



UNIVERSITY OF
WEST LONDON

LONDON COLLEGE OF MUSIC EXAMINATIONS

Registry of Guitar Tutors / LCM Examinations

Acoustic Guitar Syllabus

Initial, Preliminary and Graded Examinations

2008 - 2016



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**Syllabus for
Initial, Preliminary and Graded Examinations
in
Acoustic Guitar**

2008 - 2016



Registry of Guitar Tutors

'Setting the standards in guitar education'

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

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

RGT Board of Honorary Patrons:

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

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

This syllabus was compiled following lengthy, detailed and regular consultation with an advisory panel consisting of over 20 experienced acoustic guitar teachers and some of the UK's most respected acoustic guitar players, including Gordon Giltrap, John Renbourn, Stuart Ryan and Clive Carroll.

For further information about this syllabus contact:

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London College of Music

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

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

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

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

London College of Music Examinations

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

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

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

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

We offer a number of pre-Grade 1 exams (Initial, Preliminary and Steps). Graded exams include a spoken test element, which encourages candidates to think, both technically and critically, about the music they perform in the exam.

Graded and diploma syllabuses are available free of charge via www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams, or on request from the LCM Examinations office.

1. Syllabus introduction

1.1 Coverage of this syllabus

This syllabus is designed to prepare students for the Graded Examinations in Acoustic Guitar awarded by University of West London Qualifications. It should be read in conjunction with the relevant Exam Information Booklet, that details the specific requirements for the subject.

Acoustic Guitar Exam Information Booklets are available free of charge from LCM Examinations (tel: 020 8231 2364), from the Registry of Guitar Tutors (tel: 01424 222222) or from local representatives. They can also be downloaded at www.RGT.org and www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams

London College of Music Examinations also offers graded examinations in the subjects listed below. Because of differences in content and/or markschemes, syllabuses and repertoire lists for these subjects are published separately. Please contact the LCM Examinations office (tel: 020 8231 2364) or your local representative for details.

Piano, Electronic Keyboard, Electronic Organ, Flute, Clarinet, Oboe, Bassoon, Recorder, Classical Saxophone, French Horn, Trumpet, Cornet, Flugel Horn, Trombone, Baritone, Euphonium, Tuba, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Harp, Classical Guitar, Electric Guitar, Bass Guitar, Drum Kit, Tuned Percussion, Snare Drum, Timpani, Percussion, Classical Singing, Popular Music Vocals, Music Theatre, Jazz Piano, Jazz Flute, Jazz Clarinet, Jazz Saxophone, Jazz Trumpet, Jazz Trombone, Church Music, Irish Traditional Music, Scottish Traditional Music, Ensemble, Theory of Music, Popular Music Theory, Composition

1.2 Validity of this syllabus

This syllabus is valid from 1 January 2008 until 31 December 2016.

1.3 Rationale

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

- creative thinking;
- practical skills either independent of literacy, or related to it;
- encouragement to think, both technically and critically, about the repertoire performed in practical examinations;
- a distinctively broad stylistic range, as reflected in tasks, endorsements and repertoire;
- the provision of assessment in areas not traditionally included within the scope of graded examinations;
- a strong emphasis towards the acquisition and demonstration of skills and understandings that are of contemporary relevance to the performing arts.

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

1.4 Syllabus aims

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

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

1.5 Syllabus objectives

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

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

1.6 Availability of examinations and entry details

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

1.7 Duration of examinations

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

1.8 Candidates with particular needs

Information on assessment, examination and entry requirements for candidates with particular needs is published in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*. Copies are available free of charge via www.uwl.ac.uk/lcmexams or on request from the LCM Examinations office.

