turn Back Time	<i>All Woman 4</i>	IMP9255A
Rainy Night In Georgia	<i>All Woman 4</i>	IMP9255A

Grade 7

Feeling Good	<i>You're The Voice: Nina Simone</i>	IMP9606A
Misled	<i>You're The Voice: Celine Dion</i>	IMP9297A
Lady Marmalade	<i>All Woman Soul</i>	IMP9668A
Do You Know Where You're Going To	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP6939A
Who's Zoomin' Who?	<i>You're The Voice: Aretha Franklin</i>	IMP9349A
Show Me Heaven	<i>Professional Singer's Audition Book</i>	AM966680

Grade 8

The Power Of Love	<i>You're The Voice: Celine Dion</i>	IMP9297A
Unbreak My Heart	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Divas</i>	IMP7769A
I Turn To You	<i>Audition Songs For Female Singers 11</i>	AM959156
Total Eclipse Of The Heart	<i>All Woman 3</i>	IMP9187A
Think	<i>You're The Voice: Aretha Franklin</i>	IMP9349A

Male Singers

The following additional repertoire can be used in the exams shown below.

Grade 1

Heartbeat	<i>Play Guitar With Buddy Holly</i>	AM943734
Get Back	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles</i>	NO90665
A Town Called Malice	<i>Play Guitar With The Jam</i>	AM963391
Eight Days A Week	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles Vol. 2</i>	NO90667

Grade 2

Yesterday	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles</i>	NO90665
I Shot The Sheriff	<i>Play Guitar With Bob Marley</i>	EMF100617
Run To You	<i>Play Guitar With Bryan Adams - Early Years</i>	AM970475

Ticket To Ride	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles Vol. 2</i>	NO90667
Right Here Waiting	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP9776A
Lucy In The Sky With Diamonds	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles Vol. 3</i>	NO90689
Don't Stand So Close To Me	<i>Play Guitar With The Police</i>	AM960993

Grade 3

Flying Without Wings	<i>Sing With Pop Idols</i>	AM974116
Here Comes The Sun	<i>Jam With The Beatles</i>	NO90685
You Wear It Well	<i>In Session With Rod Stewart</i>	IMP6607A
I Have A Dream	<i>Sing With The Boys</i>	AM969276
There She Goes	<i>Play Guitar With... Pop Anthems</i>	AM960982
Sit Down	<i>Play Guitar With... Pop Anthems</i>	AM960982
Lyin' Eyes	<i>Jam With The Eagles</i>	IMP4588A
Ain't No Sunshine	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP9776A
50 Ways To Leave Your Lover	<i>Play Acoustic Guitar With Paul Simon</i>	PS11469
Life Is A Rollercoaster	<i>Stars In Your Eyes: Number 1 Hits</i>	IMP9028A
That'll Be The Day	<i>Play Guitar With Buddy Holly</i>	AM943734
Peggy Sue	<i>Play Guitar With Buddy Holly</i>	AM943734

Grade 4

Me And Julio Down By The Schoolyard	<i>Play Acoustic Guitar With Paul Simon</i>	PS11469
Faith	<i>You're The Voice: George Michael</i>	IMP9007A
Suspicious Minds	<i>Sing With Elvis</i>	AM975172
Mack The Knife	<i>Sing With Pop Idols</i>	AM974116
Ziggy Stardust	<i>Play Guitar With David Bowie</i>	AM955988
Jumping Jack Flash	<i>Play Guitar With The Rolling Stones</i>	AM90247
She's Electric	<i>Play Guitar With Oasis</i>	AM935330
Dear Prudence	<i>Play Guitar With The Beatles Vol. 2</i>	NO90667
No Woman No Cry	<i>Play With Bob Marley</i>	EMF100617
What Becomes Of The Broken Hearted	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Evergreen	<i>Sing With Pop Idols</i>	AM974116

Grade 5

Father Figure	<i>You're The Voice: George Michael</i>	IMP9007A
Goodbye Yellow Brick Road	<i>Play Piano With Elton John</i>	AM955526
Blaze of Glory	<i>Play Guitar With Bon Jovi - Early Years</i>	AM971256
If You Don't Know Me By Now	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A

