

ROCK EXAMS
& **POP** EXAMS

2015–2017 SYLLABUS

Bass

Drums

Guitar

Keyboards

Vocals

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

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

Trinity College London
www.trinitycollege.com

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TRINITY
COLLEGE LONDON

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Introduction

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

This syllabus is valid for the duration of 2015–2017, but please check the website regularly for any amendments or updates at www.trinityrock.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

Range of qualifications

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

QCF* Level	EQF** Level	Classical & Jazz	Rock & Pop	Theory & Written	Music Tracks †	Solo Certificate †	Group Certificate †
7	7	FTCL Diploma		FMusTCL			
6	6	LTCL Diploma		LMusTCL			
4	5	ATCL Diploma		AMusTCL			
		Certificate for Music Educators (Trinity CME)					
3	4	Grade 8	Grade 8	Grade 8		Advanced	Advanced
		Grade 7	Grade 7	Grade 7			
		Grade 6	Grade 6	Grade 6			
2	3	Grade 5	Grade 5	Grade 5		Intermediate	Intermediate
		Grade 4	Grade 4	Grade 4			
1	2	Grade 3	Grade 3	Grade 3		Foundation	Foundation
		Grade 2	Grade 2	Grade 2	Track 2		
		Grade 1	Grade 1	Grade 1	Track 1		
Entry Level 3	1‡	Initial	Initial	n/a	Initial Track		
Entry Level 1&2					First Access Track		

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

** European Qualifications Framework

† Not QCF or EQF accredited ‡ Excludes Classical & Jazz Initial exams

Exams at a glance

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

Exam structure

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

How the exams are marked

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

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

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

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

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

How the exams are marked

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

Session skills

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

Pass bands

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

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

About the exams

Entering for an exam

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

Special needs

Trinity welcomes applications from those with special needs. It is essential that these are notified at the time of entry by using the special needs provision form available at www.trinitycollege.com/musicspecialneeds

Taking the exam

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

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

Candidates taking Initial to Grade 5 Vocals exams will need to inform the examiner if any of their song choices are in an alternative key. They can do this by including it in 'other important information' on the appointment form.

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

Examiners

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

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

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

Page turners

The examiner will not be able to help with page turning. Difficult page turns may be overcome by photocopying the relevant pages. A page turner may assist candidates at Grades 6–8 if necessary, but may only remain in the exam when required.

After the exam

Report forms are normally issued within a week of completion of a centre's exam session, although at larger centres representatives may issue report forms on a fortnightly basis.

In the case of successful candidates, results are provisional until confirmed by the issue of a certificate six to eight weeks after the end of the exam session.

The exam room

The exam room will be equipped with the following:

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

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

There may be a warm-up room or area where candidates can prepare just before the exam. Facilities will vary between centres.

Group exams

Rock & Pop group exams

Group exams are available for any combination of instruments at three Certificate levels; Foundation, Intermediate and Advanced:

Initial and Grade exams		Certificate exams		
Level	Exam duration (minutes)	Level	Programme duration (minutes)	Exam duration (minutes)
Initial	13			
Grade 1	13			
Grade 2	15			
Grade 3	15	Foundation	8-10	13
Grade 4	20			
Grade 5	20	Intermediate	15-20	23
Grade 6	25			
Grade 7	25			
Grade 8	30	Advanced	25-30	33

Group exams

Song choice

Candidates can create their own band from any combination of bass, drums, guitar, keyboards and vocals. To help, we have provided at least one song at each level from Initial–Grade 5 with all the parts for each instrument. Band songs are marked with ⚡ in the song list sections further on in this syllabus.

At each Group exam level the group will need to create a set list of the required length (see p.10). They should use at least one of the band option songs at the appropriate level: Foundation level is equivalent to Grade 3 and Intermediate level is equivalent to Grade 5.

Otherwise there is a free choice, but ensure the required parameters for 'Choosing your own song' (available on the website) are followed. For Advanced level there are no prescribed songs so it is a completely free choice, although candidates will be expected to choose songs at the appropriate level for all of the instruments and vocalists (Advanced is equivalent to Grade 8).

