

rockschool®



YAMAHA

DRUM ENCOUNTERS

DRUM ENCOUNTERS SYLLABUS SPECIFICATION
2019 Edition





Yamaha Drum Encounters

Syllabus Guide & Handbook

September 2019

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Preface

INTRODUCTION

This syllabus guide is designed to give teachers, learners and candidates practical information on the graded examinations run by Rockschool.

This Syllabus Guide covers the following examinations:
Graded Examinations Debut – Grade 8

The Value of RSL Qualifications

RSL advocates an open access approach to qualifications, providing a range of syllabi, designed to accommodate a wide variety of candidates of different ages, experience and levels of achievement. RSL qualifications are regulated in England and Northern Ireland by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), in Wales by Qualifications Wales and accredited in Scotland by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. RSL is committed to maintaining and improving its reputation for excellence by providing high quality education and training through its syllabi, examinations, music and resources.

RSL & UCAS

For students applying for work or University, many potential employers see graded music exams in a very positive way. Recognised qualifications demonstrate an ability to dedicate commitment to extra-curricular activities, providing evidence of versatility which many students find beneficial within UCAS (Universities & Colleges Admissions Service) applications and for University entrance interviews.

Our qualifications at Level 3 (Grades 6–8) carry allocated points on the UCAS tariff.
For full details relating to the allocation of UCAS points please see: www.rslawards.com/about-us/ucas-points

Period of Operation

This syllabus specification covers Yamaha Drum Encounter Grade Examinations from September 2019

Examinations

GRADE EXAMINATIONS

Grade Examinations are available from Debut – Grade 8 and consist of the following elements:

PREPARED WORK	UNPREPARED WORK
3 Performance Pieces: Debut – Grade 8 Technical Exercises: Debut – Grade 8	Sight Reading: Debut – Grade 5 Quick Study Piece: Grade 6 – 8 Ear Tests: Debut – Grade 8 General Musicianship Questions: Debut – Grade 8

OVERVIEW

Unit Overview – Graded Examinations in Popular Music Performance

QUALIFICATION TITLE	QAN	TOTAL NO. OF UNITS	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	CREDIT	TOTAL QUALIFICATION TIME
RSL Entry Level Award in Popular Music Performance Debut (Entry 3)	501/0370/2	1	8	4	40
RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance Grade 1	501/0391/X	1	12	6	60
RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance Grade 2	501/0646/6	1	18	9	90
RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance Grade 3	501/0647/8	1	18	12	120
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Popular Music Performance Grade 4	501/0389/1	1	24	15	150
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Popular Music Performance Grade 5	501/0643/0	1	24	18	180
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance Grade 6	501/0390/8	1	36	22	220
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance Grade 7	501/0645/4	1	48	27	270
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance Grade 8	501/0648/X	1	54	32	320

Assessment Overview

ASSESSMENT	
Form of Assessment	All assessments are carried out by external examiners. Candidates are required to carry out a combination of practical tasks and underpinning theoretical assessment.
Unit Format	Unit specifications contain the title, unit code, credit level, credit value, learning outcomes, assessment criteria, grade descriptor, and types of evidence required for the unit.
Bands of Assessment	There are four bands of assessment (distinction, merit, pass and unclassified) for the qualification as a whole.
Quality Assurance	Quality Assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

Aims & Broad Objectives

The aim of popular music performance qualifications is to provide a flexible, progressive mastery approach to the knowledge, skills and understanding required for popular music performance.

RSL's graded qualifications motivate and encourage candidates of all ages and levels through a system of progressive mastery, enabling candidates to develop and enhance skills, knowledge and understanding in a safe and consistent way. The qualifications are beneficial for candidates wishing to progress at their own pace through smaller steps of achievement.

These qualifications are suitable for candidates in the Under 16, 16+, 16–18, 19+ age groups.

Progression

Graded qualifications provide a flexible progression route for candidates. They are a positive means of determining progress and enable candidates to learn the necessary techniques to gain entry to FE and HE courses. Graded qualifications operate according to a well-established methodology of 'progressive mastery'. They allow candidates to be tested in discrete stages in the development of a wide range of skills. They tend to be more rigorous than other types of exams and for that reason industry is confident that achievement at the highest level gained by candidates of graded qualifications will have the skills necessary to work in other areas of the business.

Qualification Structure

A graded qualification consists of a range of both practical and knowledge-based elements which are based on detailed requirements outlined in the relevant syllabus. Therefore, requirements for each grade will be set out in detail in the Unit Specifications below (page 18 and onwards) and the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit will require knowledge, skills and understanding of these syllabus requirements to be demonstrated at the grade entered.

Entry Requirements

There are no entry requirements for these qualifications. However, candidates should be aware that the content at the higher grades will require a level of knowledge and understanding covered in previous qualifications.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

Assessment Timings

Examination timings for the graded examinations in Popular Music Performance are as follows:

GRADE EXAMS

Debut: 15 minutes
Grade 1: 20 minutes
Grade 2: 20 minutes
Grade 3: 23 minutes
Grade 4: 25 minutes
Grade 5: 25 minutes
Grade 6: 30 minutes
Grade 7: 30 minutes
Grade 8: 30 minutes

All assessment of these qualifications is external and is undertaken by RSL Examiners.