Eternity	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP9776A
If You Come Back	<i>Sing 16 Hits</i>	AM976800
The Riverboat Song	<i>Play Guitar With... The Platinum Book</i>	AM951918
Achilles Heel	<i>Play Piano With Coldplay, Toploader Plus...</i>	AM970849

Grade 6

Wanted Dead Or Alive	<i>Play Guitar With Bon Jovi - Early Years</i>	AM971256
I Knew You Were Waiting (For Me)	<i>You're The Voice</i>	IMP9007A
You're In My Heart	<i>In Session With Rod Stewart</i>	IMP6607A
When A Man Loves A Woman	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP9776A
Roxanne	<i>Play Guitar With The Police</i>	AM960993

Grade 7

Careless Whisper	<i>You're The Voice: George Michael</i>	IMP9007A
Hello	<i>Sing & Party With Tear-jerkers</i>	IMP9803A
Reet Petite	<i>Audition Songs For Male Singers 3</i>	AM972400
Hero	<i>Essential Audition Songs: Pop Ballads</i>	IMP9776A

Grade 8

Freedom '90	<i>You're The Voice: George Michael</i>	IMP9007A
'97 Bonnie And Clyde	<i>Rap With Eminem</i>	AM972510
The Real Slim Shady	<i>Rap With Eminem</i>	AM972510
My Name Is	<i>Rap With Eminem</i>	AM972510

Unaccompanied Piece

In Grades 1-5 candidates are asked to perform part of a song unaccompanied. This test is designed to test a candidate's ability to hold a line and to show stylistic awareness in some variation and improvisation to the line. The unaccompanied piece is performed between the second and third songs of the performance pieces.

Exam Requirements for Grades 1-5

Candidates should prepare 16 bars of music at grades 1 to 3 and 24 bars at grades 4 and 5 either from a song they have already performed in the exam or from the list of repertoire given above. Some additional information is given below.

Grades 1-2: simple variation to the vocal line in either notes values and/or pitch. This should be applied to only a few notes. The candidate at these grades should be looking to maintain intonation as a primary consideration.

Grade 3: the candidate should show more stylistic awareness in the improvisation. This should include some simple ornamentation to notes and variation in the line. An emerging sense of technical ability should be shown. This is to apply to 25% of the piece. Candidates may apply further improvisation if stylistically aware.

Grade 4: The candidate should show distinct variation in the use of ornamentation and tempo. They should demonstrate some movement in register and give a sense of construction and shape to the line. This is to apply to 33% of the piece.

Grade 5: The Candidate should show the ability to convey a stylistic and original sense of line to the melody in the use of stylistic ornamentation and pitch shifts. Candidates should demonstrate a musical awareness of shape and direction to the passage to convey a unified whole. This is to apply to at least 33% of the piece.

Marking Scheme

The following marking scheme applies to the Rockschooll vocal grades as shown below:

Grades 1-5

Technical Exercises **15 marks**

General Musicianship Questions **(5)**

Aural Tests **(10)**

Performance Pieces **(60)**

Unaccompanied Piece **(10)**

Grades 6-8

Technical Exercises **10 marks**

Aural Tests **(10)**

Quick Study Piece **(15)**

Performance Pieces **(60)**

General Musicianship Questions **(5)**

All Rockschooll exams are marked out of 100. In Grade exams the pass mark is 65%. Rockschooll awards merit certificates for candidates achieving marks 75-84% and distinction certificates for candidates achieving any mark above 85%.

In performance certificates, the pass mark is 70%. Rockschooll awards merit certificates for candidates achieving marks 80-89% and distinction certificates for candidates achieving any mark above 90%.

Free Choice Pieces

Rockschooll candidates have the opportunity to bring a piece of their own choice for performance in the exam. This may be either a hit song from the charts or a piece of own composition. Candidates are allowed the following free choice pieces:

- **Grade exams:** one piece may be performed from outside the prescribed repertoire;
- **Performance Certificates:** up to two pieces from outside the prescribed repertoire may be performed.

