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UKULELE

SYLLABUS SPECIFICATION 2020

PREMIERE – GRADE 8



Awarding the
Contemporary Arts



UKULELE

SYLLABUS SPECIFICATION

2020 Edition

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See [Revision History](#) at back of book
for further information

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PREFACE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Rockscool 2020 syllabus for Ukulele. This syllabus guide is designed to give teachers, learners and candidates practical information on the graded examinations run by Rockscool.

The Rockscool website www.rslawards.com has detailed information on all aspects of our examinations, including examination regulations, detailed marking schemes and assessment criteria as well as notated and audio examples to help you prepare for the examination.

This Syllabus Guide covers the following examinations:

- Graded Examinations Debut to Grade 8
- Graded Certificates Debut to Grade 8
- Performance Certificates Premiere to 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 listed on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) in England by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual). In Northern Ireland they are regulated by the Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment (CCEA). 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 Ukulele Grade Examinations, Graded Certificates and Performance Certificates from May 2020.

Examinations

Rockscool offers three types of graded music examination: Graded Examination, Graded Certificate & Performance Certificate

Grade Examinations

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

Prepared Work	Unprepared Work
▪ 3 Performance Pieces: Debut to Grade 8 ▪ Technical Exercises: Debut to Grade 8	▪ Sight Reading Or Improvisation & Interpretation: Debut to Grade 5 ▪ Quick Study Pieces: Grades 6–8 ▪ Ear Tests: Debut to Grade 8 ▪ General Musicianship Questions: Debut to Grade 8

Performance Certificates

Performance Certificates are available from Premiere – Grade 8 and consist of the following:

Prepared Work
▪ 5 Performance Pieces: Premiere to Grade 8

Graded Certificates

Graded Certificates are available from Debut – Grade 8 and consist of the following:

Prepared Work

- 3 Performance Pieces: Debut to Grade 8
- Technical Exercises: Debut to Grade 8

OVERVIEW

Unit Overview – Graded Examinations in Popular Music Performance

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

Unit Overview – Graded Certificates in Popular Music Performance

QUALIFICATION TITLE	QAN	TOTAL NO. OF UNITS	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	CREDIT	TOTAL
RSL Entry Level Award in Graded Certificate in Music Performance (Entry 3)	610/4760/0	1	8	4	40
RSL Level 1 Award in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 1	610/4761/2	1	12	6	60
RSL Level 1 Award in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 2	610/4762/4	1	18	9	90
RSL Level 1 Award in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 3	610/4763/6	1	18	12	120
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 4	610/4764/8	1	24	15	150
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 5	610/4765/X	1	24	18	180
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 6	610/4766/1	1	36	22	220
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 7	610/4767/3	1	48	27	270
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Graded Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 8	610/4768/5	1	54	32	320

Unit Overview – Performance Certificates in Popular Music Performance

QUALIFICATION TITLE	QAN	TOTAL NO. OF UNITS	GUIDED LEARNING HOURS	CREDIT	TOTAL
RSL Entry Level Award in Performance Certificate in Music Performance (Entry 2)	610/4769/7	1	4	0	20
RSL Entry Level Award in Performance Certificate in Music Performance (Entry 3)	610/4770/3	1	8	4	40
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 1	610/4771/5	1	12	6	60
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 2	610/4772/7	1	18	9	90
RSL Level 1 Award in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 3	610/4773/9	1	18	12	120
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 4	610/4774/0	1	24	15	150
RSL Level 2 Certificate in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 5	610/4775/2	1	24	18	180
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 6	610/4776/4	1	36	22	220
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 7	610/4777/6	1	48	27	270
RSL Level 3 Certificate in Performance Certificate in Music Performance - Grade 8	610/4778/8	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	All RSL examinations are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by RSL. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Performance Certificate

Learners will be able to:

- Perform music in a range of musical styles

Graded Certificate

Learners will be able to:

- Perform music in a range of musical styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on an instrument/voice through responding to set technical demands

Graded Exam

Learners will be able to:

- Perform music in a range of musical styles
- Demonstrate technical ability on an instrument/voice through responding to an unseen selection of set technical demands
- Demonstrate musical understanding through a range of an unseen selection of set tests

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 24 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.

For further details on exam dates and fees and to apply for your music performance grades please visit the RSL website at: www.rslawards.com

EXAMINATIONS OVERVIEW

RSL offers three types of graded music examination; Grade Examinations, Graded Certificates and Performance Certificates.