Marking Schemes

GRADE EXAMS: GRADES 6–8			
ELEMENT	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION
Performance Piece 1	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 2	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 3	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Technical Exercises	9–10 out of 15	11–12 out of 15	13+ out of 15
Quick Study Piece	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
Ear Tests	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
General Musicianship Questions	3 out of 5	4 out of 5	5 out of 5
Total Marks	60%+	74%+	90%+

GRADE EXAMS: DEBUT–GRADE5			
ELEMENT	PASS	MERIT	DISTINCTION
Performance Piece 1	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 2	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 3	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Technical Exercises	9–10 out of 15	11–12 out of 15	13+ out of 15
Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
Ear Tests	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
General Musicianship Questions	3 out of 5	4 out of 5	5 out of 5
Total Marks	60%+	74%+	90%+

Examination Structure

The examination structure for the grade examinations is shown below:

1. Pieces or technical exercises
2. Technical exercises or pieces
3. Sight Reading (Debut – Grade 5); Quick Study Piece (Grades 6–8)
4. Ear Tests
5. General Musicianship Questions

General Notes

At the beginning of a Grade Examination, the Examiner will ask the candidate if they wish to begin with Performance Pieces or Technical Exercises.

Prior to the start of the Performance Pieces, the Examiner will conduct a sound check by asking the candidate to play the first few bars of the first chosen piece. This will set the levels for the exam and will take place alongside the backing track. Once the level has been established, the Examiner will then commence with the first piece in full. Note: the sound check is undertaken for the first Performance Piece only.

Candidates may perform any or all of their pieces from memory. This is not compulsory at any level and no additional marks are given for this. With the exception of certain Technical Exercises where memory requirements apply, it is permitted to use books which contain notes made during the course of a candidate's study.

Note: It is not permitted to make any notes at any time during the exam.

For General Musicianship Questions, the Examiner may use his or her version of the selected piece as the basis to ask the questions if such notes contained on the candidate's version are deemed sufficiently extensive or might assist the candidate when answering the questions.

The Examiner will not facilitate page turning for candidates. Candidates are allowed to photocopy relevant sheet music as necessary to alleviate page turns but all copied materials must be handed into the Examiner at the end of the examination.

All tempo markings are to be observed unless otherwise stated. Each piece is designed carefully to achieve a number of outcomes appropriate for the grade.

Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The graded examination system is one based on the principle of 'progressive mastery': each step in the exam chain demonstrates learning, progression and skills in incremental steps. Successful learning is characterised by a mastery of the fundamentals of the skills demanded in each grade.

Learners will be able to complete a set of practical tasks and be tested on their underpinning knowledge (the complexity and variety of tasks are determined by which qualification is being attempted). This allows them to demonstrate popular music performance knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to the grade. These technical skills set a firm platform for further technical and creative development by the learner.

Quality Assurance

All RSL examinations and graded qualifications are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by RSL.

CANDIDATE ACCESS AND REGISTRATION

Access and Registration

The qualifications will:

- be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- offer equal opportunities for all wishing to access the qualifications

At the point of application, RSL will ensure that all candidates are fully informed about the requirements and demands of the qualification.

Candidates may enter online for any of the qualifications at various points in the calendar year in territories throughout the world. Dates will be published on the website at www.rslawards.com

FURTHER INFORMATION & CONTACT

Complaints & Appeals

All procedural complaints and appeals, including malpractice and requests for reasonable adjustments/special considerations, can be found on the RSL website www.rslawards.com

Equal Opportunities

RSL's Equal Opportunities policy can be found on the RSL website www.rslawards.com

Contacts for Help & Support

All correspondence should be directed to:

RSL
Harlequin House
Ground Floor
7 High Street
Teddington
Middlesex
TW11 8EE

Or info@rslawards.com

CENTRES

All centres should ensure they have an accessible copy of this Handbook during exam sessions.

All performance pieces will be performed to backing tracks unless otherwise stated.

In some cases, there are multiple backing tracks available for each performance. At Grades 6 – 8, teachers should prepare their students to know which one to request from the examiner.

It is advised that Candidates are taught to use the terminology as referred to in this Handbook to avoid confusion or upset in the exam.

All Yamaha centres should have a book of example tests for Candidates to practice from.

EXAMINERS

Examiners should read through all materials carefully before running Yamaha exams as some content differs to RSL graded exams.

Grade 6 – 8 Drum candidates will use photocopies.

Examiner materials are located digitally on the examiner FTP site.

To conduct Yamaha exams, examiners will require hardcopies of the Candidate Books from the Yamaha Syllabus, should you not have these please contact RSL HQ.

Examiners should complete standard Graded Mark Sheets and return as normal to RSL.

All examiners are required to carry this guide with them when scheduled for Yamaha exams.

All materials for examining Yamaha syllabus exams can be found in the 'Yamaha GE/DE syllabus' books.

N.B. All Yamaha exams are Graded Music exams, candidates cannot sit a Yamaha Performance Certificate.

UNIT SPECIFICATIONS

DEBUT

Title	RSL Entry Level Award in Popular Music Performance: Debut (Entry 3)
Qualification No.	501/0370/2
Level	Entry Level 3
Credit Value	4
Guided Learning Hours	8

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Debut level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Basic techniques
- Evident rhythm and pulse
- Accuracy of notation
- Synchronisation to backing track or click
- Confident presentation/prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. 16 Bar Exercise 1	<i>Drum Fundamentals</i> – page 11 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Debut 1
2. Tom Exercises 1, 2 & 3	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 15 Tempo 106 bpm USB Track – Debut 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be played as a continuous exercise twice through without repeats. First play should be with snare and toms only and then repeated adding the bass drum playing quarter notes throughout. Use indicated sticking where provided, exercise 1 – use upper sticking pattern R.R.R.R
3. Song 3 - Summer	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 17 Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Debut 3

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below.