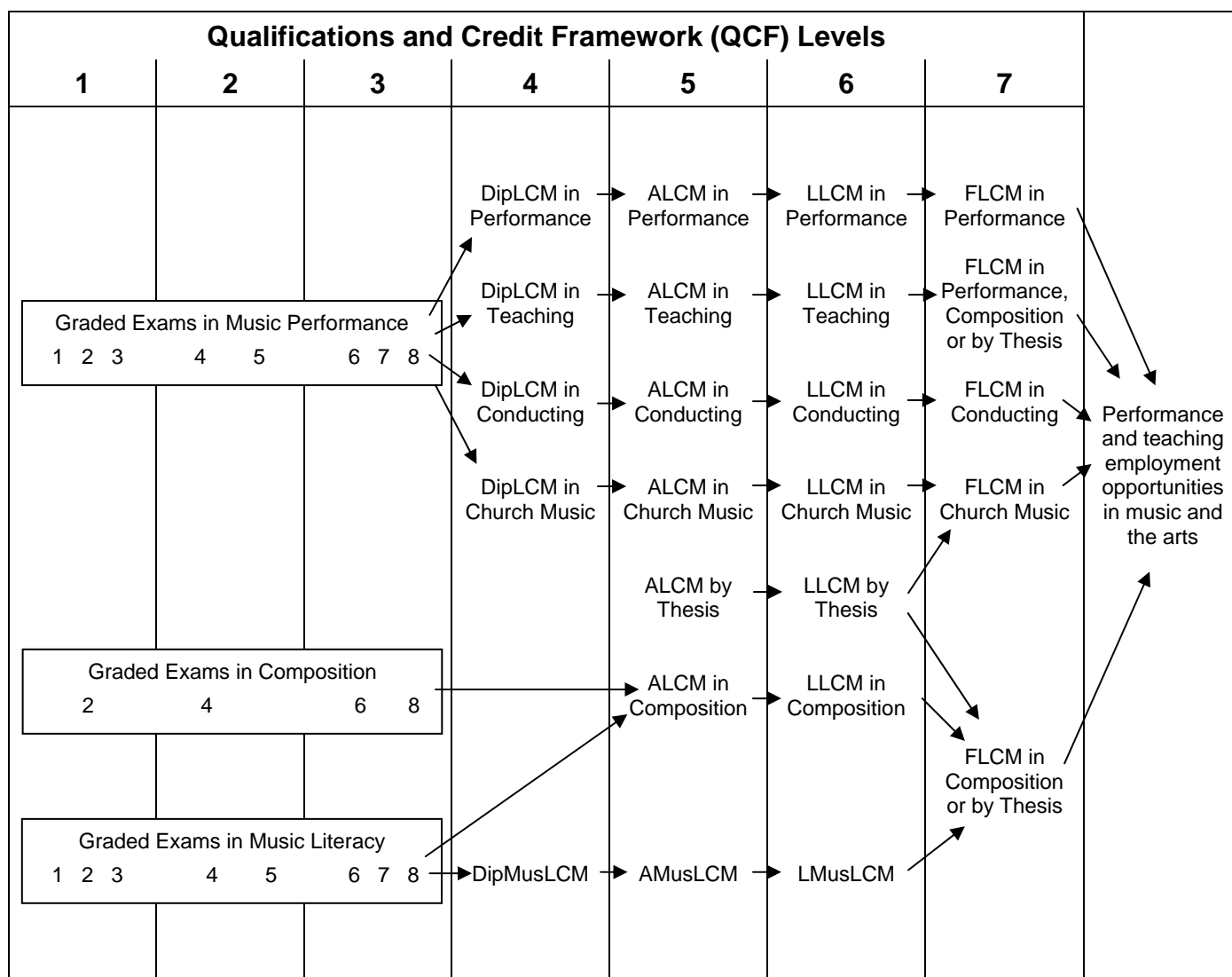
1.9 Target groups

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

Graded Examinations in Acoustic Guitar: *Likely* age groups

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

1.10 Progression routes



The above chart outlines the overall framework for all LCM Exams. Post-Grade Eight examinations for acoustic guitar are not currently available. Non-accredited Initial Stage and Preliminary Grade examinations (prior to Grade One) are available in acoustic guitar.

1.11 Accreditation

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

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

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

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

1.12 UCAS tariff points

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

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

2. Syllabus content

2.1 Syllabus overview

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

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

2.2 Summary of subject content and description of examination components

These summaries should be read in conjunction with the Grade Descriptions (Section 2.4) and the Pass Band Descriptions (Section 4.3). In-depth details of all examination requirements and specifications are included in the official RGT course handbooks and in the Examination Information Booklet. Further information for teachers and advice on syllabus requirements is available from the Registry of Guitar Tutors (tel: 01424 222222; email: office@RGT.org; website: www.RGT.org).

Areas of Study

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

Component 1: Fingerboard Knowledge

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to perform from memory the chords, scales and arpeggios specified. The primary areas of study are the pitch content of the set exercises, and the ability to perform them from memory, with clarity, fluency, secure technique and accuracy, including the use of particular fingerboard positions as specified.
2. technical mastery of the instrument, including fingering, clarity, plectrum/finger control, tone control and articulation and the ability to shape the exercises musically.

Explicit ability:

perform from memory a specified set of scales and arpeggios, at a tempo appropriate to the grade, with clarity, evenness and accuracy (including numerous fingerboard positions when specified).

perform from memory a specified set of chords, using specified fingerboard positions, appropriate to the grade, with accuracy and clarity.

Implied ability:

demonstrate basic technical fluency, secure fretting-hand technique, picking/plectrum control, articulation and knowledge of keys. Also to include the ability to fret and sound chords clearly without fretbuzz, and knowledge of chord shapes and chord symbols.