Graded Examinations

The graded examinations in Ukulele are assessed via an examination. The examination is divided into the following sections:

Technical tests covering knowledge of:

- Scales
- Arpeggios
- Chords
- Stylistic Studies (level 3 only)

Performance Pieces

- Three Performance pieces (two pieces can be 'Free Choice Pieces')

Unseen Tests

- Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation tests (Debut – Grade 5)
- Quick Study Pieces (Grades 6–8)
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

These elements fall into two categories:

- Prepared work: This consists of three Performance Pieces and Technical Exercises
- Unprepared work: This consists of Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation (Debut to Grade 8)

Performance Certificates

Ukulele Performance Certificates are available from Premiere to Grade 8 and consist of the following elements:

- Five Performance Pieces

Graded Certificates

Ukulele Graded Certificates are available from Debut to Grade 8 and consist of the following elements:

- Three Performance Pieces

Technical tests covering knowledge of:

- Scales
- Arpeggios
- Chords
- Stylistic Studies (level 3 only)

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: 25 minutes
- Grade 4: 27 minutes
- Grade 5: 27 minutes
- Grade 6: 32 minutes
- Grade 7: 32 minutes
- Grade 8: 32 minutes

Performance Certificates

- Premiere: 10 minutes
- Debut: 15 minutes
- Grade 1: 20 minutes
- Grade 2: 20 minutes
- Grade 3: 25 minutes
- Grade 4: 25 minutes
- Grade 5: 25 minutes
- Grade 6: 27 minutes
- Grade 7: 27 minutes
- Grade 8: 30 minutes

Graded Certificates are taken remotely and have no specific assessment timings.

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

MARKING SCHEMES

Grade Exams: Debut to Grade 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
Ear Tests	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation (Debut – Grade 5)	6 out of 10	7–8 out of 10	9+ out of 10
Quick Study Piece (Grades 6–8)			
General Musicianship Questions	3 out of 5	4 out of 5	5 out of 5
Total Marks	60%	74%	90%

Performance Certificates: Premiere to Grade 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
Performance Piece 4	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Performance Piece 5	12–14 out of 20	15–17 out of 20	18+ out of 20
Total Marks	60%	75%	90%

Graded Certificates: Premiere to Grade 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
Total Marks	60%	75%	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 or Improvisation & Interpretation (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. In a Performance Certificate, candidates may present their Performance Pieces in any order of their choice.

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 grade 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), which 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

Please Note: Candidates may not perform pieces in their exam that they have previously performed for an RSL Assessment. This includes re-sits of their exams.

Recommended Prior Learning

Learners are not required to have any prior learning for these qualifications. However, learners should ensure that they are aware of the requirements and expectations of each grade prior to entering for an assessment.

FURTHER INFORMATION & CONTACT

Complaints & Appeals

Information regarding complaints and appeals 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

ROCKSCHOOL CONTEMPORARY UKULELE EXAMINATIONS

GENERAL NOTES

The following general notes apply to both Grade and Performance Certificate Examinations:

Guidance on Free Choice Pieces

For all examinations (except Premiere), candidates are able to play a number of free choice pieces:

- Grade Examinations and Graded Certificates: Two free choice pieces (a minimum of one piece must be from the Ukulele grade book)
- Performance Certificates: Three free choice pieces (a minimum of two pieces must be from the Ukulele grade book)

Please note: free choice pieces are not available for the Premiere exam.

Free choice pieces must demonstrate a comparable level of technical and musical demand to the pieces given in the set selections in the grade books which can be referred to as an indication of appropriate level.

Own compositions are also acceptable. Pieces should be selected carefully to ensure that they provide suitable opportunity for candidates to demonstrate the relevant assessment criteria. Prior approval is not required but any deviation/simplification/omissions from any aspect of the criteria or requirements may be reflected in the marks awarded. Candidates are reminded that if a chosen Free Choice Piece does not meet these requirements this may impact on the level of achievement possible within the examination.

Free Choice Pieces can be performed to a backing track (without the examined part on the track), or as a solo piece (without backing track).

For more information on free choice pieces and adapted repertoire, please visit <https://www.rslawards.com/free-choice-pieces>

Adaptation and Personalisation of Pieces

Candidates should perform pieces as notated, except where they choose to embellish or rework any sections (NB. this does not apply to technical exercises or unseen tests which must be performed exactly as written). In these instances, as well as where there are performance indications to *ad lib.*, *improvise*, *develop*, etc., candidates will be marked on their ability to present the personalised material in a stylistically appropriate way, commensurate with the grade level. All performances will be expected to have a clear basis in the notated material.

Notation

There are some repertoire passages and technical exercises which require campanella style technique (using the instrument's re-entrant tuning for over-ringing of notes). These passages should be played as shown or as stipulated.

For non-campanella passages, candidates may interpret the tablature positions freely as long as the notated pitch is observed.

Instrument Specification

The Rockschoo Ukulele Syllabus 2020 has been designed to embrace the instrument's re-entrant tuning. Please contact Rockschoo (info@rslawards.com) should you wish to take an exam with an instrument using standard tuning.