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Single Paradiddle	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – Page 55 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Debut 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat 4 times The sticking indicated is for right handed drummers, left handed drummers should reverse these. Must be played to a click track.
5. Exercise 1	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – Page 14 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Debut 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat once, 8 bars in total. To be played twice; first time as written, second time orchestrated around the drum set; snare drum in bar one, top tom in bar 2, mid tom in bar 3, floor tom in bar 4. Must be played to a click track.

SIGHT READING

Snare Drum only
Tempo 60 bpm

The candidate will be given a four-bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Quarter note rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practise the test and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track.

At this grade there is no requirement for Improvisation & Interpretation, the candidate should complete sight reading only.

AURAL TESTS

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm.

The Candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click tracks.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of two notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 bpm.

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes

The test will be played on:

- Snare
- Hi-hat
- Bass Drum

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on Song 3.

The questions will be taken from the following:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values 1/4 and 1/8 notes
- Instrument knowledge (parts of the drum kit)

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

DEBUT		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure basic techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation accuracy detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Consistent sync Highly confident and assured presentation
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure basic techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation accuracy observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Mainly synchronised Confident presentation overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Basic techniques evident Rhythm / pulse evident Notation accuracy evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Sync evident Some confidence in presentation
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Basic techniques not shown Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Notation accuracy largely inaccurate
	Technical exercises 4–8	Sync not achieved Unsure in presentation
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance
	Technical exercises 0–3	No attempt

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DEBUT		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	

GRADE 1

Title	RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance: Grade 1
Qualification No.	501/0391/X
Level	1
Credit Value	6
Guided Learning Hours	12

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 1 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Basic techniques
- Evident rhythm and pulse
- Accuracy of notation
- Synchronisation to backing track or click
- Confident presentation/prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. 24 Bar Exercise 1	<i>Drum Fundamentals</i> – page 35 Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 1 1
2. Tom Exercises 1, 2, 3 & 4	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 22 Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 1 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be played as a continuous exercise twice through without repeats. First play should be as written. Then repeat should add bass drum playing quarter notes through out
3. Song 5 – Time Warrior	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 25 Tempo 106 bpm. USB Track – Grade 1 3

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below.

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Inward Paradiddle	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 55 Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 1 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat 4 times: Orchestrating the Accented note on toms. The sticking indicated is for right handed drummers, left handed drummers should reverse these. Must be played to a click track.
5. Exercise 1, 2 & 3.	<i>Drum Encounters 1</i> – page 30 Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 1 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be played as a continuous sequence without repeats (12 bars). Must be played to a click track.

SIGHT READING

Snare Drum only
Tempo 60 bpm

The candidate will be given a four-bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Quarter note rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practice the test and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track.

At this grade there is no requirement for Improvisation & Interpretation, the candidate should complete Sight Reading only.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests:

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm.

The Candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Quarter note rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of two notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 bpm.

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Eighth note rests

The test will be played on:

- Snare
- Hi-hat
- Bass Drum

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on Song 5.

The questions will be taken from the following:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$ notes and equivalent rests.
- Time Signature
- Repeat markings including 1st and 2nd time bars
- Instrument knowledge (parts of the drum kit)

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 1		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure basic techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation accuracy detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Consistent sync Highly confident and assured presentation
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure basic techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation accuracy observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Mainly synchronised Confident presentation overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Basic techniques evident Rhythm / pulse evident Notation accuracy evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Sync evident Some confidence in presentation
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Basic techniques not shown Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Notation accuracy largely inaccurate
	Technical exercises 4–8	Sync not achieved Unsure in presentation
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance
	Technical exercises 0–3	No attempt

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GRADE 1		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10 GMQ 5	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8 GMQ 4	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6 GMQ 3	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5 GMQ 2	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2 GMQ 0–1	No attempt Responses not offered

GRADE 2

Title	RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance: Grade 2
Qualification No.	501/0646/6
Level	1
Credit Value	9
Guided Learning Hours	18

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 2 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Basic techniques
- Evident rhythm and pulse
- Accuracy of notation
- Synchronisation to backing track or click
- Confident presentation/prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. 24 Bar Exercise	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals – page 25</i> Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 2 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be performed with the bass drum playing quarter notes throughout.
2. Exercises 1 – 6	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals – page 82</i> Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 2 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be played as a continuous exercise on the snare without repeats playing toms on all accented notes.
3. Song 10 – Red River	<p><i>Drum Encounters 1 – page 48</i> Tempo 116 bpm USB Track – Grade 2 3</p>

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below.

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Paradiddle Group	<p><i>Drum Encounters 1 – page 55</i> Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 2 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paradiddle/Inward Paradiddle/Reverse Paradiddle/Delayed Paradiddle Each rudiment to be repeated 4 times before moving on to next; accented notes to be played on toms (16 bars total) The sticking indicated is for right handed drummers, left handed drummers should reverse this <p>Must be played to a click track.</p>
5. Combination Exercise	<p><i>Drum Encounters 1 – page 27</i> Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 2 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercises 1 – 9 with repeats, played as a continuous exercise (18 bars in total). Must be played to a click track.