Assessment

In the exam the group will be assessed in two areas:

1. Performing the set (90 marks)

The set should be presented as if in a gig in front of an audience. The group will be assessed in the following areas:

- ✔ fluency & musical detail
- ✔ technical control
- ✔ communication & style.

2. Presentation skills (10 marks)

The group will be assessed in the following areas:

- ✔ programme planning
- ✔ promo pack
- ✔ presentation skills.

More details and help on Group exams can be found at www.trinityrock.com

Choosing songs

Song 1

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

Song 2

Song 2 may be selected from the relevant Trinity Rock & Pop book, or from appropriate tracks on www.trinityrock.com or be an **own-choice song**:

Own-choice song

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

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

The song may:

- ✔ be unaccompanied
- ✔ have a backing track (must not include the solo part) – this may be self-created
- ✔ include (for singers) a live self-played accompaniment on any instrument
- ✔ include (for instrumentalists) added vocals performed live by the candidate
- ✔ include (for any candidate) an accompaniment played or sung by any one other live musician, e.g. guitar, drums, piano accompaniment. The additional musician may be a teacher, and should remain in the exam room for Song 2 only.

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

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

Song 3

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

If a candidate performs more than one song that has been designated as a **Technical focus** song, then they must select only one of these songs as Song 3 and should indicate clearly on the appointment form which of these songs is intended for the **Technical focus** assessment. This must be performed with the backing track from the songbook or download.

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

Important

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

Choosing songs

Repeats, expressive techniques and tempi

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

Backing tracks

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

Performing from memory

Candidates are free to perform any or all of their songs from memory although no extra marks will be awarded.

Music and copies

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

Copyright in a song

Points to remember:

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

Further information is available on the website.

Session skills

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

Playback

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

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

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

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

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

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

Improvising

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

Candidates will be given a chord chart and the examiner will play a short section of the backing track so they can get a feel for the tempo and style. They then have 30 seconds to study it and to try out any sections. The examiner will then play the recorded backing track, which consists of a passage of music played on a loop.

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

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

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

Tuning and set-up

Up to and including Grade 5, somebody may assist with tuning and set-up. From Grade 6 onwards, candidates are expected to tune and set up equipment without assistance. Please note that it is the candidate's responsibility to ensure that the instrument is in tune before the start of the exam.

Types of instrument

For Initial to Grade 2, candidates can use either an acoustic/classical, electro-acoustic or electric guitar in the exam. From Grade 3 onwards, an electro-acoustic or electric guitar must be used, although an acoustic guitar may be used for Song 2 if this is an own-choice song where an acoustic guitar would be suitable for the style.

Some songs are not suited to performance on an acoustic or electro-acoustic guitar. Care should be taken that the style can be successfully conveyed on the type of instrument being used.

The use of a plectrum is encouraged throughout the syllabus, unless a song is specifically written in a fingerpicked style.

In the exam room

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

What to bring to the exam

Essential

Guitar candidates must bring:

- ✔ an original Trinity Rock & Pop book with the included CD, and any authorised download(s) from the website (including a copy of the sheet music for the examiner, backing track on CD/portable media, and certificate of authenticity clearly stating the candidate's name), even if performing from memory
- ✔ the completed appointment form
- ✔ their own guitar
- ✔ if performing an own-choice song – the original score and one copy for the examiner, plus the backing track (if appropriate).

Optional

Guitar candidates may bring:

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

Guitar songbook lists

Initial

Black Betty ⚡ [TF]
Lead Belly

Breakdown [TF]
Jack Johnson

Dirty Old Town
The Dubliners

I Am The Music Man ⚡
Traditional

I Wanna Be Like You
From The Jungle Book

Rhinestone Cowboy
Glen Campbell

Grade 3

All Day And All Of The Night ⚡
The Kinks

Basket Case [TF]
Green Day

Creep [TF]
Radiohead

John Barleycorn ⚡
Traditional

Sunshine Of Your Love
Cream

Turn! Turn! Turn!
The Byrds

Grade 1

Freight Train ⚡ [TF]
Taj Mahal

I Believe I'll Dust My Broom ⚡ [TF]
Robert Johnson

I Walk The Line
Johnny Cash

I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)
The Proclaimers

Sheena Is A Punk Rocker
Ramones

These Boots Are Made For Walkin'
Nancy Sinatra

Grade 4

Heroes ⚡ [TF]
David Bowie

Jenny Don't Be Hasty
Paolo Nutini

Knights Of Cydonia [TF]
Muse

Scarborough Fair ⚡
Traditional

Use Somebody
Kings Of Leon

Would?
Alice In Chains

Grade 2

2, 4, 6, 8 Motorway
Tom Robinson Band

I Love Rock 'N' Roll
Joan Jett And The Blackhearts

Mean Jumper Blues ⚡ [TF]
Blind Lemon Jefferson

The Modern Age [TF]
The Strokes

Pretty Vacant
Sex Pistols

Rock Around The Clock
Bill Haley And His Comets

Grade 5

Boulevard Of Broken Dreams [TF]
Green Day

Molly's Chambers
Kings Of Leon

Money
Pink Floyd

The One I Love
R.E.M.

Parisiene Walkways [TF]
Gary Moore

The Raggle Taggle Gypsies ⚡
Traditional

Guitar songbook lists

Grade 6

Albatross [TF]
Fleetwood Mac

Just
Radiohead

Paranoid
Black Sabbath

Place Your Hands
Reef

Supermassive Black Hole [TF]
Muse

This Charming Man
The Smiths

Grade 7

The Devil
Anna Calvi

La Grange
ZZ Top

Hey Joe [TF]
Jimi Hendrix

Hide Away
John Mayall And The Bluesbreakers

Paranoid Android
Radiohead

That Golden Rule [TF]
Biffy Clyro

Grade 8

5150 [TF]
Van Halen

6:00
Dream Theater

The Crying Machine [TF]
Steve Vai

Freewill
Rush

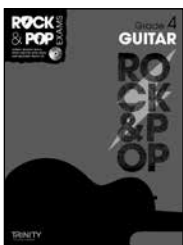
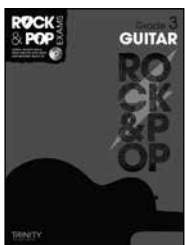
Maggot Brain
Funkadelic

Run To The Hills
Iron Maiden

⚡ = Band option song
[TF] = Technical focus song

A list of alternative songs for Guitar is
available online at www.trinityrock.com

Guitar publications



Guitar Initial

ISBN: 978-0-85736-218-6

Guitar Grade 1

ISBN: 978-0-85736-219-3

Guitar Grade 2

ISBN: 978-0-85736-220-9

Guitar Grade 3

ISBN: 978-0-85736-221-6

Guitar Grade 4

ISBN: 978-0-85736-222-3

Guitar Grade 5

ISBN: 978-0-85736-223-0

Guitar Grade 6

ISBN: 978-0-85736-224-7

Guitar Grade 7

ISBN: 978-0-85736-225-4

Guitar Grade 8

ISBN: 978-0-85736-226-1

Accreditation

UCAS points	A levels (Grades A–E)		Rock & Pop exams (Pass, Merit, Distinction)		
	AS level	A2 level	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
120		A			
110					
100		B			
90					
80		C			
75					D
70					M
65					
60	A	D		D	
55				M	P
50	B				
45			D		
40	C	E	M	P	
35					
30	D				
25			P		
20	E				
15					
10					
5					

Entry to UK higher education and UCAS points

The United Kingdom Universities' and Colleges' Admissions Service (UCAS) has confirmed the inclusion of Trinity Grade music exams within the UCAS tariff system, which is open to any student applying for a course of study at a UK university or other higher education institution. These exams will contribute towards a student's 'score' of UCAS points when they apply for entry to higher education.

The UCAS points system assists admissions tutors to make broad comparisons across applicants to higher education with different types and levels of qualifications. The way in which points are awarded provides a level of confidence to university admissions staff for the use of the tariff within the higher education sector. Therefore, recognition is attributed to qualifications offered by applicants which may otherwise not be known by university staff, and is important in the context of increasing participation in and widening access to higher education as a whole. Trinity College London Diplomas are also awarded credit by The Open University towards their degree programmes.