GRADING CRITERIA & DEFINITIONS

GRADED EXAMINATIONS

Performance Pieces					
Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	18–20	15–17	12–14	6–11	0–5
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Style & Expression	Consistently convincing projection of the music.	Mostly convincing projection of the music.	Some convincing projection of the music.	Music not projected convincingly	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

Technical Exercises					
Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	13–15	11–12	9–10	4–8	0–3
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

Sight Reading / Improvisation & Interpretation / Quick Study Piece

Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	9–10	7–8	6	3–5	0–2
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

Ear Tests

Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	9–10	7–8	6	3–5	0–2
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

General Musicianship Questions (GMQs)

Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	5 correct responses	4 correct responses	3 correct responses	2 correct responses	0–1 correct responses

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES

Performance Pieces					
Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	18–20	15–17	12–14	6–11	0–5
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Style & Expression	Consistently convincing projection of the music.	Mostly convincing projection of the music.	Some convincing projection of the music.	Music not projected convincingly	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

GRADED CERTIFICATES

Performance Pieces					
Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	18–20	15–17	12–14	6–11	0–5
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Style & Expression	Consistently convincing projection of the music.	Mostly convincing projection of the music.	Some convincing projection of the music.	Music not projected convincingly	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

Technical Exercises					
Bands of Attainment / Mark Range					
Attainment Band	Distinction	Merit	Pass	Below Pass 1	Below Pass 2
Mark Range	13–15	11–12	9–10	4–8	0–3
Command of Instrument	Consistently clear production of sound and even tone quality throughout	Mostly clear production of sound and even tone quality overall	Some clear production of sound and generally even tone quality	Sound produced is unclear with uneven quality of tone produced	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Sync or Pulse	Performance consistently synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance mostly synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance sometimes synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse maintained	Performance not synchronised to the music, or an internal pulse not maintained	No attempt and/or incomplete performance
Accuracy & Understanding	All of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated throughout. Understanding of musical structure shown all of the time.	Most of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills demonstrated overall. Understanding of musical structure shown most of the time.	Some of the written music accurately performed or equivalent skills generally demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure shown some of the time.	Written music not accurately performed or equivalent skills not demonstrated. Understanding of musical structure not evidenced.	No attempt and/or incomplete performance

DEFINITIONS

DEFINITIONS	
Command of Instrument	The quality of the sound produced from the instrument, including the consistency of sound/tone, control of sound/tone commensurate with grade.
Sync or Pulse	Alignment of the performance to backing track, metronome or applied to a solo performance, observing notation markings. For unaccompanied pieces candidates should maintain a secure internal pulse and adjust the pulse where instructed within the music.
Accuracy & Understanding	Representing the written notation accurately, except by instruction through performance notes, or interpreting the written part with equivalent skills demonstrated. Secure understanding of musical structure evidenced through transitions of phrases, bars and sections.
Style & Expression	An expressive and commanding performance of the notated material dictated by the demands of the performance piece.

UNIT SPECIFICATIONS

PREMIERE

The Premiere Ukulele exam is available as a Performance Certificate only. Premiere exams are assessed in the same way as other Rockschoo! Performance Certificates.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | PREMIERE

EXAM OVERVIEW

Performance Pieces

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces (listed below). There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

Candidates are NOT permitted to submit Free Choice Pieces for the Entry Level 2 (Premiere) exam.

The following performance pieces can be found in the Ukulele Method Book One:

- 'Leaping Around' (Page 40)
- 'Out of Town' (Pages 40 and 41)
- 'Rockin and a Rollin' (Page 45)
- 'The Hawker' (Page 46)
- 'I C U' (Pages 52 and 53)

The Premiere Performance Certificate lasts 10 minutes.

Setting the level of the backing track

Before playing the first piece all the way through the examiner will make sure the volume of the backing track is correct by asking the candidate to play along to the backing track for the first few bars. Once the correct level has been agreed the examiner will begin again and conduct all five pieces. Note that this is only done for the first piece.

DEBUT

The Debut Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been learning a short time and have developed elementary skills, techniques, co-ordination and musical understanding.

There are three types of exam available at Debut, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | DEBUT

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chord voicings.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests which begin to develop Melodic and Rhythmic recall

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Debut exam lasts 15 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Debut there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chord Voicings.

All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Groups A & B need to be played to a click. The examiner will play the click at the given tempo and candidates should begin to play after four clicks.

Group C is played as announced by the examiner.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=65bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- C major
- C major pentatonic
- A minor pentatonic
- G major

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=65bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- C major
- A minor

Group C: Chord Voicings

Open position chords. Individual chords will be strummed once as directed by the examiner.

