

ROCK EXAMS
& **POP** EXAMS

2012 SYLLABUS

Bass

Drums

Guitar

Keyboards

Vocals

Trinity College London (Trinity) is an awarding body recognised in the United Kingdom by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) in England, the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) and the Northern Ireland Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). Trinity's qualifications are recognised by these authorities within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Various arrangements are in place with governmental education authorities worldwide.

Trinity College London's Rock & Pop syllabus and supporting publications have been devised and produced in association with Faber Music and Peters Edition London.

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Introduction

Trinity's groundbreaking Rock & Pop exams for Bass, Drums, Guitar, Keyboards and Vocals provide an opportunity for rock and pop musicians to gain accredited qualifications through performing carefully chosen and arranged songs across the rock and pop genres.

This syllabus is valid for the duration of 2012, but please check the website regularly for any amendments or updates at www.trinityrock.com

These exams have been developed through a unique partnership with two of the world's leading music publishers: Faber Music and Peters Edition London.

Available from Initial to Grade 8, the exams are supported by 48 new books which provide essential support for the learner through:

- ✔ sheet music
- ✔ demo and backing tracks on CD
- ✔ background information on the songs
- ✔ performance hints and tips
- ✔ Technical focus
- ✔ support for Session skills

In addition there are many resources being developed online including song downloads, transpositions and additional repertoire. This is a growing resource which will expand the scope of the syllabus and provide support material for teachers and learners in the future; www.trinityrock.com/downloads

The exams are available internationally and entering for the exam is easy. Further details are available from the website together with information about the mark schemes and assessment criteria for the exams.

Performance is at the core of Trinity's Rock & Pop exams. Whether self-taught or taking lessons, learning for fun or heading for a career in the music industry, these exams will help musicians develop valuable playing skills and achieve their musical ambitions.

Nicholas Keyworth
Chief Examiner in Music

Range of qualifications

Trinity's Rock & Pop exams are part of a suite of qualifications offered by Trinity College London across a range of musical styles, instruments and disciplines:

QCF* Level	Solo Certificate	Group Certificate	Classical & Jazz	Rock & Pop	Theory & Written
7			FTCL Diploma		Diplomas for teachers and performers are available covering a range of musical styles
6			LTCL Diploma		
4			ATCL Diploma		
3	Advanced	Advanced	Grade 8	Grade 8	Grade 8
			Grade 7	Grade 7	Grade 7
			Grade 6	Grade 6	Grade 6
2	Intermediate	Intermediate	Grade 5	Grade 5	Grade 5
			Grade 4	Grade 4	Grade 4
1	Foundation	Foundation	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3
			Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2
			Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 1
Entry Level 3			Initial	Initial	n/a

* Qualifications and Credit Framework in England, Wales and Northern Ireland

Exams at a glance

For the Rock & Pop exam candidates will need to perform a set of **three Songs** and one of the **Session skills** assessments, either **Playback** or **Improvising**. Candidates can choose the order of the set list.

Exam structure

Component	Option	Pass mark	Maximum mark
Song 1	Choose a song from the relevant Trinity Rock & Pop book or from www.trinityrock.com/downloads	15	25
Song 2	Choose a different song from the book or from www.trinityrock.com/downloads or perform a song you have chosen yourself or perform a song you have composed yourself. For Song 2 you may choose to sing and play, e.g. by adding vocals to playing keyboards or adding a guitar accompaniment to your vocals.	15	25
Song 3	Choose one of the two Technical focus songs from the book, which cover three specific technical elements.	18	30
Session skills	Choose either Playback or Improvising .	12	20
	TOTAL	60	100

How the exams are marked

The marks for the Songs are made up of three assessment areas:

Assessment area	Criteria include the following elements:	Songs 1 & 2	Song 3 Technical focus
Fluency & Musical Detail	Sense of pulse, synchronisation with backing track, continuity, rhythm, notes, dynamics, phrasing, articulation	8	8
Technical Control	All instruments and Vocals: balance, tone, sound quality, co-ordination, expressive shaping of phrases, use of instrumental resources Bass & Guitar: bends, slides, vibrato, use of fx pedals and amp Drums: stick control, rudiments, posture, independence of hands and feet, use of the kit Keyboards: pedalling, fingering, use of function keys Vocals: breathing, diction, intonation, use of microphone	8	12
Communication & Style	Giving a confident performance, being musically engaged, feel and expression, communicating the musical mood and character, demonstrating stylistic awareness in ad libs, fills, improvised bars and solos	9	10
TOTAL		25	30

The marks for Song 3 are different because higher marks are awarded under Technical Control to reflect the three areas of **Technical focus**.