Component 2: Performance

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to choose and perform a selection of studies and/or pieces as specified in the relevant grade handbook (the number and combination of studies and pieces varies between the different grades). The principal area of study is the technical mastery of the instrument, including control of the pitch content of the set pieces and the ability to perform them with accuracy and fluency.
2. the ability to utilise strumming and picking techniques to aid and adapt interpretation of the pieces; use of tonal and specialist techniques to aid creativity.
3. increasing evidence of a sense of musicality as the grades progress.
4. familiarity with chord symbols as appropriate to the grade.
5. increasing ability to communicate effectively to the listener as the grades progress.

Explicit ability:

perform a number of specified studies and/or pieces, using music selected by the candidate in accordance with the grade handbook, appropriate to the grade, with accuracy and fluency.

Implied ability:

demonstrate basic technical fluency (secure timing, fluid picking/plectrum technique, adequate fret-hand control, dexterity in changing between chords), an understanding of harmonic progression, awareness of style, melodic and rhythmic security and inventiveness, a sense of musicality and communication.

Component 3: Musical Knowledge

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to respond orally to questions asked by the examiner on a number of specified topics. The primary area of study throughout the grades will be a thorough understanding of the specified topics.
2. the ability to articulate answers clearly and confidently, employing appropriate terminology.

Explicit ability:

respond orally to questions asked by the examiner on a number of topics, as specified for the grade.

Implied ability:

a thorough understanding of the specified topics, demonstrated through articulate responses employing appropriate vocabulary.

Component 4: Accompaniment

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate:

1. the ability to perform an accompaniment for a melody by following a given chord sequence, according to the examples specified in the relevant grade handbook. The principal area of study is the pitch content of the exercises, and the ability to perform them at sight, with accuracy and fluency.
2. technical mastery of the instrument, including fluency via secure strumming technique or finger picking, dynamic variety and clarity.
3. increasing evidence of a sense of musicality as the grades progress.
4. familiarity with chord symbols as appropriate to the grade.
5. increasing ability to communicate effectively to the listener as the grades progress.

Explicit ability:

provide a suitable accompaniment to a melody following a given chord sequence, appropriate to the grade, with accuracy, fluency and musicality.

Implied ability:

demonstrate basic technical fluency (including dexterity in changing between chords and inventiveness in creating rhythm/picking patterns), a sense of the interrelatedness of melody and harmony, the ability to interpret chord symbols accurately, awareness of style, and a sense of musicality and communication.

Component 5: Aural Assessment

Candidates need to be prepared to demonstrate the ability to:

1. provide accurate musical or verbal responses to questions from the examiner, based on published question types in the grade handbooks. The primary areas of study are the knowledge and understanding of the required parameters of rhythm, pitch and harmony.
2. communicate these answers to the examiner by means of appropriate terminology as required.
3. understand the specific test formats as published in the relevant grade handbook.

Explicit ability:

provide accurate musical or verbal responses to questions set by the examiner, based on published question types in the grade handbooks, relating to discrimination of such musical aspects as rhythm, pitch and harmony.

Implied ability:

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

2.3 Weightings for examination components

	Fingerboard Knowledge	Performance	Musical Knowledge	Accompaniment	Aural Assessment
Initial Stage	25%	75%	-	-	-
Preliminary	15%	75%	-	-	10%
Grades 1-8	10%	50%	10%	20%	10%

2.4 Grade descriptions

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

Initial Stage, Preliminary and Grades 1-2

The musical material selected for these grades, and hence the standard of performance expected, is of an essentially elementary nature. Only the most basic, and hence most common, chords and structures are used. Melodic and rhythmic material will be relatively simple. Expectations of dynamics, articulation and phrasing are limited to the most basic types and to occasional use. The repertoire of scales and chords in Component 1 is limited to the least demanding examples. Technical accomplishment is a more important element of assessment than is musicality, and expectations of communication are limited.

Grades 3-4

The musical material selected for these grades, and hence the standard of performance expected, is of a more demanding nature. The number of chords and structures that may be used is increased. Melodic and rhythmic material will be more complex than earlier grades. Expectations of dynamics, articulation and phrasing will extend to a wider variety of type and degree of use. The repertoire of scales, arpeggios and chords in Component 1 is expanded in number, and includes more taxing examples. Musicality is an increasingly important element of assessment in relation to technical accomplishment, and expectations of communication are higher.

