

MTB Exams

Awards in Music Performance

(Graded Exams 1-8 plus Pre Grades)

Specification 2019

The qualification's objective,

MTB Exams Awards in Music Performance (Grades 1-8 plus Pre Grade Introductory and Pre Grade Higher) are intended to provide targets to enable candidates to develop their mastery of the technical and musical skills and knowledge required to play and perform on musical instruments or as a singer, from a very basic to advanced level.

With these qualifications, the Music Teachers' Board aim to increase accessibility to graded instrumental music exams by enabling professional instrumental music teachers to oversee and deliver the practical examination for their students. These graded instrumental and vocal music examinations are recorded and verified by the teacher, submitted online and marked by an MTB Exams specialist examiner. This is designed to remove some of the barriers candidates and teachers sometimes encounter when taking graded music examinations. The nature of delivery of our qualifications means that our qualifications are available to candidates of any age, in any location worldwide at any time, without the need to enter a long time in advance or adhere to visiting examiner dates or limited exam periods. We also have a Reasonable Adjustments Policy (available via our website) to further maximise accessibility to our qualifications.

Regulation

MTB Exams (The Music Teachers' Board) graded awards in Music Performance are regulated in England by Ofqual (The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation).

Recognition by Ofqual is a mark of quality – it shows that as a board we meet their rules and requirements and are able to combine expertise in assessment with effective operational delivery. In turn, this provides assurance that the learners who have taken our Ofqual regulated qualifications have the required level of knowledge and skills in the relevant subject area.

Who may deliver our qualifications

These qualifications are designed to enable professional instrumental, vocal and music teachers to oversee and deliver graded practical examination for their students. There is no visiting examiner and the teacher may record the examination during the course of a candidate's normal lesson or at a separate time if preferred.

This means that only professional music teachers or organisations employing professional music teachers (such as schools or music services) may register to oversee, record and submit exams for marking. We define a professional instrumental or vocal teacher as someone who earns all or part of their income from either instrumental, vocal or classroom music teaching. Organisations such as schools or music services may register as a centre on behalf of their staff, or teachers may register as an individual instrumental/vocal teacher. When registering as an individual instrumental/vocal teacher you will be required to provide a referee who can confirm your professional status. This may be a current or previous

employer or professional colleague for example. They will only be contacted in order to confirm you are a professional instrumental or vocal teacher and will not be asked to provide a written reference for you or any other comment on your teaching.

Teachers delivering our qualifications must adhere to our rules, regulations and policies which are available to view on our website.

The Specification

This specification provides the information required to help Teachers, Centres, Parents and Candidates to prepare for our qualifications and facilitate their delivery. It should be read along with the syllabuses which are available via the website www.mtbexams.com

Specification Review

The specification is valid from March 2019 and will be reviewed in October 2019. The specification may be updated from time to time and the most recent version will be available at all times from www.mtbexams.com

The qualifications we offer are as follows:

| Qualification Number | Qualification Title |
|----------------------|---|
| 603/4179/8 | MTB Entry Level Award in Music Performance – Pre Grade Introductory |
| 603/4178/6 | MTB Entry Level Award in Music Performance – Pre Grade Higher |
| 603/4177/4 | MTB Level 1 Award in Music Performance – Grade 1 |
| 603/4176/2 | MTB Level 1 Award in Music Performance – Grade 2 |
| 603/4167/1 | MTB Level 1 Award in Music Performance – Grade 3 |
| 603/4166/X | MTB Level 2 Award in Music Performance – Grade 4 |
| 603/4165/8 | MTB Level 2 Award in Music Performance – Grade 5 |
| 603/3976/7 | MTB Level 3 Award in Music Performance – Grade 6 |
| 603/3977/9 | MTB Level 3 Award in Music Performance – Grade 7 |
| 603/3978/0 | MTB Level 3 Award in Music Performance – Grade 8 |

The Guided Learning Hours (GLH), Total Qualification Time (TQT) and Credits for each grade are as follows:

| Grade | GLH | TQT | Credit Value |
|------------------------|-----|-----|--------------|
| Pre Grade Introductory | 6 | 20 | 2 |
| Pre Grade Higher | 12 | 40 | 4 |
| Grade 1 | 12 | 60 | 6 |
| Grade 2 | 18 | 90 | 9 |
| Grade 3 | 18 | 120 | 12 |
| Grade 4 | 24 | 150 | 15 |
| Grade 5 | 24 | 180 | 18 |
| Grade 6 | 36 | 220 | 22 |
| Grade 7 | 48 | 270 | 27 |
| Grade 8 | 54 | 320 | 32 |

Specialisations

These qualifications allow candidates to specialise in the following:

Flute, Oboe, Clarinet, Bassoon, Alto Saxophone, Tenor Saxophone, Recorder, Trumpet, Cornet, Eb Tenor Horn, French Horn, Euphonium, Baritone, Soprano Trombone, Trombone, Violin, Viola, Cello, Double Bass, Piano, Classical Guitar, Plectrum Guitar, Keyboard, Ukulele, Drum kit, singing – However, not every specialisation is available at all grades. Please see the syllabus for each specialisation for details.