Trinity College London Rock & Pop exams are designed to encourage musical performances in which the candidate can demonstrate their own personal style and approach. This may involve some flexibility in the interpretation of the written notes, particularly at the higher grades, where consistent and stylish interpretation is encouraged. However, performances should not be simplified and musical integrity should always be maintained.

For further details on the assessment criteria go to www.trinityrock.com

How the exams are marked

Candidates choose one of the two **Session skills**. Each is marked out of 20:

Session skills

Component	Criteria	Total mark
Playback	How accurately and fluently the candidate performs the music	20
OR		
Improvising	How effectively the candidate creates an original response to a backing track	20

Pass bands

Pass band	Mark
Distinction	87-100
Merit	75-86
Pass	60-74
Below Pass 1	45-59
Below Pass 2	0-44

Further details of the marking criteria are available on the website www.trinityrock.com

About the exams

Entering for an exam

Exams can be taken at Trinity's international network of centres. Details of closing dates, fees, how to enter, and location of exam venues and centres are available on the website.

Special educational needs

Trinity welcomes applications from those with special educational needs. It is essential that these are notified at the time of entry by using the special form available online.

Taking the exam

When the exam timetables are prepared, candidates will be sent an appointment slip. This will confirm the details of the candidate, grade, and instrument together with the time and place of the exam.

Candidates should complete the details of the songs being performed, the order they will be performed, and indicate which of the two **Session skills** will be presented.

It is the candidate's responsibility to hand this completed appointment slip to the examiner at the start of the exam.

Examiners

Examiners are carefully recruited and trained to conduct the exams in a friendly and professional manner.

Assessments are made using the published criteria and examiners deliver the exams and carry out the assessment of the candidate's performances through a fair and standardised process.

Examiners invite candidates to perform their set list in their chosen order and administer their chosen **Session skills**. Examiners will write a report on the candidate's performance but will not be able to reveal the outcome of the assessment at this stage.

After the exam

Report forms will be released to teachers and candidates as soon as possible. The report form is a provisional result and may change following moderation.

Once the results have been processed by Trinity College London through rigorous checking and moderation, certificates are issued for all successful candidates.

The exam room

The exam room will be equipped with the following:

- ✔ amplifiers suitable for Bass, Guitar, Keyboards and Vocals
- ✔ CD player, speakers/sound system for backing tracks
- ✔ digital piano (contact centre for details)
- ✔ jack-to-jack and mic leads
- ✔ table, chairs and a music stand
- ✔ vocal microphone and adjustable microphone stand
- ✔ adjustable piano stool
- ✔ A good-quality drum kit which comprises:
 - snare drum with adjustable drum kit size stand
 - toms (three minimum): high/medium/low
 - bass drum (18–22")
 - hi-hat (12–14")
 - ride cymbal (18–22")
 - crash cymbal (14–18")

A mains power supply will be available at centres; candidates are responsible for the electrical safety of any of their own equipment used in their examination.

There will normally also be a warm-up room or area where candidates can prepare just before the exam.

Choosing songs

Song 1

Song 1 must be selected from the relevant Trinity Rock & Pop book (songs are also listed in this syllabus), or from www.trinityrock.com

Song 2

Song 2 must be selected from the relevant Trinity Rock & Pop book (songs are also listed in this syllabus), or from www.trinityrock.com. Alternatively, Song 2 can be a **self-chosen song**:

Self-chosen song

Candidates may perform a self-chosen song. This must conform to the parameters set out on the website in terms of length and level of difficulty. This could be:

- ✔ sheet music from a printed or online source
- ✔ an original song that the candidate has written
- ✔ a song that the candidate has arranged (cover version).

The song may:

- ✔ be unaccompanied
- ✔ have a backing track (must not include the solo part) – this may be self-created
- ✔ include (for singers) a live self-played accompaniment on any instrument
- ✔ include (for instrumentalists) added vocals performed live by the candidate.

Candidates must provide a (photo)copy of their chosen song for the examiner, with name and candidate number clearly shown. The examiner will retain this copy. Self-chosen songs may be presented as an original score, handwritten or computer generated in one of the following formats:

- ✔ a lead sheet with lyrics, chords and melody line
- ✔ a chord chart with lyrics
- ✔ a full score using conventional staff notation.

Song 3

Two of the songs in each of the Trinity Rock & Pop books are identified as **Technical focus** songs. One of these must be chosen for your Song 3. These songs are designed to develop technical skills. Each song has three technical elements specifically identified. Guidance on the preparation of these technical skills is included in the books. For the **Technical focus** song, higher marks will be awarded under Technical Control to reflect the increased emphasis on this area. Examiners will refer to the three technical elements in their comments.

If a candidate performs more than one song that has been designated as a **Technical focus** song, then they must select only one of these songs as Song 3.

