

**FAQs about**

**Music Qualifications**

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## 1. General

### 1.1.1 What is the difference between TCL, TCM and Trinity Guildhall?

Trinity College London (TCL) is an exam board which offers assessments to any external candidate who wishes to apply.

Trinity College of Music (TCM), now known as Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music & Dance, is a higher education institution which offers performance degree courses.

Trinity Guildhall is a brand that was used after Trinity College London acquired Guildhall Examinations in 2004. It was discontinued as a brand on 31 July 2012.

### 1.1.2 Are Trinity exams accredited to the same level as other boards?

Yes, all of Trinity's Grade and Diploma exams are accredited by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) and have assigned levels from the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) in line with equivalent qualifications. For more information please see the 'About Trinity' section of our website or search for our qualifications on the Ofqual website [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk).

### 1.1.3 What recognition/incentive is there for high achievers?

A number of prizes and exhibitions are awarded each year for outstanding achievement in examinations. Information about these is available from Trinity representatives.

### 1.1.4 Can I get UCAS points for my exam?

You can earn UCAS points for Grades 6-8 as detailed below.

	Grade 6			Grade 7			Grade 8		
	Pass	Merit	Dist.	Pass	Merit	Dist.	Pass	Merit	Dist.
Practical	25	40	45	40	55	60	55	70	75
Theory	5	10	15	10	15	20	20	25	30

### 1.1.5 Are there any workshops for Trinity exams?

Workshops and presentations are held regularly across the world depending on demand. They are designed for teachers, learners and anyone interested in our exams. Details will be posted on the news and events page of the website, and if you have registered your interest online you will be notified of any events happening in your area.

## Books, Music & Downloads

### 1.2.1 Are my Trinity Guildhall publications still valid?

Yes. Following a review of branding, Trinity College London decided to offer all its examinations under the Trinity College London brand and discontinued the use of the Trinity Guildhall brand from 31 July 2012.

However, the exams themselves, which were branded Trinity Guildhall after Trinity College London acquired Guildhall Examinations in 2004, will not change as a result of this decision. Any publications branded with Trinity Guildhall will continue to remain valid.

### 1.2.2 This book seems to be out of print, can you tell me how to locate it?

Sometimes books on our syllabus go out of print after we have published the repertoire lists. We will remove any items in the subsequent impressions of the syllabus, but it is always important to check with the publisher of the book directly, to ensure whether it is still available.

### 1.2.3 I live outside of the UK – can I order your books online?

Yes. Our online store allows you to buy our books in other parts of the world. Postage costs may vary.

### 1.2.4 Do the repertoire books have everything I need for the exams?

No, the syllabus is the only place to find the full requirements for the exam. Some of our books include exercises and some do not; make sure to check the contents before buying.

### 1.2.5 Do you offer any books to accompany the supporting tests?

Yes, we have books to help prepare for the Aural section of our exams (*Aural Tests from 2007* books 1 & 2). Our Sound at Sight series offers sample pieces to help with Sight Reading for each instrument. There are no books available for Improvisation or Musical Knowledge, but we offer free online resources with sample tests on our website.

Please also check the parameters for your instrument and level in the relevant syllabus.

### 1.2.6 Do you have any music for ensembles?

We offer some ensemble music for Music Tracks and group Rock & Pop music.

### 1.2.7 Do you have CD recordings to accompany all your books?

CD recordings of pieces on our syllabuses are available for Piano, Violin, Guitar and Electronic Keyboard. CDs for Drum Kit are only available to buy with the books.

### 1.2.8 Can I play from a handwritten or typeset copy of music in the exam?

Yes, hand-written or typeset copies may be used, provided an original copy is also present in the exam room.

### **1.2.9 Where can I buy the music for my exam?**

You can buy all music for your exam from the online Trinity Shop or from your local music retailer. Recommended editions are listed in the syllabus.

### **1.2.10 What is your policy on using digitally downloaded music for an exam?**

Original copies of sheet music (or web-based version of works out of copyright) can be purchased or downloaded from music shops and publishers and used in exams. In this case, candidates should bring proof of purchase or write the web address on top of the music for the examiner's reference.

Guidelines regarding the legitimacy of all forms of sheet music can be obtained from the UK Music Publishers Association's Code of Fair Practice, available at [www.mpaonline.org.uk](http://www.mpaonline.org.uk)

### **1.2.11 Can I use a photocopy of the music for my exam?**

Candidates must bring an original copy (or authorised download) of all music performed in the exam room, even if they are performing from memory.

Photocopies may be legitimately used to facilitate page turns and for the examiner's reference. Any photocopies provided will be retained by the examiner and destroyed after the exam.

### **1.2.12 Must I use the recommended edition in the syllabus for my pieces?**

No, all editions listed are suggestions only and are given for the purposes of accurate identification. Candidates are free to perform from any other edition, provided that it has not been shortened or otherwise simplified.

When a particular edition must be used this is indicated in the syllabus.