Grade 5

The musical material selected for Grade 5 is of a significantly more demanding nature than for previous grades; it is the first grade where one might expect to encounter a standard of performance which might conceivably be suitable for a professional concert. The number of chords and structures which may be used extends to all but the most unusual and unlikely examples. Melodic and rhythmic material will include a moderate degree of complexity. It is expected that dynamics, articulation and phrasing will be varied and will often demonstrate a degree of subtlety. The repertoire of scales, arpeggios and chords in Component 1 is expanded in number to include more taxing examples. Musicality is judged to be an extremely important element of assessment, and expectations of communication are higher.

Grades 6-7

The musical material selected for these grades, and hence the standard of performance expected, may be described as being at the technically less demanding end of the continuum of professional repertoire. The number of chords and structures that may be used extends to the full range of possibilities. Melodic and rhythmic material will include a significant degree of complexity. It is expected that the performances will include passages where dynamics, articulation and phrasing demonstrate considerable dexterity and flexibility. The repertoire of scales, arpeggios and chords in Component 1 is expanded in number to include a large number of types and fingerboard positions. Musicality is judged to be almost as important as technical accomplishment in the assessment, and the candidate is expected to communicate with an emerging sense of musical personality.

Grade 8

The musical material selected for this grade, and hence the standard of performance expected, may be described as being technically some way inside the continuum of professional repertoire. The number of chords and structures that may be used extends to the full range of commonly occurring possibilities. Melodic and rhythmic material should include a significant degree of complexity. It is expected that the demands of dynamics, articulation and phrasing will be consistent and considerable. The repertoire of scales, arpeggios and chords in Component 1 is expanded in number to comprise an extremely wide range of type, requiring different fingerboard positions and exploiting the full range of the instrument. Musicality is judged to be almost as important as technical accomplishment in the assessment, and the candidate is expected to communicate with an emerging or clear sense of musical personality.

3. Assessment

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

3.1 Assessment objectives

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

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

3.2 Coverage of the assessment domains

	Technical Accomplishment	Musicality	Musical Knowledge	Communication
Fingerboard Knowledge	✓	✓	✓	
Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓
Musical Knowledge			✓	✓
Accompaniment	✓	✓	✓	✓
Aural Assessment		✓	✓	✓

3.3 Approximate weightings for assessment domains

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Initial	60	10	23	7
Preliminary	53	9	31	7
Grades 1-2	46	8	39	7
Grade 3-5	39	11	39	11
Grades 6-8	32	15	39	14

3.4 How marks are awarded during the examination

Component 1: Fingerboard Knowledge

The examiner will consider the performance of the requested scales, arpeggios and chords and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domains	Approximate weightings
Technical Accomplishment: fingerboard accuracy, fluency, dexterity, appropriate and even tempo, fingerboard positions, clarity, prompt response to examiner's instruction.	75%
Musicality: musical shape, phrasing.	10%
Musical Knowledge: pitch content of specified scales, arpeggios and chords.	15%

Component 2: Performance

The examiner will consider the performance of the selected studies and/or pieces and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domains	Approximate weightings		
	Initial Prelim. Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8
Technical Accomplishment: accuracy of pitch and rhythm, and the ability to manipulate the instrument with respect to fluency, articulation, dexterity, tempo, dynamics, clarity, rhythmic invention.	55%	45%	35%
Musicality: the ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions, resulting in a sense of individual interpretative skill, so that the music is performed in a manner reflecting a degree of sensitivity and empathy, and an emerging musical personality; the ability to play with a sense of stylistic awareness.	10%	15%	20%
Musical Knowledge: an understanding of the notation occurring in the repertoire; evidence of a sense of established performance practice and an understanding of the stylistic content.	25%	25%	25%
Communication: the ability to engage the listener, and to communicate a sense of style and personality.	10%	15%	20%

Component 3: Musical Knowledge

The examiner will consider the candidate's responses to the questions, and will award a mark taking into account the following:

Assessment Domain	Weighting
Musical Knowledge: A thorough understanding of all aspects of the specified topics.	100%

Component 4: Accompaniment

The examiner will consider the performance of the chord sequence as an accompaniment, and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domains	Approximate weightings		
	Grades 1-2	Grades 3-5	Grades 6-8
Technical Accomplishment: the ability to manipulate the instrument with respect to accuracy, fluency, articulation, dexterity, tempo, dynamics, clarity, rhythmic invention.	55%	45%	35%
Musicality: the ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions, resulting in a sense of individual interpretative skill, so that the music is performed in a manner reflecting a degree of sensitivity and empathy, and an emerging musical personality; the ability to play with a sense of stylistic awareness.	10%	15%	20%
Musical Knowledge: an understanding of the chord symbols, dynamics and other interpretative signs; evidence of a sense of established performance practice.	25%	25%	25%
Communication: the ability to engage the listener, and to communicate a sense of style and personality.	10%	15%	20%