- Major Chords: C, F, G & D
- Minor Chords: Am, Dm

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 4 bars
- Rhythms: Whole, half and quarter notes
- Key: C major
- Pitches and instrumental compass: Open/first position > C&D on the 3rd string; E on the 2nd string
- Tempo: ♩=65

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 4 bars
- Key: C major
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only
- Tempo: ♩=65

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS [CONTINUED]

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

Candidates will hear two half notes one after the other and will be asked whether the second note is higher or lower in pitch than the first note.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar vocal count-in.

The tempo is ♩=85.

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

Candidates will hear a two-bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the high A (1st) string.

The test will be played twice. Candidates will be asked to play the rhythm back, before identifying the rhythm from two printed examples shown to them by the examiner.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar count-in. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next candidates will hear a vocal count-in and will then need to play the rhythm to the drum backing.

The tempo is ♩=85.

SUPPORTING TESTS [CONTINUED]

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge relating to the candidate's choice of performance piece, and the fifth question asked will be about the candidate's instrument.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music performed in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Debut candidates will be asked to identify:

- The music stave and the TAB
- The treble clef
- Half and quarter note values

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding their instrument.

In Debut candidates will be asked to identify *one* of the following parts of the ukulele:

- Neck, body, tuning-pegs or bridge

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | DEBUT

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Debut Performance Certificate lasts 15 minutes

GRADED CERTIFICATE | DEBUT

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Debut there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 1

The Grade 1 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for six months to one year. They have mastered the key basic debut level skills and have since acquired greater use of technique, rhythms, co-ordination and musical understanding. There is also an opportunity to build on basic improvisation.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 1, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 1

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chord voicings

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests developing Melodic and Rhythmic recall

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 1 exam lasts 20 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 1 there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chords.

All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Groups A & B need to be played to a click. The examiner will play the click at the given tempo and candidates should begin to play after four clicks.

Group C is played as announced by the examiner.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=70bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- C major
- A natural minor
- G major
- F major
- C major pentatonic on 3rd and 4th strings

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=70bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- G major
- F major
- D minor

Group C: Chord Voicings

Individual chords will be strummed once as directed by the examiner.

- Major: A, D & E
- Minor: Dm, Em & Bm
- Dominant 7: G⁷ & D⁷ (root omitted)

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 4 bars
- Rhythms: Half notes and quarter notes
- Key: G major or A minor
- Pitches and instrumental compass: Open position > E-G on the 2nd string; A, B & C on the first string
- Tempo: ♩=70

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 4 bars
- Key: G major or A minor
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only.
- Tempo: ♩=70

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play three notes in sequence. Candidates will need to tell the examiner whether the notes are higher or lower (up or down) in sequence. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar vocal count-in. The tempo is ♩=85.

Please note: candidates may answer "higher/lower" or "up/down".

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the high A string. Candidates will hear the test twice before being to play the rhythm back. Candidates will then be asked to identify the rhythm from two printed examples shown. The test will contain a combination of quarter notes, quarter-note rests, and eighth notes.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap to practise. Next, candidates will hear a vocal count-in and will then need to play the rhythm to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about the candidate's instrument.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music performed in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 1 candidates will be asked to identify:

- The treble clef
- The time signature
- Whole, half, quarter and eighth-note values
- The difference between a major and a minor chord

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding their instrument.

In Grade 1 candidates will be asked to identify:

- Two of the following parts of the ukulele: neck, fretboard, body, tuning-pegs, nut or bridge, sound hole
- Pitch names of the open strings

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 1

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 1 Performance Certificate lasts 20 minutes

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 1

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 1 there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 2

The Grade 2 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for one year to eighteen months. They have mastered the key basic skills up to Grade 1 and since acquired greater use of technique, rhythms, co-ordination and musical understanding. There is also the continuing opportunity to develop improvisation skills.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 2, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 2

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chord voicings.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests which continue to develop Melodic and Rhythmic recall

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 2 exam lasts 20 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 2 there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chord Voicings.

All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Groups A & B need to be played to a click. The examiner will play the click at the given tempo and candidates should begin to play after four clicks.

Group C is played as indicated below

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩ = 80bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- D major
- B^b major
- C minor pentatonic
- C blues
- C major on strings 3 & 4

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩ = 80bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

- D major
- B minor
- B^b major (candidates can prepare either fingering shown in grade book)
- G minor (candidates can prepare either fingering shown in grade book)

Group C: Chord Voicings

1. Major & Minor Chords

Each chord to be strummed as directed by the examiner. Note: for each chord type, candidates must demonstrate both fingerings

- B^b major
- G minor

2. 7th Chords

Each chord to be strummed once as directed by the examiner.

- G maj⁷
- G⁷
- Gm⁷

3. Suspended Chords

Tempo: ♩ = 80bpm

Candidates must play the given suspended chord exercise in the grade book as a continuous exercise to a click.