Grade 1 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 1 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the piece between 1 and 2 minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the piece performed with backing track? (yes) (no)
- Is the lead line easily distinguishable? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements

Physical techniques

- Demonstrate solid voice (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate short phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate medium range
with some small interval work (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate rhythmic control (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- use of legato/staccato; (yes) (no)
- a range of dynamics (p, mf, f); (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain a mixture of semibreve (whole), minim (half), crotchets (quarter) and quavers (eighth).

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 2 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 2 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the piece between 1 and 2 minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Is the lead line easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to all of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements

Physical techniques

- Use of chest voice (yes) (no)
- Limited interval work (yes) (no)
- Short melodic phrases (yes) (no)
- Evidence of clear diction (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- use of legato/staccato; (yes) (no)
- use of dynamics (p-ff); (yes) (no)
- expressive communication (yes) (no)
- simple ornamentation/improvisation (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain a mixture of semibreve (whole), minim (half), crotchets (quarter) and quavers (eighth) and their dotted values and simple syncopation

Range Requirements

General range 1 octave with interval work up to a sixth

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 3 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 3 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Does the piece last between 1 and 2 minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements

Physical techniques

- Demonstrate use of chest voice and some head voice (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate the ability to sustain over mid length phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate interval work (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate suitable posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate a control of more developed rhythm (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a greater range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff-pp* (yes) (no)
- Use of legato and staccato (yes) (no)
- Use of diction to aid expression (yes) (no)
- Sense of communication (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain a mixture of semibreve (whole), minim (half), crotchets (quarter) and quavers (eighth) and their dotted values.

Range Requirements

General range up to a tenth with interval work to a sixth

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 4 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 4 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the piece between 2 and 3 minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements

Physical techniques

- Demonstration of solid chest voice and moderate facility in head voice (yes) (no)
- Demonstration of mid length phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate tonal resonance in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate some appropriate variation and improvisation (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate accuracy in pitch and intonation (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a greater range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff*-*pp* (yes) (no)
- Ability to control extended intervals (yes) (no)
- Ability to show increased range of articulation (yes) (no)
- To show expressive communication through delivery of lyrics (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain a mixture of semibreve (whole), minim (half), crotchets (quarter), crotchet triplets and quavers (eighth) and their dotted values.

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 5 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 5 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the song between 2 and 3 minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature at least 3 of the physical techniques, **plus** all of the expressive techniques

Physical techniques

- Demonstration of solid chest voice and facility to bridge smoothly to head voice (yes) (no)
- Demonstration of longer phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate tonal resonance in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate some appropriate variation and improvisation (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate accuracy in pitch and intonation (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a greater range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff*-*pp* (yes) (no)
- Ability to control extended intervals (yes) (no)
- Ability to show increased range of articulation (yes) (no)
- To show expressive communication through delivery of lyrics (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain a mixture of semibreve (whole), minim (half), crotchets (quarter), crotchet triplets and quavers (eighth) and their dotted values. Also a demonstration of more sophisticated semiquaver syncopation.

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 6 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 6 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the song between 3 and 3½ minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical techniques, **plus** all of the expressive techniques

Physical techniques

- Demonstration of solid chest voice and facility to bridge smoothly to head voice in more than one way. (yes) (no)
- Demonstration of longer phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate tonal resonance in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate some appropriate variation, ornamentation and improvisation (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate accuracy in pitch and intonation (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a greater range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff*-*pp* (yes) (no)
- Ability to control extended intervals (yes) (no)
- Ability to show a wide range of articulation (yes) (no)
- To show expressive communication through delivery of lyrics (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain note values in almost any combination but have considerable amount of 16th notes, dotted note combinations and triplets of all varieties. Songs should if possible contain at least one change of time signature.

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 7 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 7 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the song between 3 and 3½ minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer **NO** to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer **YES** to **all** of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece **must** feature all of the physical techniques, **plus** all of the expressive techniques

Physical techniques

- Demonstration of solid chest voice and facility to bridge smoothly to head voice in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstration of long phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate tonal resonance in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate extensive variation, ornamentation and improvisation (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate accuracy in pitch and intonation (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a wide range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff*-*pp* (yes) (no)
- Ability to control extended intervals in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Ability to show a wide range of articulation (yes) (no)
- To show expressive communication through delivery of lyrics (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain note values in almost any combination but have considerable amount of 16th notes, dotted note combinations and triplets of all varieties. Songs should if possible contain at least one change of time signature.