### **1.2.13 Is it okay to play from a copy of the music that is annotated?**

Candidates who have chosen the Musical Knowledge option for grades Initial to Grade 5 should ensure that the printed score is free of annotations except for essential markings such as fingerings, bowings, breath marks etc. For candidates not taking the Musical Knowledge option for Grades, and for all Certificate and Diploma exams, it is fine to play from an annotated score.

## **Rock & Pop Downloads**

### **1.3.1 How can I download the Rock & Pop sheet music?**

Visit our online store [www.trinityrock.com/downloads](http://www.trinityrock.com/downloads), where you can purchase our sheet music downloads as part of a bundle which includes demo and backing tracks.

### **1.3.2 When will the alternative songs for Rock & Pop become available?**

The alternative songs lists will start to be released during 2013.



### **1.3.3 Are the alternative keys for Rock & Pop available?**

The alternative keys for some of the songs for Vocals Initial to Grade 5 are available for download from [www.trinityrock.com/downloads](http://www.trinityrock.com/downloads)

### **1.3.4 My download has stopped working!**

If you have problems printing sheet music or downloading mp3 files, please contact us using this online form: [trinityrockstore.fabermusic.com/Contact.aspx](http://trinityrockstore.fabermusic.com/Contact.aspx) . Sheet music and bundles are delivered in the following way: sheet music is presented in a flash file on screen which can then be printed and mp3 files are downloaded and stored locally on your computer.

Due to copyright laws, when you buy sheet music from our website you can only download it once. You will need to print the music out and keep it as a hard copy. It is not a PDF file (or similar) because, by law, you are not permitted to save an electronic copy in this format as it is too easily shared.

## **Preparing for the Exam**

### **1.4.1 Do I need a theory qualification before I can take higher level practical exams?**

No, there is no theory requirement for any Trinity practical exams. However, we would strongly encourage the study of musical theory to complement practical studies.

### **1.4.2 Do I have to pass each level before progressing to the next?**

No, it is possible to take any exam when you and your teacher feel that you are fully prepared for that level. It is also possible to 'skip' grades. There are some prerequisites for Diploma exams; please see Section 3 for further details.

### **1.4.3 Does Trinity recommend any teachers in my area?**

Unfortunately we are unable to recommend teachers to candidates.

### 1.4.4 How long will my exam take?

Please see the tables below for the timings for each instrument at each level:

Initial and Grade exams					Certificate exams/Rock & Pop Group		
Level	Piano	Piano Accompanying, Harp, Organ, Electronic Keyboard, Rock & Pop	Percussion	All other instruments	Level	Programme Duration (minutes)	Exam Duration (minutes)
Initial	10	13		11			
Grade 1	11	13	15	13			
Grade 2	11	15	15	13			
Grade 3	12	15	16	13	Foundation	8-10	13
Grade 4	16	20	21	18			
Grade 5	16	20	21	18	Intermediate	15-20	23
Grade 6	22	25	27	23			
Grade 7	22	25	27	23			
Grade 8	27	30	32	28	Advanced	25-30	33

Qualification title	Examination length (minutes)	Duration of pieces (minutes)
ATCL Recital	40	32-38
ATCL Pro-Music Performance	45	13-15
LTCL Recital	45	37-43
LTCL Pro-Music Performance	60	18-20
FTCL Recital	50	42-48

### 1.4.5 Will I get more marks if I play/sing my pieces from memory?

Candidates may choose to perform any or all of their pieces from memory, which may improve note security and confidence. However, no separate or additional marks are given specifically for memorisation.

Candidates who perform from memory must ensure that an original copy of the music performed is brought into the exam for the examiner's reference.

### 1.4.6 The metronome mark on this piece feels too fast/slow. Will I be marked down if I play it at a different speed to what is written?

Metronome marks are given as a guide to performance and do not need to be strictly adhered to. The speed of the performance should reflect the style and character of the piece and observe all performance directions. However, performances which are substantially faster or slower than the indicated speed may be penalised.

**1.4.7 I've just realised that I've prepared something from the wrong syllabus/wrong groups - what should I do?**

If it is too late for you to learn the correct syllabuses/pieces you should go ahead and take the exam as you have prepared it. The examiner will mark the performance without prejudice and may refer the report form to Trinity's London office. Depending on the severity of the infringement, marks may be deducted as appropriate. Exam reports may be withheld until the outcome of any referred exam has been considered by Trinity.

**1.4.8 What should I do if I have special educational needs?**

In order for us to help you with your requests, please download and complete a 'Special Educational Needs Request form'. This should be sent out together with the entry form to your local representative by the closing date. Please check the current Information and Regulations booklet for guidance on applying for special educational needs' provision.

**1.4.9 How do I enter for a Trinity exam?**

All entries to a public centre must be made on an official TCL application form, available to download from our website, on the 'Enter for an Exam' page. This should be completed and sent in with the correct fee to your Local Area Representative. Details of Local Area Representatives can be found on the 'UK Representatives List with examination dates' document, or on the Trinity worldwide section of the website. For further queries regarding applications please see the Applicants FAQ document or speak to your local Representative.