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 4 bars
- Rhythms: Quarter notes and quarter-note rests, eighth notes
- Key: D major or B^b major
- Pitches and instrumental compass: Open–4th fret, any diatonic notes in D or B^b major on 1st, 2nd or 3rd string
- Tempo: ♩=80bpm

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 4 bars
- Key: D major or B^b major
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only
- Tempo: ♩=85bpm

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a drum backing using the C minor pentatonic scale. The first note of the melody will be the root note and the first interval will be ascending. The candidate must then play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for practise. Next, candidates will hear a vocal count-in, after which they must play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩ = 85.

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the high A string. The candidate will hear the test twice, then will be asked to play the rhythm back. The candidate will then be asked to identify the rhythm from two printed examples shown.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for practise. Next, the candidate will hear a vocal count-in, after which they must play the rhythm to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩ = 90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge relating to a performance piece of the candidate's choosing, and the fifth question asked will be about the candidate's instrument.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music performed in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 2 candidates will be asked to identify:

- The pitch name of notes
- The meaning of the time signature marking
- Whole, half, quarter, eighth and 16th note values
- Rest values
- The construction of a major or minor chord

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding their instrument.

In Grade 2 candidates will be asked to identify

- Three of the following parts of the ukulele:
Neck, fretboard, body, tuning-pegs, nut, soundhole, or bridge
- Names of all open strings

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 2

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 2 Performance Certificate lasts 20 minutes

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 2

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 2 there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 3

The Grade 3 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for eighteen months to two years and who are ready to consolidate their final stage as a beginner player. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 2 and since acquired greater use of technique, rhythms, co-ordination and musical understanding. Improvisation phrasing is now confident and articulate and candidates have started to develop the beginnings of stylistic awareness.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 3, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 3

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chords.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests which continue to develop Melodic and Rhythmic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 3 exam lasts 25 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 3 there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chords.

All exercises need to be played as directed below. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=90bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

The following scales need to be prepared from the root notes D, E^b and E

- Major
- Natural minor
- Major pentatonic
- Minor pentatonic

The following scales need to be performed in the keys shown only, with the given fingering

- C major pentatonic (campanella style)
- C major (linear pattern on 3rd string)

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=90bpm

Rhythms: Quarter notes

Range: As shown in grade book

The following arpeggios need to be prepared from the root notes D, E^b and E

- Major
- Minor
- Diminished

The following arpeggios need to be performed in the keys shown only, with the given fingering

- D major arpeggio on four strings
- E major arpeggio on four strings

Group C: Chord Voicings

1. Diminished Triads

Candidates must play both the root position and first inversion triads from the following chords as stated by the examiner

- D diminished
- E^b diminished
- E diminished

2. Barre Chords in the key of D, E^b or E major

Candidates must play the barre chords shown in the key stated by the examiner, as a continuous sequence to click. The tempo is ♩=90.

The chords in sequence are I, IV, II^m, V⁷ and VI^m.

3. Strumming exercise in B minor

Candidates must play the chordal muting and groove exercise to continuous click.

The tempo is ♩=90. Please note, this exercise should be played with a swung eighth-note feel.

SUPPORTING TESTS**Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation**

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 4 bars
- Rhythms: Quarter notes and quarter-note rests, eighth notes and eighth-note rests
- Key: E^b major or E minor
- Tempo: ♩=80

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 4 bars
- Key: E^b major or E minor
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only
- Tempo: ♩=80–90

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a drum backing using the D minor pentatonic scale. The first note of the melody will be the root note and the first interval will be ascending. The candidate must then play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for practise. Next, candidates will hear a vocal count-in, after which they must play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=85.

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the high A string. The candidate will hear the test twice, then will be asked to play the rhythm back. The candidate will then be asked to identify the rhythm from two printed examples shown.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for practise. Next, the candidate will hear a vocal count-in, after which they must play the rhythm to the drum backing.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge relating to a performance piece of the candidate's choosing, and the fifth question asked will be about the candidate's instrument.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music performed in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 3 candidates will be asked to identify:

- The pitch name of notes
- The meaning of the time signature marking
- Whole, half, dotted half, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth and 16th note and rest values
- The construction of any chord found within the piece from the following types:
 - Major, minor, sus⁴, dominant⁷, minor⁷
- The meaning of any dynamic or articulation markings shown on the score

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding their instrument.