SIGHT READING

Snare Drum only
Tempo 60 bpm.

The candidate will be given a four-bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Quarter note rests
- Eighth note rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practice the tests and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track. At this grade there is no requirement for Improvisation & Interpretation, the candidate should complete Sight Reading only.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests:

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm.

The Candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Quarter note rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice. The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of two notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 bpm.

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eight notes
- Quarter and eighth note rests

The test will be played on:

- Snare
- Hi-hat (open and closed)
- Bass Drum

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on Song 10

The questions will be taken from the following:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values 1/4 and 1/8 notes and equivalent rests.
- Time Signature
- Repeat markings including 1st and 2nd time bar markings
- D.C. al Coda
- Instrument knowledge (tuning drums and drum makes)

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 2		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure basic techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation accuracy detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Consistent sync Highly confident and assured presentation
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure basic techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation accuracy observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Mainly synchronised Confident presentation overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Basic techniques evident Rhythm / pulse evident Notation accuracy evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Sync evident Some confidence in presentation
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Basic techniques not shown Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Notation accuracy largely inaccurate
	Technical exercises 4–8	Sync not achieved Unsure in presentation
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance
	Technical exercises 0–3	No attempt

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GRADE 2		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	

GRADE 3

Title	RSL Level 1 Award in Popular Music Performance: Grade 3
Qualification No.	501/0647/8
Level	1
Credit Value	12
Guided Learning Hours	18

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 3 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Secure techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- A sense of stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. 24 Bar Exercise	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals – page 37</i> Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 3 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be performed with the bass drum playing 1/4 notes and the hi hat on the offbeat 8th notes throughout
2. Song 2 (Disco/Funk) – Brazilian Funk	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 11</i> Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 3 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate will be required to develop on repeats.
3. Song 4 (Shuffle/Blues) - SRV	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 25</i> Tempo 116 bpm USB Track – Grade 3 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate will be required to develop on repeats.

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below. The examiner will select **two** out of the three to be played during the exam.

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Fill Exercise	<p>Drum Encounters 2 – page 37</p> <p>Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 3 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeat four times changing the fill each time. 16 bars total; fills A-D in order Must be played to a click track
5. Combination Exercise	<p>Drum Encounters 1 – page 49</p> <p>Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 3 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercises 1-12 (with repeats) played as a continuous exercise. 24 bars in total. Must be played to a click track.
6. 5 & 7 Stroke Roll	<p>Drum Encounters 2 – Page 65</p> <p>Tempo 80bpm USB Track – Grade 3 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be played in 16th note rate as shown in performance side of page, repeating each rudiment for four bars, RLLRRL sticking to be used in seven stroke roll (8 bars total) Must be played to a click track.

SIGHT READING

Snare Drum only
Tempo 60 – 80 bpm

The candidate will be given an eight-bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Quarter and eighth note rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practice the test and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track.

At this grade there is no requirement for Improvisation & Interpretation, the candidate should complete Sight Reading only.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests:

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm

The candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Eighth note triplets
- Quarter note rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of two notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 bpm.

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Eighth note rests

The test will be played on:

- Snare
- Hi-hat
- Bass Drum
- Crash
- Open hi-hat

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on Song 2 or 4.

The questions will be taken from the following:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values – all note values and rests (excluding ties)
- Time Signature
- Repeat markings including 1st and 2nd time bar markings
- D.C and D.S al Coda
- Instrument knowledge (changing snare drum head)

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 3		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Convincing and stylistic solo / improv Consistent sync Highly confident and assured stylistic performance
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall QQ Stylistic direction observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Stylistic solo / improv overall Mainly synchronised A sense of stylistic performance overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some secure techniques evident Generally secure rhythm / pulse Some notation / harmonic accuracy evident QQ Some stylistic direction evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Adequate solo / improv Sync evident Some sense of stylistic performance
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect QQ Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect
	Technical exercises 4–8	Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding Sync largely not achieved Sense of stylistic performance not achieved
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance
	Technical exercises 0–3	No attempt

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GRADE 3		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident
	GMQ 3	Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate QQ Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate
	GMQ 2	Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate QQ Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt
	GMQ 0–1	Responses not offered

GRADE 4

Title	RSL Level 2 Certificate in Popular Music Performance: Grade 4
Qualification No.	501/0389/1
Level	2
Credit Value	15
Guided Learning Hours	24

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 4 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Secure techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- A sense of stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. 24 Bar Exercise	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals – page 49</i></p> <p>Tempo 100 bpm</p> <p>USB Track – Grade 4 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be performed with the bass drum playing 1/4 notes and the hi hat on the offbeat 8th notes throughout
2. Song 9 (Glam Funk) - Michigan	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 50</i></p> <p>USB Track – Grade 4 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate will be required to develop on repeats and D.S.
3. Song 10 (Shuffle Blues) – Phrygian Domination	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 51</i></p> <p>USB Track – Grade 4 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate is required to develop on repeat and D.S.

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below. The examiner will select **two** out of the three to be played during the exam.

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Co-ordination 3	<p>Drum Encounters 2 – page 38</p> <p>Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 4 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be played to a click track. • Exercise 1-4 played as a continuous piece without repeats (16 bars in total)
5. Combination Exercise	<p>Drum Encounters 1 – page 49</p> <p>Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 4 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be played to a click track. • Exercises 13-28 played as a continuous exercise with repeats (32 bars in total)
6. Flam Rudiments 1/2/3/5	<p>Drum Encounters 2 – Page 64</p> <p>Tempo 90bpm USB Track – Grade 4 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each line to be played twice as written on snare drum. 6/8 bar to be performed as triplets in 2/4 • Must be played to a click track.