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Grade 8 Free Choice Piece Checklist

Please read through the following document if you are thinking of performing a piece of repertoire not published by Rockschooll in its Grade 8 Singing pack.

This checklist has been devised to help you assess whether or not the repertoire you have chosen to play meets the criteria established for performance pieces in the grade.

Section A – Essential Elements

- Is the song between 3 and 3½ minutes long? (yes) (no)
- Is the song performed to a backing track? (yes) (no)
- Can the lead line be easily distinguished? (yes) (no)
- Does the piece exist in a notated copy? (yes) (no)

If you answer NO to any of the above the piece is unsuitable for use in the grade examination.

If you answer YES to all of the above then please proceed to the next section.

Elective Elements

The piece must feature all of the physical techniques, plus all of the expressive techniques

Physical techniques

- Demonstration of solid chest voice and facility to bridge smoothly to head voice in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstration of long phrases (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate tonal resonance in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate awareness of appropriate posture (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate some extensive variation, ornamentation and improvisation (yes) (no)
- Demonstrate accuracy in pitch and intonation (yes) (no)

Expressive techniques

- To control a wide range of dynamic changes as appropriate *ff*-*pp* (yes) (no)
- Ability to control extended intervals in a variety of ways (yes) (no)
- Ability to show a wide range of articulation (yes) (no)
- To show expressive communication through delivery of lyrics (yes) (no)

Rhythmic Requirements

The piece should contain note values in almost any combination but have considerable amount of 16th notes, dotted note combinations and triplets of all varieties. Songs should if possible contain at least one change of time signature.

If your piece does have all of the physical and expressive techniques and include a variety of the rhythmic requirements it is suitable for the examination

Assessment Criteria

PIECES

Grade 1

Distinction 17-20

1. Highly confident and fluent techniques given consistently throughout
2. Very secure and reliable appropriate tonal quality throughout
3. Secure rhythm/pulse throughout
4. Exact in pitch throughout
5. Seamless sync; secure continuity throughout
6. Highly confident, assured presentation with a clear sense of communication (ie lyrics)

Merit 15-16

1. Secure techniques throughout
2. Reliable and appropriate tonal quality throughout
3. Secure rhythm/pulse with minor slips
4. Secure in pitch throughout
5. Good sense of sync/continuity throughout
6. Confident presentation with a sense of communication

Pass 13-14

1. Mainly secure basic techniques. Some small slips not affecting continuity
2. Generally secure appropriate tonal quality with some less consistent moments
3. Generally accurate in rhythm/pulse with some minor lapses
4. Generally secure in pitch with minor inaccuracies
5. Mainly synchronised; occasional slips in fluency, but continuity maintained
6. Mainly confident presentation, with small lapses in communication

Fail 9-12

1. Insecure techniques with breaks to the line/continuity
2. Inconsistent/inappropriate tonal quality affecting the line and fluency
3. Inconsistent rhythmic sense causing lapses in fluency and continuity
4. Inconsistent pitch control with breaks to the phrases/line
5. Poor synchronisation with lack of fluency. 2 stoppages/breaks
6. Hesitant presentation with little sense of communication

Poor Fail 1-8

1. Consistent basic technical errors resulting in 2 or more stoppages or resumptions to the line
2. Inconsistent/inappropriate tonal quality throughout
3. Wayward pulse, incorrect rhythm throughout resulting in stoppages

4. Inconsistent in pitch throughout
5. No evidence of sync, large gaps , more than 2 restarts, piece abandoned
6. Highly nervous presentation with no sense of communication