In Grade 3 candidates will be asked to:

- Identify three of the following parts of the ukulele:
 - neck, fretboard, body, tuning-pegs, nut, soundhole, or bridge
- Identify names of all open strings

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 3

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 3 Performance Certificate lasts 25 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 3

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 3 there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 4

The Grade 4 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for two to three years and who are ready for intermediate level playing. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 3 and since acquired greater use of technique, more complex rhythms, co-ordination and musical understanding. Candidates will be developing a sense of expression and continuing to broaden their stylistic awareness, and there is also the opportunity to improvise which will be growing in assurance and articulation.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 4, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 4

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chords.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests which continue to develop Melodic recall and begin to develop harmonic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 4 exam lasts 27 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 4 there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chords.
All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown.
Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=80bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

The following scales need to be prepared from the root notes E^b, E and F

- Major
- Natural minor
- Harmonic minor

The following scales need to be prepared from the root notes shown only, with the given fingering

- C# minor pentatonic across two positions
- E major pentatonic across two positions
- D blues scale on strings 3 & 4
- G major | linear pattern on one string
- C natural minor | linear pattern on one string

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=80bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

The following arpeggios need to be prepared from the root notes E^b, E and F

- Major
- Minor
- Dominant 7
- Minor 7

The following arpeggios need to be prepared from the root notes shown only, with the given fingering

- E^b dominant 7 arpeggio on four strings
- C minor 7 arpeggio on four strings

Group C: Chord Voicings

The tempo for this group is ♩=80 bpm.

1. Harmonised scale

Barre chord shapes in the key of E^b, E or F major, to be played in sequence to continuous click.

The chord types (in sequence) are I, II^m, III^m, IV, V, VI^m, VII dim, I.

The tempo is ♩=80.

Please note, candidates can choose between exercise 2 or exercise 3 below:

Either:

2. Muted chords and 16th note strumming

To be played to continuous click. Note candidates must play with a swung 16th note groove.

Or:

3. Triple Strokes

To be played to continuous click.

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 8 bars
- Rhythms: Quarter notes and quarter-note rests, eighth notes and eighth-note rests, ties
- Key: E major or F minor
- Tempo: ♩=80–90

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately.

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 4 bars
- Key: E major or F minor
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only.
- Tempo: ♩=80–90

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a drum backing using either the C# minor pentatonic or E major pentatonic scales. The first note of the melody will be the root note and the first interval will be ascending. Candidates will play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next there will be a vocal count-in and candidates will then play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

Candidates will hear a tonic chord followed by a two bar chord sequence in the key of C major, played to a bass and drum backing. The sequence will be a selection drawn from the I, IV, and V chords and may occur in any combination.

Candidates will be asked to play the chord sequence to the drum backing using the rhythm shown in the grade book. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. Candidates will then be asked to identify the sequence.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap to practise after the second playing. There will then be a count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in, after which candidates will need to play the chords to the drum backing. Candidates will then need to name the chord sequence. The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions about a performance piece of their choosing. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about technical knowledge.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask the candidate four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music performed in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 4 the examiner can draw on the following subject areas for these questions:

- Names of pitches
- The meaning of the time signature and the key signature markings
- Repeat marks, first and second time bars, **D.C.**, **D.S.**, **al Coda** and **al Fine** markings
- Whole, half, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth, dotted eighth, triplet eighth-notes and 16th-note values
- Whole, half, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth, dotted eighth, triplet eighth, 16th-note rests and rest combinations
- The construction of any chord found within the piece from the following types: Major 7, minor 7, dominant 7, diminished, major 6 or minor 6
- The meaning of any dynamic or articulation markings shown on the score

Technical Knowledge

The examiner will also ask one question regarding a technical consideration of the piece, in relation to:

- Picking hand: Strumming or picking technique for a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable
- Fretting hand: Fretting position and fingering used to play a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable

The examiner will choose the section of music and will ask candidates to give a brief explanation as to why the technique was appropriate for the chosen section.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 4

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 4 Performance Certificate lasts 25 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 4

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 4 there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 5

The Grade 5 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for three years or more and who have fully consolidated their intermediate level playing. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 4 and since acquired a greater use of appropriate technique, more complex rhythms, coordination and musical understanding. Candidates will have developed a good sense of expression, have a strong grasp of stylistic awareness, and there is also the opportunity to improvise which is now individual, assured, accurate and expressive.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 5, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 5

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover scales, arpeggios and chords.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete either a Sight Reading or an Improvisation & Interpretation test, and two Ear Tests which continue to develop melodic and harmonic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 5 exam lasts 27 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Sight Reading OR Improvisation & Interpretation
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 5 there are three groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios and Chords.
All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown.
Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩ = 90bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

1. Major scale in three positions (key of A^b or B major)
2. Harmonic minor scale on one string
Candidates must demonstrate a harmonic minor scale with its root note on any of the four open strings (G, C, E or A) as specified by the examiner.
3. C major (campanella style)
4. G major (campanella style)

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩ = 90bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

1. Arpeggios formed on chords Imaj⁷, V⁷ and VI m⁷ to be played in a continuous exercise in the key of A^b major
2. Arpeggios formed on chords Imaj⁷, V⁷ and VI m⁷ to be played in a continuous exercise in the key of B major
3. C# minor 7 arpeggio across four strings

Group C: Chords

The tempo for this group is 90 bpm.