SIGHT READING

Full drum kit
Tempo 60 – 90 bpm

The candidate will be given an 8 bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Dotted eighth notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Equivalent rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practice the test and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track. The test will include dynamics.

At this grade there is an element of Improvisation & Interpretation. This is in the form of a two bar fill, soloing in time.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests:

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm

The Candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Dotted eighths
- Eighth note triplets

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of three notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 90 – 110 bpm.

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Dotted eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Eighth note triplets

The test will be played on:

- Full kit

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the style from three options given to them by the examiner.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on any piece performed (examiner's choice).
The questions will be taken from the following:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values – all note values and rests (excluding ties)
- Time Signature
- Repeat markings including 1st and 2nd time bar markings
- D.C and D.S al Coda
- Dynamics
- Fills, rhythm, types, pulse, groove and feel
- Instrument knowledge includes previous grades (cymbal makes)

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 4		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Convincing and stylistic solo / improv Consistent sync Highly confident and assured stylistic performance
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall Stylistic direction observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Stylistic solo / improv overall Mainly synchronised A sense of stylistic performance overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some secure techniques evident Generally secure rhythm / pulse Some notation / harmonic accuracy evident Some stylistic direction evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Adequate solo / improv Sync evident Some sense of stylistic performance
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect ❄️ Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect
	Technical exercises 4–8	Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding Sync largely not achieved Sense of stylistic performance not achieved
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance No attempt
	Technical exercises 0–3	

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GRADE 4		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	

GRADE 5

Title	RSL Level 2 Certificate in Popular Music Performance: Grade 5
Qualification No.	501/0643/0
Level	2
Credit Value	18
Guided Learning Hours	24

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 5 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Secure techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- A sense of stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (SIGHT READING, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

The candidate must prepare and perform all three pieces listed below. This is set repertoire so candidates do not have the option of Free Choice Pieces.

TITLE	DETAILS
1. Song Samba	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 56</i> USB Track – Grade 5 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate is required to develop on repeat and D.S.
2. Song 2 (Prog Rock) – Running Man	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3 – page 16/17</i> USB Track – Grade 5 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate will be required to develop on repeats and d.s and perform drum solo in section D incorporating snare figures on even numbered bars into their solo.
3. Song 8 (Funk Fusion) – Red Jacket	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3 – Page 46/47</i> USB Track – Grade 5 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The candidate is required to develop on repeat and D.S

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below. The examiner will select **two** out of the three to be played during the exam.

TITLE	DETAILS
<p>4. Rhythm Pattern Exercise 1</p>	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3 – Page 113</i> Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 5 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 bars rhythm pattern 1; 4th bar to be fills from page 112 nos 1-4 (16 bars). • Must be played to a click track.
<p>5. DE2 Exercise 1-4</p>	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – Page 53</i> Tempo 90 bpm USB Track – Grade 5 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be played as a continuous exercise over samba foot ostinato (bass drum to be played on first and fourth 16th notes of each beat; and hi hat left foot on offbeat 8th note as seen in favela Rockschoo grade 6 bar 1). • Must be played to a click track.
<p>6. Drag Combination</p>	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2 – page 63</i> Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Grade 5 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must be played to a click track. • Order of playing for drag combination (from page 63): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ruff beats 1+2 (drags) for 2 bars of 4/4 • Single Drag (tap) for 2 bars of 4/4 • Lesson 25 for 2 bars of 4/4 • Single Ratamacue for 2 bars of 4/4

SIGHT READING

Full drum kit. Tempo 60 – 90 bpm.

The candidate will be given an 8-bar example in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Dotted eighth notes
- Eighth notes
- Eighth note triplets
- Sixteenth notes
- Equivalent rests

The candidate will have 90 seconds to prepare and practice the test and will then be required to give a performance for the examination.

The examiner will ask the candidate whether or not they would like to use a click track.

The test will include dynamics.

At this grade there is an element of Improvisation & Interpretation. This is in the form of a two-bar fill, soloing in time.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests:

1. Fill Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm

The candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Dotted eighth notes
- Eighth note triplets
- Sixteenth notes

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the same fill from a set of three notated examples.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 100 – 120 bpm

The candidate will hear a two-bar drum groove repeated in 4/4 consisting of:

- Quarter notes
- Eighth notes
- Dotted eighth notes
- Sixteenth notes
- Eighth note triplets

The test will be played on:

- Full kit

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the style from three options given to them by the examiner.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

Five questions will be asked on any piece performed (examiner's choice).