All songs in the exam books and on the download site are available as printed music (using staff, tab or drum notation appropriate to the instrument or voice), demo recordings, and backing tracks.

Important

Songs listed may be subject to change for copyright reasons: candidates should refer to the website for the most up-to-date information:
www.trinityrock.com

Choosing songs

Repeats, expressive techniques and tempi

All songs should be prepared in full with all repeats, da capo and dal segno instructions and 1st and 2nd time bars observed. Candidates are encouraged to include a range of expressive techniques such as vibrato, slides/glissandi, tapping, grace notes, pitch bend, whammy bar, etc. appropriate to the style of the song, particularly in the higher grades. Candidates should observe terms showing tempo, character and style of the music.

Backing tracks

Backing tracks for self-chosen songs must be of good quality and presented on CD or other portable media, e.g. USB stick or MP3 player. These must not include the solo part.

Performing from memory

Candidates are free to perform any or all of their songs from memory.

Music and copies

It is essential that candidates bring an original copy, or an authorised download of the music being performed into the exam room. If an unauthorised copy is used Trinity may not award marks for that song. Original copies of self-chosen sheet music can be purchased or downloaded from music shops and publishers. Proof of purchase will be required for downloads. Allowances cannot be made for delays in obtaining printed music.

Copyright in a song

Points to remember:

- ✔ you can create a cover version of a song and perform it in an exam or other non-public performance
- ✔ you cannot record a cover version or make recordings available to others (by copying or uploading it to a website) without the appropriate licence
- ✔ you own the copyright of any songs you have written yourself

Further information is available on the website.

Session skills

Either **Playback** or **Improvising** must be selected for the exam. For further information on **Session skills**, the requirements for each grade and the assessment criteria visit www.trinityrock.com

Playback

If you choose Playback, you will be asked to perform some music you have not seen or heard before.

You will be given a song chart and have 30 seconds to study it or to try out any sections. The examiner will then play the recorded backing track. You should listen to the audio, copying what you hear; you can also read the music from the song chart.

You will hear a series of short melodic phrases or drum grooves and fills, and are required to repeat each of them straight back in turn. A count-in will be given at the beginning of the recording, and a backing rhythm will be played throughout.

In the exam you will have two chances to play along with the track:

- 🎧 first time – for practice
- 🎧 second time – for assessment.

No variation or improvisation is required – what is printed on the song chart/heard on the track should be copied as accurately as possible, including any details of phrasing, articulation and dynamics at higher grades.

Improvising

If you choose to improvise, you will be asked to improvise in a specified style over a backing track that you have not seen or heard before.

You will be given a chord chart and have 30 seconds to study it or to try out any sections. The examiner will then play the recorded backing track, which consists of a passage of music played on a loop.

You should improvise in the given style over the backing track, which will be played four times through before fading out. A count-in will be given at the beginning of the recording, and a backing rhythm will be played throughout. Guitar and Keyboards candidates can choose whether to play a lead melodic line, rhythmic chords, or a combination of the two.

In the exam you will have two chances to play along with the track:

- 🎧 first time – for practice
- 🎧 second time – for assessment.

Tuning and set-up

Up to and including Grade 5, somebody may assist with tuning and set-up. From Grade 6 onwards, candidates are expected to tune and set up equipment without assistance.

Types of instrument

For all Bass exams an electric bass guitar must be used.

In the exam room

Candidates can choose to play standing up or sitting down. The examiner will have all the backing tracks so the candidate's CD is only required as a back-up copy. At the beginning of the exam, the examiner will play the first few bars of the backing track of the first song as a sound check, and any adjustments to volume, set-up, etc. can be made before the exam begins.

What to bring to the exam

Essential

Bass candidates must bring:

- ✔ an original Trinity Rock & Pop book with the included CD, and/or authorised download(s) from the website
- ✔ the completed appointment slip
- ✔ their own bass guitar
- ✔ if performing a self-chosen song – the original score and one copy plus the backing track (if appropriate)

Optional

Bass candidates may bring:

- ✔ their own guitar lead(s)
- ✔ fx pedals/boxes/equalizers etc.
- ✔ their own amplifier and mains power lead
- ✔ any other equipment required for their performances
- ✔ a set of spare strings

Bass publications



Bass Initial

ISBN: 978-0-85736-227-8

Bass Grade 1

ISBN: 978-0-85736-228-5

Bass Grade 2

ISBN: 978-0-85736-229-2

Bass Grade 3

ISBN: 978-0-85736-230-8

Bass Grade 4

ISBN: 978-0-85736-231-5

Bass Grade 5

ISBN: 978-0-85736-232-2

Bass Grade 6

ISBN: 978-0-85736-233-9

Bass Grade 7

ISBN: 978-0-85736-234-6

Bass Grade 8

ISBN: 978-0-85736-235-3