**1.4.10 How do I enter for a Rock & Pop exam?**

You can enter a UK exam on the website [www.trinityrock.com](http://www.trinityrock.com). If you want to enter an exam in another country, contact your Trinity co-ordinator in your country. Their details are listed on the 'Venues' page of the website.

## **In the Exam**

**1.5.1 Will Trinity provide me with an accompanist for the exam?**

No, candidates are responsible for providing their own accompanists.

**1.5.2 Will Trinity provide me with a page-turner for the exam?**

No. Difficult page turns should be overcome by photocopying the relevant pages. Page turners may assist the accompanist or candidates on unaccompanied instruments in Grades 6 to 8, Advanced Certificate, and for Diploma exams.

**1.5.3 Will I have a chance to try out the instrument provided before my exam?**

Candidates may play a few notes before the exam starts to get used to the piano. Rock & Pop candidates will be given a sound check before the assessment starts.

#### **1.5.4 Can I have help with tuning my instrument before the exam?**

Candidates are responsible for the tuning of their own instruments. Up to and including Grade 5, the teacher or accompanist may assist with tuning. From Grade 6 onwards, candidates are expected to tune or adjust their instrument without assistance.

#### **1.5.5 Can I play with a backing track or recorded accompaniment in the exam?**

Up to and including Grade 3 candidates may play with a backing track or recorded accompaniment, which need not be a commercial product but must not include the solo line. Backing tracks can be used for all grades for Drum Kit and Jazz candidates, and for some Electronic Keyboard pieces if indicated in the syllabus. Backing tracks are not permitted for Diploma exams, except for Drum Kit and Jazz. Please see the Rock & Pop Syllabus section for details of Rock & Pop backing tracks.

#### **1.5.6 Do I need to provide copies of the music for the examiner?**

Candidates for grade exams are strongly encouraged to bring photocopies of pieces not published by Trinity to their exam as reference copies for the examiner. Candidates for Certificate and Diploma exams must always bring copies of the music they are playing for the examiner. If there is more than one examiner, they will not need a copy each; one copy will always be sufficient.

#### **1.5.7 Will the examiner start the backing track for me?**

For classical grade exams, it is the candidate's responsibility to provide and operate playback equipment for backing tracks. For Rock & Pop grade exams, the examiner will operate all of the backing tracks for the songs and Session skills.

#### **1.5.8 How many examiners will there be in my exam?**

Grade, Certificate, ATCL and LTCL assessments will normally be conducted by one examiner. FTCL assessments will often be conducted by two examiners.

Another examiner may also attend for moderation purposes, and trainee examiners are also sometimes in attendance.

#### **1.5.9 Why is my exam being recorded?**

All graded and diploma exams are now recorded on a hard disk recorder (audio only) for training and quality assurance purposes. This procedure is an essential feature of Trinity's commitment to the consistency of marking and administration by its examiners and is in no way detrimental to the candidate. These recordings are not made available to the public.

Candidate privacy and data are protected under the UK Data Protection Act 1998.

## After the Exam

### 1.6.1 Do I need to pass every section of the exam to achieve a pass overall?

No, as long as you have achieved an overall mark of 60 you have passed the exam. For Diploma exams with two modules you will need to have passed both modules to pass overall.

### 1.6.2 What are the different pass bands?

Pass bands are detailed below:

Grade Exams		Certificate and Diploma Exams	
Pass band	Mark	Pass band	Mark
Distinction	87-100	Distinction	80-100
Merit	75-86		
Pass	60-74	Pass	60-79
Below Pass 1	45-59		
Below Pass 2	0-44	Below Pass	0-59

### 1.6.3 How long will it take for me to get my results?

Grade and Certificate results are normally sent out immediately after the completion of the exam session, therefore all reports should be received within one week of the exam. However, if the session goes over more than one week then results may be issued on a fortnightly basis. The target date for sending diploma results to the candidate is six weeks after the examination.

### 1.6.4 I'm not happy with my exam result/exam experience, what can I do?

We value all feedback regarding our exam procedures from our customers. Should you wish to raise a complaint about any aspect of our exams, our Complaints Policy is available to download from the policies section of the website.

If you wish to query the result of an exam please see our Appeals Procedure at [www.trinitycollege.co.uk/appeals](http://www.trinitycollege.co.uk/appeals)

### 1.6.5 When will I receive my certificate?

Certificates for successful candidates are issued 6-8 weeks after the result has been released.

## 2. Grade & Certificate Syllabuses

### General Syllabus FAQs

#### 2.1.1 What are the differences between the Grade exams and the Certificate Exams?

Most Grade exams have a basic structure of repertoire, technical work and supporting tests (or Songs and Session Skills), which is flexible and designed to reflect a range of musical understanding.