The questions will be taken from the following and include all topics from previous grades:

- Drum Voicings
- Note Values – all note values and rests
- Time Signature
- Repeat markings including 1st and 2nd time bar markings
- D.C and D.S al Coda
- Dynamics
- Fills, rhythm types, pulse, groove and feel
- Instrument knowledge includes topics from previous grades and stylistic awareness of cymbal sounds

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 5		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Convincing and stylistic solo / improv Consistent sync Highly confident and assured stylistic performance
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall Stylistic direction observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Stylistic solo / improv overall Mainly synchronised A sense of stylistic performance overall
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some secure techniques evident Generally secure rhythm / pulse Some notation / harmonic accuracy evident Some stylistic direction evident
	Technical exercises 9–10	Adequate solo / improv Sync evident Some sense of stylistic performance
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect
	Technical exercises 4–8	Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding Sync largely not achieved Sense of stylistic performance not achieved
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance No attempt
	Technical exercises 0–3	

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GRADE 5		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	

GRADE 6

Title	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance: Grade 6
Qualification No.	501/0390/8
Level	3
Credit Value	22
Guided Learning Hours	36

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 6 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Advanced techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Advanced soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Understanding of musical structure
- A sense of communication through stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (QUICK STUDY PIECES, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

Candidates must prepare and perform two pieces from List A and **one** piece from List B. Only one piece per style is allowed.

List A: Yamaha Course Material

TITLE	DETAILS
1. Song 5 (Funk) – Funktown	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 6 – Page 5</i> Tempo 100 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 1
2. Song 6 (Rock) - Kitana	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 6 – Page 7</i> Tempo 96 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 2
3. Song Bossa Nova (Latin)	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 6 – Page 3</i> Tempo 116 USB Track – Grade 6 3

List B: Rockschoo! Exam Syllabus

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Mohair Mountain (Rock)	<i>Rockschoo! Grade 6 (2012) – page 5</i> Tempo 92 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 4
5. Pop it in the Top (Funk)	<i>Rockschoo! Grade 6 (2012) – page 11</i> Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 5
6. Favela (Latin)	<i>Rockschoo! Grade 6 (2012) – page 23</i> Tempo 109 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 6

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below:

TITLE	DETAILS
7. Exercise A: Change up Exercises	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals</i> – page 101, Ex 21</p> <p>Tempo 60 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate play with single strokes initially, followed by double strokes on the repeat (12 bars in total). • Must be played to a click track.
8. Exercise B: Artificial Groupings ‘Groups of 3, Resolving in 3 bars of 4/4 Time’.	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3</i> – page 99</p> <p>Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played on snare drum, with accents played on toms • Bass drum quarter notes played throughout • Candidates must include repeat (6 bars in total) • The sticking pattern is optional • Must be played to a click track.
9. Exercise C: Bossa Nova – Rhythm Variation of Rim Click	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3</i> – page 80</p> <p>Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 6 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pattern B instrumentation (ride, bass drum and hi hat with left foot) • Candidates should play A, B, C, D, E and F as a continuous exercise, playing each example • twice through (24 bars in total) • Must be played to a click track.

QUICK STUDY PIECES

The candidate will be asked to choose, prepare and play a short quick Study Piece (QSP) in one of the styles listed below:

- Rock/Metal
- Funk
- Blues/Jazz/Latin

Candidate will be shown and played the written notated parts of the QSP

Candidate will be given three minutes to study the piece and practice

The candidate can choose to practice with or without click track

After the three minutes preparation the backing track will be played twice through as one continuous playthrough.

The first play is intended for practice and the second play will be the examined performance

The QSP will be in the form of a lead sheet and it will be left up to the candidate to create their own interpretation in sections marked for improvisation.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests.

1. Fill Playback and Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm

The candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill (with a click track) consisting of:

- All values and combinations from quarter notes to 16th note sextuplets
- Quarter and eighth note rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the fill from three options given to them by the examiner.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 – 120 bpm

The candidate will hear a two-bar repeated drum groove, played on a full kit with a click track.

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the style from four options given to them by the examiner.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

1. Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played (candidates' choice).

Candidates will be asked to explain the following;

- Any notation used in the chosen piece
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- What makes the drum groove stylistically appropriate?
- Use of drum voices, rhythms and techniques used in drum solo sections

2. Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask the candidate to demonstrate and explain one of the following questions regarding their instrument:

- Care and maintenance of drums
- How to tune the drum kit according to the style of one of the pieces they have performed
- How to convincingly produce: cross stick, choke cymbal, bell of ride, rim-shots, ghost notes, half open hi-hat and accents.

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 6		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure advanced techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout Advanced solo / improv with stylistic conviction Consistent sync Comprehensive understanding of complete musical structure Convincing communication through stylistic performance
	Technical exercises 13–15	
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure advanced techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Detailed notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall Stylistic direction observed overall Convincing and stylistic solo / improv overall Mainly synchronised Secure understanding of complete musical structure Good sense of communication through stylistic performance
	Technical exercises 11–12	
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some advanced techniques shown Generally secure rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy observed Some stylistic direction observed Solo / improv with some stylistic conviction Sync evident General understanding of musical structure Some sense of communication through stylistic performance
	Technical exercises 9–10	
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Advanced techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding Sync largely not achieved Hesitant in understanding of musical structure Communicating of stylistic performance not achieved
	Technical exercises 4–8	
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance No attempt
	Technical exercises 0–3	

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GRADE 6		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt
	GMQ 0–1	Responses not offered

GRADE 7

Title	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance: Grade 7
Qualification No.	501/0645/4
Level	3
Credit Value	27
Guided Learning Hours	48

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 7 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Advanced techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Advanced soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Understanding of musical structure
- A sense of communication through stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (QUICK STUDY PIECES, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

Candidates must prepare and perform two pieces from List A and **one** piece from List B. Only one piece per style is allowed.