1. Harmonised scale in A^b or B
Barre chord shapes in the key of A^b or B major to be played in sequence to continuous click.
The chord types (in sequence) are I, II m, III m, IV, V, VI m, VII dim, I. The tempo is ♩ = 90.

Please note, candidates can choose between exercise 2 or exercise 3 below:

Either:

2. Dominant 7th partial chords and 16th note strumming rhythms. The tempo is 90 bpm.
To be played to continuous click.

Or:

3. Dominant 7th chords & triple strokes
To be played to continuous click.

SUPPORTING TESTS**Section 1 | Sight Reading or Improvisation & Interpretation**

In this section, candidates can choose between a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test. The examiner will ask which the candidate has chosen before then showing the test. Once the candidate has chosen, they cannot change their mind.

Sight Reading

- Duration: 8 bars
- Rhythms: Quarter notes and quarter-note rests, eighth notes and eighth-note rests, dotted eighth notes and eighth-note rests, 16th notes and ties
- Key: A^b major or B major
- Tempo: ♩=80

Improvisation & Interpretation

- Duration: 8 bars
- Key: A^b major or B major
- Improvisation & interpretation requirement: Single-note melodies only.
- Tempo: ♩=80–90

Candidates will have 90 seconds to practise after which the examiner will play the backing track twice. The first time is to practise and the second time is to perform the final version for the exam. During the practice time, candidates will be given the option of a metronome click throughout or a one bar count-in at the beginning.

The backing track is continuous so once the first playthrough has finished the count-in of the second playing will start immediately

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a drum backing using the A^b major scale. The first note of the melody will be the root note. Candidates will play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next there will be a vocal count-in and candidates will need to play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=80.

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play a tonic chord followed by a four bar chord sequence in the key of G major played to a drum backing. The sequence will be a selection drawn from the I, IV, V and VI^m chords and may occur in any combination.

Candidates will be asked to play the chord sequence to the drum backing in the rhythm shown in the example in the grade book. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. Candidates will then be asked to identify the sequence.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap to practise after the second playing. Candidates will hear the count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in, and will then need to play the chords to the drum backing. Candidates will then need to name the chord sequence, including chord types (i.e. major or minor). The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions about a performance piece of their choosing. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about technical knowledge.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask candidates four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 5 the examiner can draw on the following subject areas for these questions:

- Names of pitches
- The meaning of the time signature and the key signature markings
- Repeat marks, first and second time bars, **D.C.**, **D.S.**, **al Coda** and **al Fine** markings
- Whole, half, quarter, dotted quarter, eighth, dotted eighth, triplet eighth-notes and 16th-note values & rests.
- The construction of any chord found within the piece from the following types:
 - major 7, minor 7 or dominant 7 chords
 - sus² or sus⁴ chords
 - '3rd omitted' chords, e.g. 'B⁷ (no 3rd)'
- The meaning of a 'slash' chord, e.g. 'C/E'
- The meaning of any dynamic or articulation markings shown on the score

Technical Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding a technical consideration of the piece, in relation to:

- Picking hand: Strumming or picking technique for a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable
- Fretting hand: Fretting position and fingering used to play a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable

The examiner will choose the section of music and will ask candidates to give a brief explanation as to why the technique was appropriate for the chosen section.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 5

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 5 Performance Certificate lasts 25 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 5

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 5 there are three groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 6

The Grade 6 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for three years or more and who have fully consolidated their intermediate level playing. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 5 and since acquired a greater use of appropriate technique, more complex rhythms, coordination and musical understanding. Candidates will have developed a good sense of expression, have a strong grasp of stylistic awareness, and there is also the opportunity to improvise which is now individual, assured, accurate and expressive.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 6, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 6

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover Scales, Arpeggios, Chords and Stylistic Studies.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete a Quick Study Piece and two Ear Tests which continue to develop melodic and harmonic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 6 exam lasts 32 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Quick Study Piece
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 6 there are four groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios, Chords, and Stylistic Studies. All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following scale types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G

- Dorian Mode
- Mixolydian Mode
- Melodic Minor
- Chromatic Scale

Each of the following scales needs to be prepared from the root notes shown only:

- G major in 3rds | partial scale on strings 1 and 4
- G natural minor in 3rds | partial scale on strings 1 and 4
- D natural minor (campanella style)
- D harmonic minor (campanella style)
- C# minor pentatonic exercise | continuous exercise in four positions as shown in grade book.

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following arpeggio types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G:

- Minor 7^b5 arpeggio
- Diminished 7 arpeggio

Each of the following arpeggio types needs to be prepared from the root note shown only:

- E major 7 | compound 10th arpeggio
- E dominant 7 | compound 10th arpeggio
- E augmented | compound 10th arpeggio
- E minor 6 | arpeggio on four strings
- G minor 7 | arpeggio on four strings

Group C: Chords

Each of the following chord types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G.