Certificate exams offer performance-based assessment, with no technical work, supporting tests or Session skills. They develop solid performance preparation and presentation skills.

#### 2.1.2 Are there age limits for any grade exams?

There are no age limits for any Trinity grade or Certificate exams. We welcome learners of all ages.

#### 2.1.3 What are the syllabus overlap arrangements for 2013?

The following overlap arrangement applies to the following new syllabuses which came into operation 2013:

Singing, Woodwind, Jazz Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Guitar, Keyboard & Organ, excluding Digital Keyboard Grades 6-8

For exams taking place in 2013 candidates have the following two options:

*Either*

- ▶ Use Repertoire from the 2012 syllabuses paired with Technical Work from the 2013-2014 syllabuses
- or*
- ▶ Use Repertoire and Technical Work from the 2013-2014 syllabuses

#### 2.1.4 Can I play a piece that's not listed in the syllabus?

Candidates have the option to present an own composition as one of their exam pieces but all other pieces must be taken from the syllabus list for that grade unless otherwise stated.

#### 2.1.5 Do I need to play repeats/cadenzas?

Repeats of more than a few bars in any pieces, exercises or orchestral excerpts should be omitted unless otherwise stated. All da capo and dal segno instructions should be observed. Cadenzas in grade exams should not be played unless specified in the syllabus.

#### 2.1.6 Can I make notes during the Aural Test?

No, the Aural test is designed as far as possible to be based on listening and depend less on memory, so candidates should be able to answer all questions without having to make notes. Each question is based on a single extract which will become more familiar as the test progresses, and this extract is repeated.

**2.1.7 Can I choose the order of what I play/sing in the exam?**

Yes. Candidates who wish to do the exam in an order of their choice should indicate their preferred sequence on the appointment form which is given to the examiner when entering the exam room.

If no preference is given, the usual order of the exam will be as follows:

For accompanied instruments: Pieces, Technical Work, Supporting Tests

For unaccompanied instruments: Technical Work, Pieces, Supporting Tests

**2.1.8 Will the examiner ask me scales from previous grades as well as the scales listed for the grade I am taking?**

No, the examiner will only ask the candidate scales listed for the grade they are taking.

## **Brass Syllabus**

**2.2.1 Do I still have to play the lip flexibility exercise for the 2013-2014 syllabus?**

For the Trombone, Bass Trombone, French Horn and Tenor Horn, the 2013-14 syllabus requires that candidates chose to do either Section i) Scales and Arpeggios (from memory) or Section ii) Exercises (plus one lip flexibility exercise) for the Technical Work in the exam.

For the Trumpet, Cornet, Flugel Horn, Euphonium, Baritone and Tuba, there is no requirement to do the lip flexibility exercise in the exam.

**2.2.2 Please could you explain the sight reading/transposition test for Trumpet and French Horn in the 2013-2014 syllabus?**

There is no longer a prepared transposition test. For Trumpet, Grades 6-8, and French Horn, Grades 4-8, the sight reading test simulates an orchestral band situation. Candidates will be asked to transpose their sight reading from the written key of C major into one of the keys listed on page 14 of the syllabus.

## Electronic/Digital Keyboard Syllabus

### 2.3.1 Can I still take an exam on Digital Keyboard in 2013?

Digital Keyboard Grades 6-8 syllabus came to an end in December 2012 and is now replaced with Electronic Keyboard Grades 6-8. However, candidates who wish to take Digital Keyboard Grades 6-8 exams in 2013 can request special permission from Trinity's London Office by emailing [music@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:music@trinitycollege.co.uk) with the following details:

Candidate Name:

Exam:

Centre:

Session:

Trinity College London will provide candidates with a permission letter to present to the examiner on the day of the exam.

Please note that for Digital Keyboard Grades 6-8 candidates must present both Repertoire and Technical Work from the same syllabus. The content of the Digital Keyboard and Electronic Keyboard syllabuses cannot be combined in any way and candidates should choose one or the other of these in 2013.

### 2.3.2 Is my Keyboard the correct model for the exam?

Please see page 12 of the syllabus for details on the recommended Keyboard specifications for each grade.

### 2.3.3 I don't understand an instruction on the Keyboard music, please could you explain?

Please see our Electronic Keyboard Glossary resource on our website for specific guidance on Electronic Keyboard terms.

### 2.3.4 Do I have to play fully fingered chords?

Single or fully fingered chords can be used at the candidate's discretion, though in the higher grades the chords required may not be available as single fingered chords.

### 2.3.5 How should I space the chords for Chord Knowledge?

Candidates should use their judgement to choose spacing and arrangement and arrangement of the notes according to the most convenient fingering. Please see the 'glossary of chords' resource on our website for further guidance.

### 2.3.6 It is impossible to change voice on my keyboard within the time given – what should I do?

All the voice and dynamic changes are possible and have been selected at the appropriate level of demand for each grade.