List A: Yamaha Course Material

TITLE	DETAILS
1. Song 7 (Funk) – Cold Fusion	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 7 – Page 7</i> Tempo 92 bpm. USB Track – Grade 7 1
2. Song 10 (Shuffle) – Josephine	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 7 – Page 10</i> Tempo 112 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 2
3. Song Samba (Latin)	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 7 – Page 3</i> Tempo 96 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 3

List B: Rockschooll Exam Syllabus

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Full English Breckerfest (Funk)	<i>Rockschooll Grade 7 (2012) – page 27</i> Tempo 168 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 4
5. Kita’s Five (Jazz)	<i>Rockschooll Grade 7 (2012) – page 33</i> Tempo 172 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 5
6. Buena Havana (Latin)	<i>Rockschooll Grade 7 (2012) – page 11</i> Tempo 204 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 6

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below:

TITLE	DETAILS
<p>7. Exercise A: Change up Exercises</p>	<p>Drum Fundamentals – page 102, Ex 22 Tempo 70 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidate play with single strokes initially, followed by double strokes on the repeat (16 bars in total). • Must be played to a click track.
<p>8. Exercise B: Artificial Groupings ‘Groups of 5, Resolving in 5 bars of 4/4 Time’.</p>	<p>Drum Encounters 3 – page 99 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played on snare drum, with accents played on toms • Bass drum quarter notes played throughout • Candidates must include repeat (10 bars in total) • The sticking pattern is optional • Must be played to a click track.
<p>9. Exercise C: Jazz Comping – Examples 1, 2, 3 & 4</p>	<p>Drum Encounters 2 – page 61 Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 7 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates should play 1, 2, 3 and 4 as a continuous exercise, playing each example four times (16 bars in total) • Must be played to a click track.

QUICK STUDY PIECES

The candidate will be asked to choose, prepare and play a short quick Study Piece (QSP) in one of the styles listed below:

- Rock/Metal
- Funk
- Blues/Jazz/Latin

Candidate will be shown and played the written notated parts of the QSP

Candidate will be given three minutes to study the piece and practice

The candidate can choose to practice with or without click track

After the three minutes preparation the backing track will be played twice through as one continuous playthrough.

The first play is intended for practice and the second play will be the examined performance

The QSP will be in the form of a lead sheet and it will be left up to the candidate to create their own interpretation in sections marked for improvisation.

AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests.

1. Fill Playback and Recognition Test – Tempo 70 bpm

The candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill (with a click track) consisting of:

- All values and combinations from quarter notes to 16th note sextuplets
- Quarter and eighth note rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the fill from three options given to them by the examiner.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 – 120 bpm

The candidate will hear a two-bar repeated drum groove, played on a full kit with a click track.

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the style from four options given to them by the examiner.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

1. Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played (candidates' choice).

Candidates will be asked to explain the following;

- Any notation used in the chosen piece
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- What makes the drum groove stylistically appropriate?
- Use of drum voices, rhythms and techniques used in drum solo sections

2. Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask the candidate to demonstrate and explain one of the following questions regarding their instrument:

- Care and maintenance of drums
- How to tune the drum kit according to the style of one of the pieces they have performed
- How to convincingly produce: cross stick, choke cymbal, bell of ride, rim-shots, ghost notes, half open hi-hat and accents.

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 7		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure advanced techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout
	Technical exercises 13–15	Advanced solo / improv with stylistic conviction Consistent sync Comprehensive understanding of complete musical structure Convincing communication through stylistic performance
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure advanced techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Detailed notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall Stylistic direction observed overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Convincing and stylistic solo / improv overall Mainly synchronised Secure understanding of complete musical structure Good sense of communication through stylistic performance
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some advanced techniques shown Generally secure rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy observed Some stylistic direction observed
	Technical exercises 9–10	Solo / improv with some stylistic conviction Sync evident General understanding of musical structure Some sense of communication through stylistic performance
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Advanced techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect
	Technical exercises 4–8	Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding Sync largely not achieved Hesitant in understanding of musical structure Communicating of stylistic performance not achieved
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance No attempt
	Technical exercises 0–3	

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GRADE 7		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/Improv QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/Improv QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/Improv QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/Improv QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/Improv QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	

GRADE 8

Title	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Popular Music Performance: Grade 8
Qualification No.	501/0648/X
Level	3
Credit Value	32
Guided Learning Hours	54

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & UNDERSTANDING

THE CANDIDATE WILL BE ABLE TO:

- Perform music in popular styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on the instrument through responding to set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of set tests

At Grade 8 level this will mean showing the following level of knowledge, skills and understanding:

PREPARED WORK (PERFORMANCE PIECES AND TECHNICAL EXERCISES)

- Advanced techniques
- Secure rhythm and pulse
- Notation accuracy
- Stylistic direction
- Advanced soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Understanding of musical structure
- A sense of communication through stylistic performance
- Prompt responses

UNPREPARED WORK (QUICK STUDY PIECES, EAR TESTS, GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS)

- Notation accuracy
- Secure rhythm/pulse
- Soloing/improvisation appropriate to style
- Synchronisation
- Responses showing understanding at this grade

PERFORMANCE PIECES

Candidates must prepare and perform two pieces from List A and **one** piece from List B. Only one piece per style is allowed.