What will be assessed

The assessment has three sections all of which are assessed separately.

1. **Recital** – This is the performance of compositions or arrangements and the skills being assessed here are the ability to play the correct notes and rhythms and the tempo and intonation. Also, the understanding of the appropriate stylistic expectations of the music, expressive elements such as dynamics and phrasing plus any relevant technical ability required to successfully convey the music to an audience such as tone quality, breath control, bow control, shifts across strings, clarity and quality of articulation, other particular techniques relevant to the piece being performed, staccato, legato, accents, technical control of passagework etc.
2. **Technical Section** – This assesses the development of particular techniques relevant to the specialisation such as tone, articulation, fingering, bowing patterns, playing patterns in a variety of keys and modes, slurring etc through exercises specifically designed to test these elements as well as scales and arpeggios and chords as appropriate to the chosen specialisation.
3. **Reading & Listening skills** – This assesses for the reading skills: the understanding of and ability to read rhythms in a variety of time signatures, through prepared clapping of rhythmic patterns against a regular pulse at a variety of tempi including crotchets, quavers, semiquavers, minims and semibreves plus dotted rhythms, swung rhythms, triplet, quintuplet and changing time signatures and for the listening skills: performance of a duet or prepared sung aural tests including singing back notes, melodies, notes from chords and intervals plus scales arpeggios and modes as well as sight singing melodic patterns and clapping back rhythmic patterns.

The exact content of the syllabus is available on the website www.mtbexams.com 'syllabus' page and is tailored to the specialisation (e.g. violin, trumpet, piano etc) of the candidate. Although therefore, the three sections above are common to all specialisations, the exact content of each section may vary between the syllabuses as appropriate for each specialisation.

There are no unprepared elements (such as unprepared sight reading or aural tests) to these MTB Exams' qualifications. Candidates are expected to practice **all** elements to be presented in the assessment (included the published reading and listening skills) as part of their preparation for taking the examination.

The method of assessment

Assessment is through a recorded practical examination (audio recording), delivered by the teacher/assessor. The process for this is as follows:

MTB Exams are recorded and overseen by the teacher and so the examination can be taken at any time to suit both teacher and pupil. Candidates will need an accompanist (where relevant) and it is acceptable for the teacher to accompany their own student if they would like to do so or for pre-recorded accompaniments to be used. Teachers will also need a means to record the examination.

Before beginning the assessment, the teacher should check they have the following:

- Audio recording equipment
- List of the scales (if relevant)
- Any music needed in order to deliver the reading & listening skills section of the assessment (if relevant)

The above paperwork can be downloaded from the MTB Exams website:

www.mtbexams.com

1. Start the recording equipment and state clearly: candidate name, instrument, grade, teacher/assessor's name and the exam reference number (see top of the assessment sheet)
2. Ask the candidate to complete each element of the assessment in turn – they may be performed in any order. Each element is listed on the Front Cover as below – Tick each element once it has been completed (or write N/A if not relevant to the assessment)

Ask the **candidate** to:

- Announce the title and perform Piece 1
- Announce the title and perform Piece 2
- Announce the title and perform Piece 3/study
- Perform **all** of the scales/arpeggios etc. for this grade
- Perform the technical exercises required for this grade
- Perform the reading skills for this grade
- Perform the listening skills for this grade

3. Once all elements have been completed, turn off the recording equipment. (The recording equipment should be left running throughout and should not be turned off at any point during the assessment)

4. Candidate signs and dates the Front Cover form where indicated

5. Teacher/assessor adds their name and signs and dates the form where indicated

6. To submit the exam: upload and send the recording and signed assessment/verification sheet to MTB Exams by clicking on 'submit an exam' and following the instructions.

The criteria against which learners' levels of attainment will be measured

The following criteria are assessed to determine the level of attainment at each grade:

The exact areas of assessment and criteria are listed in the table below. The level of assessment at each grade is outlined here:

RQF Entry Level – Pre Grades Introductory & Higher:

Requires performance of very elementary repertoire with very simple technical and musical demands. Also, technical exercises demonstrating elementary control of the very basic

techniques associated with their specialisation (e.g. violin, piano etc) and an understanding of very basic reading of rhythm, and aural awareness.