Up to and including Grade 2, candidates using keyboards without registration memory may find it necessary to alter the voice from the one suggested in the music to facilitate quick changes; for example, by selecting voices with near or adjacent locations.



## Guitar Syllabus

### **2.4.1 Do I have to use a footstool?**

Candidates are expected to provide and use a footstool or similar support to promote good posture for Classical Guitar exams. No specific marks will be deducted for lack of a footstool but the examiner may comment on it if it is seen to have affected the overall technical facility.

### **2.4.2 I think I've spotted a misprint in your Guitar Scales & Exercises book, should I let you know?**

For publications such as the Guitar Scales & Exercises book where we have spotted a number of errors, we will publish a list on the appropriate syllabus page so that you can mark in any changes on your copy.

We welcome feedback about our books, so if you would like to let us know about an error then please let us know by emailing [music@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:music@trinitycollege.co.uk)

### **2.4.3 Can I use an acoustic guitar for my classical guitar exam?**

No, acoustic guitars with six steel strings are not appropriate for this exam.

### **2.4.4 Can I play plectrum guitar pieces finger style?**

No, all Plectrum guitar pieces must be played using a plectrum.

## Jazz Woodwind Syllabus

### **2.5.1 Is improvisation no longer compulsory for all Jazz instruments in the 2013-2014 Syllabus?**

In the Jazz Woodwind syllabus, pieces containing improvisation are required for Saxophone, but not required for Flute and Clarinet.

### **2.5.2 Are the Aural and Improvisation supporting tests different for Jazz instruments?**

No, the Aural and Improvisation supporting tests for Jazz exams are the same as for Classical exams.

### **2.5.3 If the syllabus does not specify how many choruses to play, what should I do?**

Two to three choruses is normally sufficient for improvisation pieces, but it is ultimately the candidate's choice as to what works best musically. A good guideline for the expected length of a piece is the own composition timings on p10 of the syllabus.

## Percussion Syllabus

### **2.6.1 I'm left handed – can I have a left-handed Drum Kit set up for my exam?**

Yes. Please inform your local representative of your request on entry so that setting up time can be built into the timetable.

## Rock & Pop Syllabus

### **2.7.1 What is the difference between the Rock & Pop exams and existing Trinity grade exams (i.e. Drum Kit, Guitar, Singing and Electronic Keyboard)?**

Trinity's Rock & Pop exams offer an alternative approach to the learning and teaching of these instruments and have been designed to reflect the way rock and pop musicians learn. The structure and content of the Rock & Pop exams is different from our existing exams to reflect this, but the levels and validity of the qualifications are identical. The Rock & Pop exams are designed to develop skills and techniques specific to rock and pop music such as hammer-ons for guitarists and mic technique for vocalists.

### **2.7.2 Are band exams available?**

Selected songs for Initial to Grade 5 appear in the song books across all instruments (bass, drums, guitar, keyboards and vocals). This means there is a great opportunity to get together in a group to play with friends or other learners as a band.

Although Rock & Pop exams are primarily for solo musicians, Trinity offers certificate exams for groups and the songs from the Rock & Pop books can be used as a part of a free choice programme for a certificate exam. More information can be found on the Groups pages of the website.

### **2.7.3 Can I include styles like Soul and Reggae Music in my song choices?**

It is possible to include any popular style as an own choice song for Song 2. We will also be expanding the song choices as we make more songs available as digital downloads from 2013

### **2.7.4 Are Rock & Pop Keyboards exams are more suited to electronic keyboard players or pianists?**

The Rock & Pop Keyboards syllabus encourages both electronic keyboard and piano students to tackle different styles of music – some of which will work fantastically well on a digital or acoustic piano. The term 'Keyboards' in the Rock & Pop books encompasses a range of instruments – acoustic pianos, digital pianos, electronic keyboards, synthesizers, (Rhodes pianos, Mellotrons etc.).

### **2.7.5 For Rock & Pop Keyboards exams, can I just play the chords in the left hand using the chord symbols?**

No, in Rock & Pop exams please note that the left hand part in all songs should be played as written i.e. the bass clef part should be included.

**2.7.6 Are V-drums suitable for all Rock & Pop exams?**

For Initial to Grade 2 candidates can use either a digital or an acoustic kit. For Grade 3 onwards, an acoustic kit must be used. Public or private centres may provide a digital drum kit for use up to and including Grade 5, in addition to the acoustic kit. Where they do so the following conditions will apply:

- ▶ Both kits must be provided - an acoustic kit and a digital kit
- ▶ The digital kit must at least meet the specification provided below which will be updated from time to time to recognise technological advancements
- ▶ The centre must provide Trinity with the specification of the kit to be provided, and Trinity's authorisation must be gained before going ahead. The digital kit must be amplified in such a way that the balance between instruments can be easily adjusted as appropriate by the examiner.
- ▶ It is the responsibility of the centre to inform candidates that a digital kit will be available and that they will be able to make a choice in the exam room.
- ▶ Any technical support required will be provided by the centre and not by the examiner.
- ▶ Where the digital kit fails for any reason the candidate will be asked to play on the acoustic kit.