List A: Yamaha Course Material

TITLE	DETAILS
1. Song 13 (Funk) - Voyager	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 8</i> – Page 8 Tempo 70 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 1
2. Song 3/4 Time – Three Sisters	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 8</i> – Page 6 Tempo 92 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 2
3. Song Salsa (Latin)	RSL Download – <i>Drum Encounters Grade 8</i> – Page 3 Tempo 92 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 3

List B: Rockschoool Exam Syllabus

TITLE	DETAILS
4. Mind the Gaps (Funk)	<i>Rockschoool Grade 8 (2012)</i> – page 11 Tempo 96 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 4
5. Meet Darth Ear (Metal)	<i>Rockschoool Grade 8 (2012)</i> – page 5 Tempo 120 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 5
6. Nosso Samba (Latin)	<i>Rockschoool Grade 8 (2012)</i> – page 29 Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 6

TECHNICAL EXERCISES

The Candidate is required to prepare all of the exercises listed below:

TITLE	DETAILS
<p>7. Exercise A: Change up Exercises</p>	<p><i>Drum Fundamentals</i> – page 102, Ex 23 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 7</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be played once through (20 bars in total) • Must be played to a click track.
<p>8. Exercise B: Artificial Groupings ‘Groups of 7, Resolving in 7 Bars of 4/4 Time’</p>	<p><i>Drum Encounters 3</i> – page 99 Tempo 80 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 8</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Played on snare drum, with accents played on toms • Bass drum quarter notes played throughout • Candidates must include repeat (14 bars in total) • The sticking pattern is optional • Must be played to a click track
<p>9. Exercise C: Jazz Comping – Examples 5, 6, 7 & 8.</p>	<p><i>Drum Encounters 2</i> – page 61 Tempo 110 bpm USB Track – Grade 8 9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Candidates should play 5, 6, 7 and 8 as a continuous exercise, playing each example four times (16 bars in total) • Must be played to a click track

QUICK STUDY PIECES

The candidate will be asked to choose, prepare and play a short Quick Study Piece (QSP) in one of the styles listed below:

- Rock/Metal
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- Blues/Jazz/Latin

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AURAL TESTS

The candidate will be required to complete the following tests.

1. Fill Playback and Recognition Test. Tempo 70 bpm

The candidate will hear a one bar snare drum fill (with a click track) consisting of:

- All values and combinations from quarter notes to 16th note sextuplets
- All equivalent rests

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the fill with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the fill from three options given to them by the examiner.

2. Groove Recall Test – Tempo 80 – 120 bpm

The candidate will hear a two-bar repeated drum groove, played on a full kit with a click track.

The test will be played to the candidate twice, with a one bar click count in before each playthrough. A short gap will be given between each for the candidate to practice.

The candidate will then hear a vocal count in after which they should perform the groove with the click track.

The candidate will also be asked to identify the style from a list of up to four options given to them by the examiner.

GENERAL MUSICIANSHIP QUESTIONS

1. Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played (candidates' choice).

Candidates will be asked to explain the following:

- Any notation used in the chosen piece
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- What makes the drum groove stylistically appropriate?
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- How to convincingly produce: cross stick, choke cymbal, bell of ride, rim-shots, ghost notes, half open hi-hat and accents.

GRADING DESCRIPTORS

GRADE 8		
PREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Pieces 18–20	Consistent and secure advanced techniques Consistent rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy detailed throughout Stylistic direction detailed throughout Advanced solo / improv with stylistic conviction
	Technical exercises 13–15	Consistent sync Comprehensive understanding of complete musical structure Convincing communication through stylistic performance
Merit	Pieces 15–17	Secure advanced techniques overall Secure rhythm / pulse overall Detailed notation / harmonic accuracy observed overall Stylistic direction observed overall Convincing and stylistic solo / improv overall
	Technical exercises 11–12	Mainly synchronised Secure understanding of complete musical structure Good sense of communication through stylistic performance
Pass	Pieces 12–14	Some advanced techniques shown Generally secure rhythm / pulse Notation / harmonic accuracy observed Some stylistic direction observed Solo / improv with some stylistic conviction
	Technical exercises 9–10	Sync evident General understanding of musical structure Some sense of communication through stylistic performance
Below Pass 1	Pieces 6–11	Advanced techniques hesitant and/or incorrect Rhythm/pulse mostly inaccurate Notation/harmonic work hesitant and /or incorrect Stylistic direction hesitant and/or incorrect Solo/improv limited in stylistic understanding
	Technical exercises 4–8	Sync largely not achieved Hesitant in understanding of musical structure Communicating of stylistic performance not achieved
Below Pass 2	Pieces 0–5	Incomplete performance
	Technical exercises 0–3	No attempt

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GRADE 8		
UNPREPARED WORK		
Band	Mark Range	Grading Criteria
Distinction	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 9–10	Notation/pitch accuracy correct throughout Consistent rhythm/pulse Convincing improv/solo throughout
	GMQ 5	Consistent sync Accurate responses
Merit	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 7–8	Notation/pitch correct overall Secure rhythm/pulse overall Improv/Solo convincing overall
	GMQ 4	Mainly synchronised Accurate responses overall
Pass	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 6	Notation/pitch accuracy evident Rhythm/pulse evident Improv/solo evident and generally appropriate
	GMQ 3	Sync evident Adequate Responses
Below Pass 1	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 3–5	Notation/pitch largely inaccurate Rhythm/pulse largely inaccurate Improv/solo largely absent or inappropriate
	GMQ 2	Sync largely absent Responses vague or incorrect
Below Pass 2	Sight/ QSP / Ear Tests 0–2	No attempt Responses not offered
	GMQ 0–1	