RQF Level 1 – Grades 1-3

Requires performance of simple repertoire with basic technical and musical demands. Also, technical exercises demonstrating basic control of a range of simple techniques associated with their specialisation (e.g. violin, piano etc) and an understanding of simple reading of rhythm, and aural awareness.

RQF Level 2 – Grades 4&5

Requires performance of straightforward repertoire with straightforward intermediate technical and musical demands. Also, technical exercises demonstrating a moderate, straightforward level of control of most techniques associated with their specialisation (e.g. violin, piano etc) and an understanding of straightforward reading of rhythms of a moderate difficulty, and a moderate level of aural awareness in straightforward situations.

RQF Level 3 – Grades 6-8

Requires performance of complex repertoire with sophisticated complex technical and musical demands. Also, technical exercises demonstrating an advanced level of control of the full range of techniques including complex techniques associated with their specialisation (e.g. violin, piano etc) and an understanding of complex reading of rhythm, and a high degree of aural awareness.

| What is being assessed | Criteria assessed | Criteria assessed | Criteria assessed |
|---|--|---|---|
| <u>Recital; Pieces</u> Categories being assessed: Accuracy, expression and technique | Accuracy – Control of: Rhythm, tempo, intonation and pitch | Expression Appropriate use of: phrasing, dynamics, musicality, stylistic understanding | Technique Correct demonstration of: breath control, tone quality, articulation, string crossing, bow control, pedaling etc. plus any particular technical aspects relevant to the successful performance of the piece being assessed |
| Technical section | | | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Study Accuracy and Technique | Accuracy – Control of: Rhythm, intonation, pitch, slurs, articulation, dynamics etc. as relevant. | | Technique Correct demonstration of: breath control, tone quality, articulation, string crossing, bow control, pedalling etc. plus any particular technical aspects relevant to the successful performance of the piece being assessed |
| Scales An overall mark | Accuracy of pitch and intonation | Fluency this includes hesitations and appropriate tempo/rhythm | |
| Technical exercises | Overall impression of all relevant factors such as accuracy of pitch, rhythm, intonation, dynamic control, tempo, articulation and any other relevant technical elements required for the successful performance of the exercises being presented. | | |
| Reading & Listening | | | |
| Reading skills plus either aural tests or duet | Reading skills Rhythmic accuracy and whether it is in time with the given pulse | Listening skills Aural tests: Accuracy of responses in terms of pitch, rhythm and intonation | Listening skills - Duet: Assessment of: Rhythm, balance, intonation, ensemble, awareness of and response to the other part, accuracy. |

Levels of attainment.

The examination is marked out of 100 with a pass mark of 60

Levels of attainment are categorised as follows:

87-100 Distinction

75-86 Merit

60-74 Pass

45-59 Blue

0-45 White

Breakdown of mark allocation

Because the specific skills vary as appropriate to the specialisation (e.g. violin/piano etc) the mark scheme has slight variations to take account of this. The syllabus clearly explains the mark allocation per element of the examination for each specialisation but the full list of mark schemes are also shown below.

Pre Grades (except ukulele)

| Exam element | Maximum mark available |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Piece 1 | 25 |
| Piece 2 | 25 |
| Piece 3 | 25 |
| Technical section | 25 |
| Total | 100 |

Grades 1-8

| Exam element | Maximum mark available wind/brass/strings |
|----------------------------|---|
| Piece 1 | 25 |
| Piece 2 | 25 |
| Piece 3 | 15 |
| Technical Exercises | 10 |
| Scales | 10 |
| Reading & Listening Skills | 15 |
| Total | 100 |

| Exam element | Maximum mark available Ukulele (including pre-grades) |
|-------------------------|---|
| Piece 1 | 25 |
| Piece 2 | 25 |
| Piece 3 (chord study) | 15 |
| Chord knowledge | 10 |
| Scales | 10 |
| Ensemble playing (duet) | 15 |
| Total | 100 |

| Exam element | Maximum mark available Piano & Guitar |
|------------------------------|---|
| Piece 1 | 20 |
| Piece 2 | 20 |
| Piece 3 | 20 |
| Technical Exercises & Scales | 25 |
| Reading & Listening Skills | 15 |
| Total | 100 |