Component 5 : Aural Assessment

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

Assessment Domain	Weighting
Musical Knowledge: the ability to discriminate aurally a variety of musical elements and parameters, such as pitch, rhythm and harmony.	100%

3.5 Mark allocation by assessment domain & examination component

Initial Stage. The approximate weightings of the Assessment Domains are as follows:

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Fingerboard Knowledge	75	10	15	-
Performance	55	10	25	10

Preliminary Grade. The approximate weightings of the Assessment Domains are as follows:

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Fingerboard Knowledge	75	10	15	-
Performance	55	10	25	10
Aural Assessment	-	-	100	-

Grades 1-2. The approximate weightings of the Assessment Domains are as follows:

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Fingerboard Knowledge	75	10	15	-
Performance	55	10	25	10
Musical Knowledge	-	-	100	-
Accompaniment	55	10	25	10
Aural Assessment	-	-	100	-

Grades 3-5. The approximate weightings of the Assessment Domains are as follows:

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Fingerboard Knowledge	75	10	15	-
Performance	45	15	25	15
Musical Knowledge	-	-	100	-
Accompaniment	45	15	25	15
Aural Assessment	-	-	100	-

Grades 6-8. The approximate weightings of the Assessment Domains are as follows:

	Technical Accomplishment (%)	Musicality (%)	Musical Knowledge (%)	Communication (%)
Fingerboard Knowledge	75	10	15	-
Performance	35	20	25	20
Musical Knowledge	-	-	100	-
Accompaniment	35	20	25	20
Aural Assessment	-	-	100	-

4. Awarding and reporting

4.1 Issue of results

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

4.2 Repeats of examinations

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

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

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

Distinction (85-100%)

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

Merit (75-84.5%)

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

Pass (65-74.5%)

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

Below pass, upper level (55-64.5%)

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

Below pass, lower level (0-54.5%)

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

4.4 Attainment band descriptions

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

Component 1: Fingerboard Knowledge

Initial Stage – Grade 5:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- An accurate presentation of all, or nearly all, the requirements, played with clarity and even timing. Promptly presented and performed with appropriate fluency.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Mostly accurate, clear and even, but with occasional lapses in any one of these. Mostly promptly presented and reasonably fluent.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- A reasonable attempt, but with some inaccuracies. Continuity affected by errors and restarts in places. Occasional lapses in clarity, promptness of presentation and fluency.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Containing restarts and errors, scales/arpeggios performed at a variable and inappropriate tempo, but showing the potential to pass. Limited level of clarity and hesitations in presenting requirements.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Occasionally creditable moments, but many restarts and errors so that fluency is almost completely lacking. Very limited clarity. Unable to maintain an even tempo with the scales and arpeggios.

Grades 6–8:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- An accurate, fluent and confident presentation of all, or nearly all, the requirements, played with clarity and even timing.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Prompt responses; mostly accurate, clear and even, but with occasional lapses in any one of these factors. Occasional lack of assurance, fluency or clarity in comparison with Distinction.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Evidence of a logical approach, but with some inaccuracies. Inconsistent continuity affected by some errors and restarts. Inappropriate or inconsistent tempo. Occasional lapses in clarity and promptness of presentation.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Containing restarts and errors, scales/arpeggios performed at a variable and inappropriate tempo, but showing the potential to pass. Presentations lacking clarity and hesitations in presenting requirements.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Occasionally creditable moments, but many restarts and errors so that fluency is almost completely lacking. Very limited clarity. Unable to maintain an even tempo with the scales and arpeggios.

Component 2: Performance

Initial Stage – Grade 5:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- A high level of technical accomplishment, demonstrating accuracy and fluency, appropriate to the repertoire performed. Evidence of excellent musicality and interpretative ideas as the grades progress. A confident and assured performance. A secure understanding of the musical notation/tablatore used should be evident. As the grades progress, the performance should display increasingly convincing evidence of stylistic awareness and an increasing degree of expressive qualities. A clear ability to engage the listener in the performance.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- An ability to cope well with the technical demands of the music. Evidence of appropriate musicality and interpretative ideas as the grades progress. A confident performance. A mostly secure understanding of the musical notation/tablatore used should be evident. As the grades progress, some stylistic awareness and expression should be evident. Some ability to engage the listener in the performance.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Fairly accurate, reasonably fluent, but occasionally hesitant. There is some evidence of appropriate musicality and interpretative ideas. A reasonably confident performance. Significant evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. As the grades progress, the beginnings of stylistic awareness and expression should become apparent. A basic ability to engage the listener in the performance.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Some correct playing, but a degree of discontinuity in the performance, accompanied by technical inaccuracies. Fluency and clarity need more work in order to be of an acceptable standard. Nevertheless, some signs that a sense of musicality and interpretation is potentially attainable. Evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. Stylistic awareness and expression are not clearly communicated.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- There may be some correct playing, but a proportionally greater number of inaccuracies, and a lack of continuity which compromises the sense of performance. Fluency and clarity are well below an acceptable standard. Ideas of interpretation and musicality are not clearly communicated. Some evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. Little evidence of stylistic awareness and expression.