**Specification**

The following are examples which would be acceptable for Trinity Rock & Pop exams up to and including grade 5.

- ▶ Alesis DM8 pro kit
- ▶ Roland TD4 KX
- ▶ Yamaha DTX 520 or Yamaha DTX 700

**2.7.7 Can I change the key of the Vocals songs?**

No, though there are alternative keys for some of the songs for Initial to Grade 5 which are available on our Rock & Pop website.

For Grades 6, 7 and 8 there are two books (male and female) for each grade. Although titled 'male' and 'female' they are not specifically for either gender; vocalists can choose songs from either book.

**2.7.8 Can I create my own backing track that is similar to the demo track?**

Candidates can create their own backing track only for Song 2 and they will need to bring this along on the day of the exam to give to the examiner. For Songs 1 and 3 they must use the backing tracks provided.

**2.7.9 What is the format for the backing track?**

All backing tracks will be in mp3 format.

**2.7.10 If I create a backing track for my own choice song, does this breach copyright? Can I continue to use the backing track for future performances?**

You can create your own backing tracks for exam purposes only, but will need special copyright permissions if these are to be recorded or publicly performed.

**2.7.11 Can I use live backing musicians in the exam?**

No, the whole focus of Rock & Pop exams is on playing with a backing track

**2.7.12 Can I accompany myself for every song or only Song 2?**

Candidates can accompany themselves for every song; however, they will need to play along with the backing tracks for Songs 1 and 3. If they do accompany themselves, they will only be marked on the instrument they have entered for. For example, if vocalists want to accompany themselves by playing the guitar, they may do so, as long as they play along with the backing track. The examiner will only mark the vocal performance and not the guitar.

**2.7.13 Can I perform any of the songs from the Rock & Pop books without the backing track?**

It is fine to perform a song from the books unaccompanied for Song 2 as long as it is clearly marked in the own choice column on the appointment form. Candidates must use the backing track for Songs 1 and 3.

**2.7.14 Is my own choice song of the appropriate level?**

Guidelines for how to choose your own song are available on our website. We do not offer pre-approval of own choice songs.

## Singing Syllabus

### 2.8.1 Can I transpose a song into a different key to better suit my vocal range?

Songs may be performed in any key and may be transposed except for songs from the opera, operetta, sacred and oratorio section of Group A at Grades 6-8.

### 2.8.2 How many pieces can I choose from each group?

Up to two songs may be chosen from each group. Each song must be chosen from a different composer.

### 2.8.3 Can I use the piano to help with preparation for the sight singing test in the exam?

The candidate will not be allowed to go to the piano at any point during the sight reading test; however, the tonic and key-note will be given at the start of the 30 seconds preparation and again before attempting the test. Candidates may ask the examiner to re-sound the key note at any time.

### 2.8.4 Do I have to sing all the verses of the song listed?

All songs should be prepared in full unless otherwise stated. Long introductions, tuttis and endings should be shortened as appropriate.

## Strings Syllabus

### 2.9.1 Is my harp suitable for the exam?

The syllabus is designed for a 34 string non-pedal harp tuned in E flat major and a 46 string pedal harp; however, if the octave range of the items required is not possible on your particular instrument, please note this on the bottom of your appointment form under 'Any other important information for the examiner' and adapt the item to the number of octaves available to you.

### 2.9.2 Can I play a piece on Viola in my Violin exam and vice versa?

Candidates taking Grade 6, 7 or 8 exams in Violin or Viola may chose to play one piece on the other instrument from the corresponding syllabus and grade. All technical work and supporting tests must be taken on the instrument on which the entry was made.

### 2.9.3 Do I have to follow the bowing/fingering printed in the books?

If a particular bowing or fingering must be used, this is specified in the music. Otherwise, teachers and candidates may use any fingering or bowing they wish, so long as it provides an appropriate and successful musical outcome.

## Woodwind Syllabus

### **2.10.1 Do you offer exams on just the soprano/descant recorder?**

At Initial to Grade 5, candidates may play either descant or treble recorder, or a combination of the two.

At Grades 6-8, both descant and treble recorders must be played.

However, at this level, one treble piece may also be played on the soprano if desired. Discretion must always be used to ensure it is appropriate for the music performed.

### **2.10.2 Do you offer exams on the piccolo?**

There are no exams available for just the piccolo but grades 6-8 flute candidates may substitute one of their pieces with a piccolo piece.

## Piano Syllabus

### **2.11.1 Will the examiner ask me to play all three exercises in the exam?**

You will only be asked two of the three exercises in the exam. The examiner will ask you to choose one exercise to be played first and the examiner will then select one of the remaining two prepared exercises to be performed.

## 3. Performance Diplomas

### 3.1.1 Are there any prerequisites for performance diploma exams?

There are no prerequisites for ATCL or LTCL in either Recital or Pro-Music.