| Exam element | Maximum mark available Singing |
|--------------------|--|
| Piece 1 | 20 |
| Piece 2 | 20 |
| Piece 3 | 20 |
| Technical Exercise | 15 |
| Aural | 10 |
| Reading Skills | 15 |
| Total | 100 |

| Exam element | Maximum mark available Drumkit |
|----------------------------|--|
| Piece 1 | 20 |
| Piece 2 | 20 |
| Piece 3 | 20 |
| Technical Exercises | 10 |
| Rudimental studies | 10 |
| Reading & Listening Skills | 20 |
| Total | 100 |

| Exam element | Maximum mark available Keyboard |
|----------------------------|---|
| Piece 1 | 20 |
| Piece 2 | 20 |
| Piece 3 | 20 |
| Technical Exercises | 10 |
| Scales & chords | 10 |
| Reading & Listening Skills | 20 |
| Total | 100 |

Equipment required to deliver the qualification

In delivering the assessment the teacher will make an unedited audio recording of the whole assessment. Any device which will produce this may be used to make the recording. The quality of recording needs to be of sufficient quality, volume and clarity for it to be easily marked by our examiners. The recording is uploaded by the teacher/centre as a digital

file via the submission on our website using the 'submit an exam' page. It should ideally be presented as an mp3 or wav file although other file types are acceptable provided the board are able to access it for marking. If a file type proves to be inaccessible, a request for the recording to be sent as an mp3 or wav file will be sent to the centre/assessor

Supporting materials

All printed materials required or supplied to assist in the delivery of the assessment such as reading & listening scales etc. can be found on the website www.mtbeams.com 'syllabus' pages

Submitting exams for marking

The recording plus the signed verification form should be uploaded using the 'submit an exam' page on the website www.mtbexams.com

Results

All exams submitted are marked by a specialist MTB Exams' examiner. By this we mean that only an examiner who plays or teaches the instrument played by the candidate will mark an exam for that instrument. E.g. a trombone specialist will mark a trombone exam, a violin specialist a violin exam etc.

The result will be emailed to the teacher/centre usually within 2 weeks of submission and a certificate posted to the address supplied by the teacher/centre after confirmation by the exam board. The list of dates for certification is based on the month of submission of the exam and is published on the website. These dates are the date on which the certificates are posted and receipt may therefore vary depending on the speed of the postage delivery service.

Syllabus guidelines

All repeats, DC and DS marks should be observed (unless the syllabus specifies otherwise)

For the recital section of the exam, the candidate should introduce each piece they are about to perform by stating its title.

The candidate should be asked to play **all** of the scales and arpeggios set on the syllabus during the exam.

The candidate should be asked to play all of the required technical exercises (as set on the syllabus) during the exam.

The teacher/assessor may help the candidate tune up before the exam begins. This should be done before starting the recording.

The composer's dynamics, phrasing etc should be observed in the pieces presented for the recital section of the exam. However, any editorial markings may be altered to allow for a personal interpretation.

The study (part of the technical section for many instruments) should be performed exactly as marked in the music with no changes to the tempo, dynamics, articulation, phrasing etc.

When delivering the reading skills exercises, please state which exercise the candidate is about to attempt.

Following the candidate's response to each element of the sung aural tests (when this option is selected) the teacher/assessor should immediately play the correct answer.

The teacher/assessor is encouraged to speak to the candidate during the exam to put them at ease or to help them understand what is being requested.

The recording should not be turned off at any point during the exam until all elements of the assessment have been completed.

Candidates are encouraged to practice the sung aural tests or duet (listening skills) and reading skills tests as part of their preparation prior to taking the examination (where relevant).

For the duet option (if selected), the other part (i.e. not the candidate) may be performed on any instrument from the same family (wind/brass/strings etc) and octave transpositions made as necessary. It may also be played by the teacher, another pupil or any suitable person.

Malpractice and maladministration

The integrity of our qualifications depends on the avoidance of any malpractice or maladministration by the teachers and candidates who use them and It is therefore of vital importance that no attempt is made to compromise the process in any way. We therefore take any form of malpractice or maladministration very seriously.

- Malpractice is defined as any act which compromises or is an attempt to compromise the assessment process, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate. This also includes any act which damages our reputation or credibility as an awarding organisation.
- Maladministration is defined as any act which breaches the regulations through a mismanagement of administrative processes, particularly where such a breach could compromise the integrity of a qualification or assessment.

Our 'Malpractice and Maladministration Policy' and 'Sanctions Policy' are available on our website.

Customer Services

If you require clarification of any aspect of our exams or their delivery, please contact us via the 'contact us' page on the website www.mtbexams.com