Grades 2 and 3

Distinction 17-20

1. Highly assured and fluent techniques throughout
2. Highly reliable and appropriate tonal quality showing awareness of style throughout
3. Innate musical use of rhythm/pulse throughout
4. Exact in pitch/intonation throughout
5. Seamless sync; secure continuity throughout
6. Highly confident and assured presentation resulting in an engaging communication of lyrics and mood throughout
7. Innate sense of stylistic awareness
8. Highly stylistic and structured improvisation with a secure sense of harmonic and melodic implications

Merit 15-16

1. Reliable techniques throughout
2. Secure and appropriate tonal quality with an awareness of stylistic demands
3. Musical use of rhythm/pulse throughout
4. Secure in pitch/intonation throughout
5. Strong sense of sync/continuity throughout
6. Confident presentation with a good communication of lyrics and mood throughout
7. Good degree of stylistic awareness throughout
8. Stylistic and fluent improvisation with a good sense of harmonic and melodic implications

Pass 13-14

1. Mainly secure basic techniques with small slips not affecting continuity
2. Generally secure and appropriate tonal quality with occasional lapses, but with overall control displayed
3. Generally accurate rhythm/pulse with small inaccuracies/hesitancies not affecting the fluency
4. Generally secure in pitch/intonation. Small errors but secure overall
5. Mainly synchronised; occasional slips but continuity maintained
6. Mainly confident presentation with generally reliable communication of lyrics and mood
7. Beginnings of stylistic awareness
8. Some sense of stylistic improvisation but with occasional errors in harmonic or melodic implications. Fluency maintained

Fail 9-12

1. Insecure techniques with 2 restarts/resumptions required
2. Poor tonal quality affecting the line
3. Inconsistent rhythmic sense resulting in consistent inaccuracies
4. Errors in pitch/intonation resulting in inaccurate line or breaks
5. Poor synchronisation with lack of fluency
6. Hesitant presentation with little communication of lyrics or mood
7. Little stylistic awareness shown
8. Improvisation limited and inaccurate in harmonic/melodic sense

Poor Fail 1-8

1. Consistent basic technical errors resulting in numerous restarts or abandonment
2. Inconsistent and poor tonal quality throughout displaying clear technical errors
3. Wayward Rhythm/pulse/duration throughout
4. Consistent errors in pitch/intonation throughout
5. No sync; problems in continuity, more than 2 restarts, piece abandoned
6. Highly nervous presentation with no communication of lyrics or mood
7. Stylistically unaware throughout
8. No improvisation throughout

Grade 4 and 5**Distinction 17-20**

1. Highly assured and fluent techniques throughout
2. Assured and appropriate use of diction, articulation and phrasing sustained throughout
3. Highly controlled and appropriate tonal quality sustained throughout
4. Innate and musical use of rhythm/pulse throughout
5. Exact in pitch/intonation throughout
6. Seamless sync; effortless fluency displayed throughout
7. Highly confident and assured performance showing a high degree of personal interpretation
8. Innate sense of stylistic awareness displayed in communication
9. High level of extensive and appropriate improvisation displaying harmonic and melodic security, with a clear sense of structure throughout
10. Highly confident microphone techniques
11. Confident and convincing delivery of memory item(s)

Merit 15-16

1. Secure techniques sustained throughout
2. Appropriate use of diction/articulation and phrasing throughout
3. Secure appropriate tonal quality throughout
4. Musical use rhythm/pulse/duration throughout

5. Consistent in pitch/intonation throughout
6. Strong sense of sync/continuity throughout
7. Confident presentation with a good degree of personal interpretation throughout
8. Good degree of stylistic awareness displayed in communication
9. Considerable appropriate improvisation displaying harmonic and melodic security, with a clear sense of shape
10. Confident microphone techniques
11. Convincing delivery of memory item(s)

Pass 13-14

1. Mainly secure techniques with occasional minor errors, but consistent in continuity
2. Appropriate use of diction/articulation and phrasing
3. Secure, appropriate tonal quality with minor inaccuracies but fluency maintained
4. Generally accurate rhythm/pitch with no breaks to the continuity
5. Generally accurate in pitch/intonation. Small errors but secure overall
6. Generally synchronised with small errors in fluency, but continuity maintained
7. Mainly confident presentation with adequate personal interpretation
8. Some stylistic awareness shown in communication, with some small lapses
9. Some appropriate improvisation with occasional slips in harmonic or melodic implication. Limited shape evident.
10. Able microphone techniques
11. Adequate delivery of memory item(s)