The prerequisite for FTCL Recital is LTCL (or equivalent) in the same instrument.

### 3.1.2 Is there an age limit for performance diplomas?

The minimum age for entry to ATCL Pro-Music Performance is 16.

The minimum age for entry to LTCL Pro-Music Performance is 18.

### 3.1.3 How do I know if I am a suitable candidate?

The standard of performance expected at each level is described on p14 of the syllabus.

### 3.1.4 Can I play pieces from outside the syllabus list?

If you wish to propose a programme consisting partly or completely of pieces that are not listed in the syllabus you must submit the whole programme for approval, following these guidelines:

- ▶ You must not play any work that is listed for any current Trinity Grade, Certificate Syllabus or lower diploma.
- ▶ Any own choice works that you propose must demonstrate a comparable level of technical and musical demand to the pieces given in the repertoire list in this syllabus, which should be referred to for an indication of this level.

### 3.1.5 How do I submit a programme approval request and how long does it take?

To submit a programme approval request, please visit <http://musicdiplomas.trinitycollege.com> and complete the online application form. Although it will be processed as quickly as possible, programme proposals can take up to six weeks to process, and up to 20 weeks if revisions need to be made. Please do not make an entry for the examination until you have received approval.

### 3.1.6 What should I include in my programme notes?

The main thing to bear in mind in preparing your programme notes is that they are very short, and they only form part of the presentation skills section.

It is important to provide information which would be useful to a concert audience and will help them to listen to the piece they are about to hear. Avoid providing too much biographical information on the composer, and instead focus on the actual music. The syllabus says 'context, content and significance' of the chosen works.

Every set of programme notes is different, and every piece is different, but here are a few examples of information you might want to include. This is not comprehensive and should not be taken as compulsory since every programme has different requirements.

- ▶ Character of the work
- ▶ Style and genre
- ▶ Musical features and how this piece is typical or not of its genre or style
- ▶ Technical demands
- ▶ Anything which makes this an interesting piece to perform

### **3.1.7 Is my programme balanced?**

Part of the assessment in the Presentation Skills section of the marks is programme planning, so we are not able to provide advice on whether a candidate's programme is balanced or not. We specify that you need to include a range of moods, styles and tempi. This is easier to do if you have chosen pieces from a range of musical periods, but it is not compulsory to have a piece from every period.

### **3.1.8 What do you mean by 'stagecraft' for the Presentation Skills section?**

Stagecraft refers to the candidate's manner and presentation throughout the exam – e.g. posture, attitude and behaviour. These should reflect that of a professional performer in order to achieve the highest marks.

### **3.1.9 Is the programme notes word limit overall, or for each piece?**

This is an overall word limit; they are very short, and only form part of the Presentation Skills section.

### **3.1.10 If I exceed the specified time limit for my recital will I be penalised?**

Accurate and careful timings are an important part of planning your diploma and you should consider them carefully. Any performances which are more than a few minutes above or below the specified time limit will be referred to the Music Team and may be penalised by a significant mark reduction or, in extreme cases, by disqualification.

### **3.1.11 Do I need to play repeats/cadenzas?**

Long exposition repeats should not be played but all other repeats are at the candidate's discretion. All cadenzas should be played - these may be improvised or played from scores.

### **3.1.12 Is it acceptable to choose to play any of the cadenzas from a piece or is it expected that the candidate should play the cadenza in the edition suggested in the syllabus?**

You can play any cadenza of your choice in the exam - it need not be the one from the suggested edition or match the one in the edition you are playing from. Just ensure that you have at least one original copy of all editions you are playing from in the exam room with you.

### **3.1.13 Some of the pieces in the repertoire list have 'and' or 'and/or' written by them - does that mean I have to play all the pieces in that group?**

Where the syllabus says 'and' both works need to be played. Where it says 'and/or' any combination of these pieces could be chosen.

### **3.1.14 Can I take a diploma exam on an instrument not listed in the syllabus?**

If your instrument is not listed in the syllabus you must seek permission from the Music team and submit a provisional programme using the Programme Approval Request form (<http://musicdiplomas.trinitycollege.com>)

We will be unable to accept applications from players of such instruments as electronic/digital keyboard, electronic organ, panpipes, and ukulele.



**3.1.15 I have chosen all my pieces from the syllabus list - do I need to have my programme pre-approved?**

You do not need your programme pre-approved if you have chosen all your pieces from the list for your level. However, if you would like to play a piece from a higher level list or play selected movements from a work that is listed complete you will need to submit a programme approval request.

**3.1.16 I am interested in taking a Jazz diploma - do you have any suggested repertoire lists?**

If you are interested in taking a Jazz recital diploma please see our Recital Programme Advice for Jazz document on our website for guidance on selection of repertoire. All Jazz diploma programmes must be pre-approved before entry.

**3.1.17 Can an audience be present in my exam?**

Audiences are not permitted for diploma examinations at any level.