Grades 6–8:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- A high level of technical accomplishment, demonstrating accuracy and fluency, appropriate to the repertoire performed. A mature sense of musical style, and an ability to take charge of expressive elements in the music. A confident and assured performance. A secure understanding of the musical notation/tablature used should be evident. At this level, performers should communicate a sense of individual interpretative skill, in relation to the substance of the music. A clear ability to engage the listener fully in the performance.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- An ability to cope well with the technical demands of the music. A confident performance. A secure understanding of the musical notation/tablature used should be evident. At this level, performers should communicate some sense of individual interpretative skill, in relation to the substance of the music. An ability to engage the listener in the performance.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Fairly accurate, reasonably fluent, but occasionally hesitant. There is some evidence of appropriate musicality. A reasonably confident performance. Evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. Performers should communicate something of the substance of the music. There is a basic ability to engage the listener in the performance.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Some accurate and musical playing, but compromised by discontinuity in the performance and technical inaccuracies. Nevertheless, some signs that a sense of musicality is potentially attainable. Evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. A basic, but limited, communication of the substance of the music. Little evidence of an ability to engage the listener in performance.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing, and a lack of continuity which jeopardises the sense of performance. Musicality is not clearly evident in the playing. Some evidence of an understanding of the musical notation/tablature used. Little communication of the substance of the music. Very limited, or no, ability to engage the listener in performance.

Component 3: Musical Knowledge

Grade 1–5:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- Confident responses, accurate and well communicated.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Generally accurate, but a little hesitant in response.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Fairly accurate, but limited responses not showing genuine understanding.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Various inaccuracies and significant hesitancy, but showing some potential of attaining a pass at this level.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Numerous inaccuracies suggesting that areas of the syllabus specifications have not been covered or understood.

Grades 6–8:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- Confident and informative responses, accurate and well communicated.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Generally accurate responses, but a little cautious and not always totally assured in terms of musical knowledge.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Fairly accurate, but limited responses which sometimes needed prompting.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- Lacking in confidence with various inaccuracies and significant hesitancy, but showing some potential of attaining a pass at this level.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Numerous inaccuracies, with significant hesitancy, suggesting that areas of the syllabus specifications have not been covered or understood.

Component 4: Accompaniment

Grade 1–5:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- A clear ability to cope well with the technical demands of the music: a good level of accuracy, with fluent chord changes. Ability, as the grades progress, to show effective musical instincts via the use of inventive playing. Generally secure clarity.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Ability to play fluently and generally continuously, and to cope with the technical demands of the music. An acceptable standard of clarity. As grades progress, the beginnings of inventiveness should become evident.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Fairly accurate, reasonably fluent and continuous, but occasionally hesitant. Clarity of a generally acceptable standard. Limited interpretation and inventiveness.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- A discontinuity in the performance, accompanied by inaccuracies in chords and lapses in following the chord chart. Clarity and invention very limited. Nevertheless, some signs that technical command is potentially attainable.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Inaccuracies proportionately greater than correct playing, and a lack of continuity which jeopardises the sense of performance. Lack of clarity and invention.

Grades 6–8:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- A confident and assured performance which demonstrates a high level of technical ability along with a mature sense of musical style. An ability to demonstrate harmonic development and empathy with the melody. A sense of individuality during the performance in which all musical elements are confidently articulated. Secure clarity, accuracy, timing and fluency.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Fluent playing, with a fairly secure command over the technical requirements of the music. Some expressiveness, invention and empathy with the melody. Reasonably secure level of clarity.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Despite some errors, a reasonably accurate, fluent and continuous performance, showing the ability to cope with most of the technical demands, but revealing only limited musical invention, expression and empathy with the melody. Clarity of a generally acceptable standard.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- A poor level of fluency and timing, accompanied by inaccuracies in chords and lapses in following the chord chart. Clarity and invention limited. Nevertheless, showing some potential of attaining a pass at this level.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Showing significant weakness in coping with the main demands of the music, and little sign of expressive interpretation. Very limited level of clarity.