Fail 9-12

1. Insecure techniques with 2 restarts or resumptions
2. Little musical use of diction/articulation
3. Poor tonal quality with breaks and technical inadequacies evident
4. Inconsistent rhythmic sense with lapses to continuity
5. Errors in pitch/intonation resulting in inaccurate line or breaks to the fluency
6. Problems of sync and fluency with restarts required
7. Hesitant presentation with little personal interpretation displayed
8. Little stylistic awareness with limited communication
9. Little improvisation and errors in harmonic and melodic understanding
10. Hesitancy and errors in microphone techniques
11. Some errors in memory item(s)

Poor Fail-1-8

1. Consistent technical errors resulting in numerous restarts/resumptions. Piece abandoned
2. Failure to observe diction/articulation throughout
3. Very poor tonal quality throughout
4. Wayward rhythm/pulse throughout
5. Consistent errors in pitch/intonation
6. Little or no sync, large gaps in fluency, more than 2 restarts, piece abandoned
7. Highly nervous presentation with no personal interpretation

8. Stylistically unaware with no communication
9. No improvisation displayed
10. Little or no microphone technique. Microphone not used
11. Consistent errors in memory item(s)

Grades 6-8

Distinction 17-20

1. Effortless techniques sustained throughout
2. Assured and appropriate use of diction/articulation and phrasing throughout
3. Highly assured, controlled and appropriate tone sustained throughout
4. Innate and musical rhythm/pulse shown throughout
5. Effortlessly consistent in pitch/intonation throughout
6. Seamless sync; effortless continuity throughout
7. Highly assured, professional performance with an innate level of personal interpretation
8. Innate sense of stylistic awareness displayed in communication
9. Extensive and individual improvisation displaying an instinctive harmonic and melodic security and with a clear sense of structure and shape
10. Highly assured microphone techniques
11. Effortless memory recall throughout

Merit 15-16

1. Very secure techniques throughout
2. Confident and appropriate use of diction/articulation and phrasing throughout
3. Assured, controlled and appropriate tone throughout
4. Musical use of rhythm/pulse throughout
5. Consistent in pitch/intonation throughout
6. Strong sense of sync/continuity throughout
7. Confident, assured performance with a good degree of personal interpretation throughout
8. High degree of stylistic awareness in communication
9. Individual and appropriate improvisation displaying confident harmonic and melodic security and with a sense of structure and shape
10. Confident microphone techniques
11. Confident and reliable memory recall

Pass 13-14

1. Secure techniques. Some minor errors but continuity and fluency maintained
2. Adequate awareness and appropriate use of diction/articulation and phrasing
3. Controlled adequate tone
4. Secure use of rhythm/pulse with small lapses but secure in continuity
5. Generally consistent in pitch/intonation. Small errors but secure overall

6. Synchronised with occasional errors. Overall continuity maintained
7. Mostly confident performance, with some small hesitation and with adequate personal interpretation
8. Some degree of stylistic awareness shown in communication, although occasional lapses
9. Limited but appropriate improvisation showing general awareness of harmonic and melodic implications and some evidence of shape
10. Adequate microphone techniques
11. Reliable memory recall

Fail 9-12

1. Some insecurity of techniques with restarts and resummptions required
2. Some error in use of diction/articulation
3. Poorly controlled tone causing breaks to the line
4. Some inconsistencies in rhythmic sense causing breaks or disruption of fluency to the line
5. Errors in pitch/intonation
6. Poor synchronisation and continuity with breaks to continuity
7. Hesitant: lacking in confidence and with little personal interpretation
8. Little stylistic awareness or sense of communication
9. Inappropriate improvisation with errors in harmonic and melodic implication
10. Poor control of microphone techniques
11. Poor memory recall with errors and breaks to continuity