**3.1.18 After the exam can I have a copy of the recording?**

The recordings are only used for standardisation and moderation purposes and are not made available to candidates or the public.

## 4. Teaching Diplomas

**4.1.1 Are there any prerequisites for teaching diploma exams?**

The prerequisites for each level are as follows:

ATCL – Trinity Grade 8 or above in the instrument/voice being taught

LTCL – Trinity Grade 8 or above in the instrument/voice being taught (Instrumental/vocal teaching)

Trinity Grade 6 or above (Music Teaching)

FTCL – LTCL in instrumental/voice teaching, evidence of employment as a teacher for at least 2 years full-time or 4 years part-time, prior approval of your dissertation topic in writing from the Music Team.

**4.1.2 I don't have the listed prerequisite, what can I do?**

To apply for approval of an alternative prerequisite please send an email with scanned copies of the certificate for your qualification, and transcripts of your marks if appropriate, to [music@trinitycollege.co.uk](mailto:music@trinitycollege.co.uk).

**4.1.3 Is there a minimum age for teaching diplomas?**

The minimum ages for teaching diplomas are as follows:

ATCL Principles of Instrumental/Vocal teaching = 18

LTCL Instrumental /Vocal Teaching and Music Teaching = 21

FTCL Music Education = 21

#### **4.1.4 What's the difference in level between ATCL and LTCL?**

The ATCL level qualification is aimed at those who are starting out in their teaching career and the LTCL for those with more experience. In terms of standard, the ATCL is set at QCF Level 4 (end of first year undergraduate study) and LTCL at Level 6 (final year of undergraduate study).

#### **4.1.5 Do I need to go on a course to take this diploma?**

No. In common with all Trinity's qualifications, these diplomas are available as freestanding assessments, open to direct entry by external candidates. Should you wish to attend a course the following course providers in the UK have developed courses which lead to Trinity College London teaching diplomas:

- ▶ City Lit [www.citylit.ac.uk](http://www.citylit.ac.uk)
- ▶ European Piano Teachers Association [www.epta-uk.org](http://www.epta-uk.org)

#### **4.1.6 Will I need some kind of guidance, or some lessons, to be sure I've covered everything?**

It's possible. If you have a wide experience of instrumental or vocal teaching in a recent educational context you might well feel confident enough without extra help. However, if you feel there are parts of the syllabus that you are not quite sure of, you may wish to seek further guidance from an experienced teacher.

#### **4.1.7 Can I take these diplomas before I start teaching?**

No, you need to have at least two pupils in order to do the work for the diploma.

#### **4.1.8 Can I teach more than one instrument for this diploma?**

Yes, candidates may teach up to two instruments for this diploma, provided that the prerequisites for both instruments have been met.

#### **4.1.9 Will this diploma be helpful if I am applying for a job in instrumental or vocal teaching?**

Yes. Trinity's teaching diplomas are accredited and along with theoretical knowledge they provide evidence of teaching experience and ability and encourage reflective practice.

#### **4.1.10 If I am successful in the LTCL diploma does that mean I automatically get Qualified Teacher Status in the UK?**

No, however, the LTCL is generally recognised in the sector as a professional qualification in instrumental/vocal teaching and is fully accredited. Teachers wishing to apply for Qualified Teacher Status need to follow one of the routes outlined by the Teacher Training Agency.

**4.1.11 Do I have to have any qualifications to start teaching privately in the UK?**

No. Private teaching is an arrangement between the teacher and the pupils or pupils' parents. However, most pupils or parents will check to see what qualifications any potential teachers have, and some professional bodies will ask for qualifications as a prerequisite of membership.

**4.1.12 How long will it take me to do this qualification?**

The exact length of time will naturally depend on the degree and extent of your prior experience, but the average learning path might result in the candidate completing the diploma over the course of a year.

**4.1.13 Is the 10 hours of observation for ATCL Unit 1 per student/instrument or overall?**

The 10 hours of observation required for ATCL Unit 1 Submitted materials is in total, so this can be across more than one student or instrument.

**4.1.14 For which instruments are the Instrumental/Vocal teaching diplomas available?**

Candidates may specialise on any instrument currently offered for our grade exams.

**4.1.15 Do you have a reading list for teaching diplomas?**

Yes, this can be downloaded from the teaching diplomas page on our website.

**4.1.16 Will I need to perform as part of the exam?**

No, except as necessary for demonstrating instrumental techniques for the presentation at ATCL or demonstration lesson at LTCL.

**4.1.17 If I fail a Unit, can I re-take just that one Unit?**

Yes, if you need to retake Unit 1, all submitted materials must be sent by registered post to Trinity's London office for marking.

If you need to retake Unit 2, then all submitted materials (two copies of all written materials -one hard copy and one electric copy) should be submitted to Trinity's London office, along with the entry for Unit 2. If Unit 1 has already been passed, no changes will be made to the marking.