Component 5: Aural Assessment

Preliminary – Grade 5:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- Demonstrating secure aural awareness through prompt and consistently accurate, or mostly accurate, responses.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Accuracy in most of the tests, but with one or more incorrect responses.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Ability to respond sufficiently accurately in enough of the tests to achieve the pass mark.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- A variety of errors in responses, but showing some potential of attaining a pass at this level.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Most or all of the responses are inaccurate.

Grades 6–8:

DISTINCTION (85% – 100%):

- Accurate or mainly accurate responses, demonstrating a keen sense of aural perception and the ability to articulate the answers.

MERIT (75% – 84.5%):

- Accuracy in some of the tests, but with one or more incorrect responses.

PASS (65% – 74.5%):

- Ability to respond sufficiently accurately in enough of the tests to achieve the pass mark.

BELOW PASS – UPPER LEVEL (55% – 64.5%):

- A variety of errors in responses, but showing some potential of attaining a pass at this level.

BELOW PASS – LOWER LEVEL (below 55%):

- Most or all of the responses are inaccurate.

5. Regulations and information

1. **Validity of syllabus:** This syllabus is valid from 1 January 2008 until 31 December 2016.
2. **Examination dates:** Practical examinations take place throughout the year according to location. In the UK, practical examinations are held three times a year: Spring (March/April), Summer (June/July) and Winter (November/December). Overseas candidates should contact their RGT representative for details of examination dates.
3. **Entry procedure:** Closing dates for entry, for each examination session, are listed on the examination fee lists. Overseas candidates should consult their national RGT representative for the closing dates. Please note that, while every effort will be made to accommodate requests for practical exam dates, no guarantee can be made that such requests will be met. Examination entries must be submitted to RGT head office either using an original Registry of Guitar Tutors entry form or via the RGT website using the individual entry code printed within each examination handbook. Special forms are available from RGT for 'siblings' and 're-entry'.
4. **Late entries:** These may be accepted up to seven days after the last date of entry. Each entry must be accompanied by the current late fee for each candidate. No entry will be accepted if it is received at a later date.
5. **Conditions of entry:** The right to refuse, postpone or cancel the entry of any candidate is reserved. Entries are accepted subject to the regulations stated in this syllabus. Entry for examination constitutes an agreement on the part of the candidate to abide by the regulations.
6. **Fees:** A table of UK examination fees is printed each year. Overseas fees are obtainable from the regional RGT representative. Cheques, bankers' drafts, etc. must be made payable to RGT. Fees cannot be refunded, nor entries postponed to a later examination session. Candidates not attending examinations for which they have entered, unless for a reason covered under the Special Considerations policy (see *Regulation 23*), will forfeit their fees.
7. **Substitutions:** Only candidates officially entered will be accepted for examination. Substitution of a candidate in place of a candidate originally entered will not be allowed.
8. **Transfers:** Transfer of candidates from one centre to another will not be considered unless there are exceptional circumstances which have been approved prior to the transfer by RGT *in writing*. An administration charge will be made.
9. **Examination appointments:** An Attendance Notice detailing the date, time and venue of the examination will be issued to each candidate, via the teacher or the correspondence address on the entry form, not later than ten days before the date of the examination. This should be retained by the candidate, and handed to the examiner on the day of the examination. RGT should be informed immediately if there are any errors on the Attendance Notice. An incorrect grade or subject cannot be changed on the day of the exam, and spelling corrections will incur a fee if notified after the issue of the certificate. Candidates should arrive at the venue no later than 10 minutes before the scheduled time of the examination.
10. **Conditions at exam centres:** A quiet room will be provided. Every effort will be made to ensure that the candidate is not disturbed by outside noise. The room will be of sufficient size to enable candidates to perform effectively. A chair and music stand will be provided. A waiting area will be provided.
11. **Examination procedure:** The examination components will be conducted in the order shown in the syllabus.
12. **Admission to the examination room:** Practical examinations are conducted in closed conditions. No-one, apart from the candidate and the examiner(s), is allowed into the examination room *with the following exception*:
 - an approved person, such as a parent or teacher, or a language interpreter, where this concession has been granted prior to the examination as the result of a request for reasonable adjustments for a candidate with particular needs (see *Regulation 24*).
13. **Fingering:** Specified fingerings in RGT publications should be taken as suggested guidelines only. Alternative systematic and effective fingerings will be accepted by examiners, unless they adversely affect the musical result.
14. **Tuning:** Candidates may obtain assistance with tuning their instruments up to Grade 1. From Grade 2 onwards, candidates should tune their own instruments.
15. **Use of photocopies:** The use of photocopied music by candidates, unless authorised by the publisher or copyright holder, will not be permitted in the examination *with the following exceptions*:
 - (a) a photocopy of a page of a work for ease of performance due to a difficult page turn;
 - (b) a photocopy of a piece for the examiner's reference, provided the performer is using his or her own published edition;
 - (c) an enlarged or modified photocopy for candidates with particular needs, provided the original edition is also brought to the examination and presented to the examiner (see *Regulation 24*).