Poor Fail 1-8

1. Insecure techniques throughout
2. Inappropriate use of diction/articulation throughout
3. Unmusical and uncontrolled tone
4. Poor sense of rhythm/pulse throughout
5. Consistent errors in pitch/intonation
6. Little or no synchronisation: large gaps in fluency, restarts, or abandoned
7. Extremely hesitant presentation with no personal interpretation
8. No stylistic awareness or sense of communication
9. No improvisation
10. Very poor microphone techniques. Microphone not used
11. Consistent errors in memory recall with large gaps, restarts, or piece abandoned

UNACCOMPANIED PIECE

Grades 1-5

Distinction 9+

1. Confidently controlled in pitch and pulse throughout

2. Consistent and stylistic use of tone
3. Highly musical use of dynamics and phrasing throughout
4. Highly musical and convincing improvisation with thought to shape and style
5. Highly assured microphone technique (Grades 4 and 5 only)

Merit 7+/10

1. Secure control of pitch and pulse throughout
2. Good use of appropriate tone
3. Clear use of dynamics and phrasing throughout
4. Musical and shaped improvisation with a sense of shape and style
5. Secure microphone technique (Grades 4 and 5 only)

Pass 6/10

1. Generally secure in pitch and pulse
2. Appropriate use of tone
3. Dynamics and phrasing evident
4. Adequate improvisation
5. Adequate microphone technique (Grades 4 and 5 only)

Below Pass 4-5/10

1. Slips in pitch and pulse, with restart
2. Inconsistent use of tone
3. Little dynamic range and phrasing unclear
4. Inadequate improvisation with little sense of shape or style
5. Poor microphone technique (Grades 4 and 5 only)

Below Pass 2 1-3/10

1. Consistent slips in pitch and pulse. Restarts or piece abandoned
2. Inappropriate tone
3. No evidence of dynamics or phrasing
4. Inappropriate improvisation or no improvisation offered
5. Consistently poor microphone technique or no microphone used

AURAL TESTS

Grades 1-2

Distinction

1. Immediate and accurate recognition of rhythm
2. Immediate and accurate recall of rhythm
3. Exact pulse
4. Immediate improvisation with correct length and a clear sense of shape
5. Always highly confident in delivery

Merit

1. Near instant and accurate recognition of rhythm
2. Near instant and accurate recall of rhythm
3. Exact pulse
4. Continuous improvisation, correct in length and a sense of shape
5. Confident delivery

Pass

1. Accurate recognition of rhythm with small delay, hesitation
2. Accurate recall of rhythm with small delay, hesitation
3. Consistent pulse, if slightly slower or faster
4. Improvisation given and correct in length; small lapses in pulse
5. Generally secure and confident

Fail

1. Hesitant recognition of rhythm with inaccuracies
2. Hesitant recall of rhythm with inaccuracies
3. Inconsistent pulse, two restarts
4. Improvisation hesitant and incorrect in length or pulse
5. Hesitant delivery

Poor Fail

1. Highly cautious with three restarts or abandonment
2. Wayward pulse throughout
3. Little or no improvisation, with incorrect length
4. Extremely hesitant delivery

Grades 3-8**Distinction**

1. Immediate and accurate recognition of both rhythm and melody
2. Immediate and accurate recall of melody and rhythm
3. Exact pulse
4. Immediate and stylish improvisation, with correct length and shape throughout, displaying harmonic and melodic accuracy
5. Always highly confident in delivery

Merit

1. Prompt and accurate recognition of both rhythm and melody
2. Prompt and accurate recall of both rhythm and melody
3. Consistent pulse
4. Stylistic improvisation, correct in length with general harmonic and melodic accuracy
5. Confident delivery

Pass

1. Accurate recognition of rhythm and melody with minor hesitation
2. Accurate recall of rhythm and melody with minor inaccuracy
3. Generally consistent pulse but containing inaccuracies
4. Improvisation correct in length with general accuracy in harmony and melody
5. Generally secure and confident

Fail

1. Inaccurate recognition of rhythm and melody
2. Hesitant recall of rhythm and melody with errors and two restarts
3. Inconsistent pulse with breaks of fluency
4. Improvisation inaccurate in length with little accuracy in harmony and melody
5. Hesitant delivery

Poor Fail

1. Inaccurate recognition of rhythm and melody or abandoned
2. Highly cautious recall with consistent errors or abandoned
3. Wayward pulse throughout
4. Little or no improvisation with harmonic and melodic awareness absent
5. Extremely hesitant delivery

QUICK STUDY PIECE (Grades 6-8 only)**Grades 6-8****Distinction 14+/15**

1. Fluent, musical technique; tonality securely observed throughout
2. Extensive, musical use of dynamics & phrasing with shape and structure convincingly delivered
3. Accurate, idiomatic use of pulse
4. High degree of stylistic awareness displayed with stylistic use of tone and delivery
5. High level of musical communication
6. Innate understanding of idiomatic improvisation convincingly delivered
7. Secure delivery of lyrics throughout
8. Highly assured microphone technique

Merit 12-13/15

1. Secure techniques; tonality observed throughout
2. Dynamic/expressive marks given and a good sense of structure evident
3. Consistent, accurate sense of pulse/continuity
4. Strong evidence of stylistic awareness with good use of tone and delivery
5. Confident, engaging performance
6. Good range of appropriate improvisation, confidently given

7. Lyrics well delivered
8. Secure microphone technique

Pass 11/15

1. Accurate technique; tonality observed with minor lapses
2. Some dynamic/expressive marks observed
3. Good sense of pulse/continuity
4. Evidence of some stylistic awareness with some evidence of style and delivery
5. Generally confident performance
6. Some appropriate improvisation, with understanding of harmonic and melodic content
7. Lyrics generally accurate
8. Adequate microphone technique

Fail 8-10/15

1. Some errors in pitch/rhythm; tonality not always accurate
2. Dynamic/expressive marks not observed, with little sense of shape
3. Inconsistent pulse/continuity with restarts
4. Little evidence of stylistic awareness with no evidence of style or delivery
5. Hesitant, insecure performance with lapses in continuity
6. Inappropriate improvisation with errors in harmonic/melodic progression
7. Inaccurate lyrics, some gaps
8. Poor microphone technique

Poor Fail 1-7/15

1. Consistent basic errors in technique; tonality not observed
2. Dynamic/expressive marks not offered
3. Very inconsistent pulse with frequent breakdowns
4. No evidence of stylistic awareness
5. Very tentative, insecure performance
6. Improvisation sections omitted
7. Large sections of lyrics omitted
8. Consistently poor microphone technique or no microphone used

TECHNICAL EXERCISES Grades 1-5 (out of 15) Grades 6-8 (out of 10)

Distinction 13+/15; 9+/10

1. Fluent, effortless technical and musical accuracy throughout
2. Exact pulse throughout
3. Consistent instant responses throughout
4. highly confident in delivery
5. Stylistically accurate, with thought to tone and balance (Grades 6-8 Backing Vocals)
6. Highly assured microphone technique (Grades 6-8)

Merit 12/15; 7+8/10

1. Correct pitches/rhythms with fluency consistent throughout
2. Strong sense of pulse
3. Generally instant responses
4. Confidently delivered
5. Stylistically accurate (Grades 6-8 Backing Vocals)
6. Secure microphone technique (Grades 6-8)

Pass 11/15; 6/10

1. Correct pitches/rhythms with occasional small errors
2. Generally consistent at appropriate tempo
3. Generally prompt responses
4. Small hesitations but confident overall with no breaks in continuity
5. Accurate delivery with minor slips in balance and tone (Grades 6-8 Backing Vocals)
6. Adequate microphone technique (Grades 6-8)

Fail 8-10/15; 4-5/10

1. Errors in pitches and rhythms with two restarts or resumptions
2. Some cautious tempi; irregular pulse
3. Hesitant with false starts and poor control
4. Some inaccuracies in delivery including balance and tone (Grades 6-8 Backing Vocals)
5. Poor microphone technique (Grades 6-8)

Poor Fail 1-7/15; 1-3/10

1. Largely inaccurate or incorrect
2. Some significant or repeated errors; little or no sense of pulse
3. Frequent breakdowns
4. Very hesitant in delivery
5. Consistent inaccuracies in delivery (Grades 6-8 Backing Vocals)
6. Consistently poor microphone technique or no microphone used (Grades 6-8)

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