All such photocopies will be retained by the examiner, and destroyed at the end of the day's examinations. Compliance with copyright law is the responsibility of the candidate and failure to comply may lead to disqualification and no marks or certificate being awarded.

16. **Stopping candidates:** Examiners may, at their discretion, stop a candidate at any part of a practical examination if the candidate has exceeded the time allowed for that part of the examination.
17. **Exemptions:** No exemptions are allowed from any part of any examination. Where an examination component is not attempted, a mark of 0 will be awarded. However, where all elements of a component are at least attempted, a mark of at least 33% will be awarded for that component.
18. **Recording of examinations:** A random selection of examinations is recorded for purposes of archiving, standardisation and examiner training. RGT and LCM Examinations undertakes not to disseminate such recordings in any way whatsoever beyond these purposes. The recording equipment used is unobtrusive and does not affect the examination procedure. Such recordings may not be used or referred to at any stage in connection with any enquiry, appeal or complaint about the examination, either by the candidate or by RGT or LCM Examinations.
19. **Examination results and certificates:** A written report will be compiled for each examination. Candidates will be informed of the result of practical examinations as soon as possible, and not later than four weeks after the examination date, by post. Results cannot be issued over the telephone. Certificates for successful candidates are *normally* dispatched within eight weeks of the date of the examination. Replacements of lost or destroyed certificates can normally be provided by LCM Examinations, subject to proof of the result, the applicant's identity, and payment of the appropriate fee.
20. **Graded qualifications:** Certificates issued for graded examinations are not intended to imply that the holder is qualified to teach, nor do they give the holder the right to use any letters after his or her name.
21. **Enquiries and appeals:** Information about lodging enquiries and appeals against results is contained in the document *LCM Examinations Appeals Procedure*, available from LCM Examinations. Initial enquiries must be made in writing to RGT, enclosing a copy of the candidate's report sheet.
22. **Equal opportunities:** Entry for examinations is available, and assessment is carried out, on an equal and fair basis to all candidates, regardless of origin, status or background. The full policy is contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available on request from the LCM Examinations office.
23. **Special consideration (including absence through illness):** Candidates who are unable to take an examination at the scheduled time, for medical reasons, are invited to submit a signed doctor's letter indicating the reason, and accompanied by the Attendance notice, to the RGT office. The letter must be submitted within two weeks of the examination date, and must make clear that the candidate was incapacitated on the day of the scheduled examination. The candidate will then be permitted to re-enter for the same examination on payment of half the current fee. Candidates who are unwell on the day of the examination, but elect to take the exam nonetheless, will not be granted any special consideration in terms of assessment, and will not be eligible for a half-fee re-entry. Candidates who are unable to take an examination for compassionate reasons (eg. death of a relative) are also covered under this policy. The full policy is contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available on request from the LCM Examinations office.
24. **Reasonable adjustments (candidates with particular needs):** RGT and LCM Examinations are particularly sensitive to the requirements of candidates with particular needs, and encourage them to enter for examinations. There is a wide range of special procedures that can be put in place for such candidates. Full details and accompanying documentation **MUST** be included at the time of entry; examiners are not able to consider such documents if submitted for the first time on the day of the examination. Full details of this policy are contained in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments, and Special Consideration*, available on request from the LCM Examinations office.
25. **Language:** All examinations are conducted in English.
26. **Syllabus requirements and infringements:** It is the candidate's responsibility to obtain, and comply with, the current syllabus. Where candidates are entered for examinations by teachers, the teacher should ensure that candidates are entered in accordance with the current Examination Information Booklet and syllabus requirements. Where there are variations without prior agreement, marks may be adjusted or deducted, and in serious cases, candidates may be disqualified.
27. **Changes to syllabuses:** RGT and LCM Examinations follow a policy of consistent improvement and development and may, without notice, update regulations, Examination Information Booklets, syllabuses and other publications. Where alterations, additions and/or deletions to Examination Information Booklets and syllabuses take place, RGT and LCM Examinations cannot accept responsibility for informing candidates and teachers of such changes except through *Guitar Tutor* (the RGT magazine), *Forte* (the LCM Examinations newsletter) and the normal reprinting process.
28. **Availability of syllabuses:** A wide range of examinations and subjects is offered by LCM Examinations, across the full range of Music, and Drama & Communication. All syllabuses and exam information booklets are available free of charge from LCM Examinations, and from local representatives.