When announced by the examiner, candidates must demonstrate both positions (inversions) in the key and chord type(s) stated.

- Minor 7^b5 | in two positions
- Diminished 7 | in two positions
- Augmented | in two positions

The following exercise needs to be played in the key stated only, using the fingering/string combinations as shown in the grade book, to continuous click. The tempo is ♩=100 bpm.

- F major harmonised scale | ascending only

TECHNICAL WORK | CONTINUED

Group D : Stylistic Studies

Candidates will prepare a stylistic study from the grade book, drawn from one group of styles from the list below and perform it to the backing track. The choice of style will determine the style of the Quick Study Piece, for example, if candidates choose a rock & pop Stylistic Study then the examiner will give a rock & pop Quick Study Piece in that section of the exam.

Styles:

- Rock and Pop
- Soul, Jazz and Blues
- Ukulele Specialist

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Quick Study Piece

At this grade candidates will be asked to prepare and play a short Quick Study Piece (QSP). The QSP chosen will be a previously unseen example, but similar to those provided as exemplar material in the grade book.

Candidates will be shown the test and played the track with the notated parts played. Any bars that require improvisation will not be demonstrated. Candidates will then have three minutes to study the test with the option of a click track. The backing track will be played twice more. Candidates will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track, with the notated parts now absent, before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track.

The style of the QSP is determined by the stylistic study selected by the candidate in the technical exercise section. The QSP is in the form of a lead sheet and candidates must create their own interpretation of the music in the parts where instructed to do so.

Styles:

- Rock & Pop
- Blues & Country
- Ukulele Specialist

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a bass and drum backing using the D natural minor scale. The first note of the melody will be either the root note or the fifth and the first interval will be either ascending or descending. Candidates will play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next there will be a vocal count-in and candidates will need to play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play a tonic chord followed by a four bar chord sequence in the key of F major played to a bass and drum backing. The sequence will be a selection drawn from the following chords: I, II^m, III^m, IV, V and VI^m chords and will incorporate a dominant 7 (V⁷) chord. The chords may occur in any combination.

Candidates will be asked to play the chord sequence to the drum backing in the rhythm shown in the example in the grade book. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. Candidates will then be asked to identify the sequence.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap to practise after the second playing. Candidates will hear the count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in, and will then need to play the chords to the drum backing. Candidates will then need to name the chord sequence, including chord types (i.e. major or minor). The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions about a performance piece of their choosing. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about technical knowledge.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask candidates four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 6 the examiner can draw on the following subject areas for these questions:

- The names of pitches
- Any expressive musical marking found in the piece such as palm muting, accents, *staccato*, *legato*, *vibrato*
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- One type of scale that can be used appropriately in the solo section of the chosen piece and its relation to the underlying harmony of the piece (if relevant)

or:

How a section was developed (if relevant)

or:

A stylistic feature of the piece characteristic of its genre

Technical Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding a technical consideration of the piece, in relation to:

- Picking hand: Strumming or picking technique for a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable
- Fretting hand: Fretting position and fingering used to play a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable

The examiner will choose the section of music and will ask candidates to give a brief explanation as to why the technique was appropriate for the chosen section.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 6

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 6 Performance Certificate lasts 27 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 6

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 6 there are four groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 7

The Grade 7 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for four to five years and have extended their advanced level playing. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 6 and developed notable security of appropriate technique, use of expressive devices, rhythmic complexity, fluency and musical understanding. Candidates will be able to improvise with conviction and personality plus demonstrate strong musical form and structure. There will be mature and authentic stylistic awareness, with developing individuality and communication.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 7, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 7

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover Scales, Arpeggios, Chords and Stylistic Studies.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete a Quick Study Piece and two Ear Tests which continue to develop melodic and harmonic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 7 exam lasts 32 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Quick Study Piece
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 7 there are four groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios, Chords, and Stylistic Studies. All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following modes needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G:

- Lydian mode
- Phrygian mode
- Phrygian dominant mode

Each of the following needs to be prepared in the stated key or mode only:

- B^b major in 6ths | partial scale on strings 1 and 3
- B^b natural minor in 6ths | partial scale on strings 1 and 3
- E dorian mode (campanella style)
- E natural minor (campanella style)

Each of the following scales needs to be prepared with the root note on any of the four open strings (G, C, E or A) as specified by the examiner:

- Melodic minor scale on one string
- Chromatic scale on one string

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following arpeggio types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G:

- Major 9 arpeggio
- Minor 9 arpeggio

Each of the following arpeggios needs to be prepared from the stated root note only:

- D diminished 7 arpeggio | in two positions
- D minor 7^{b5} arpeggio | in two positions
- C dominant 7 add 4 arpeggio | across four strings
- E dominant 7 add 4 | across four strings

Group C: Chords

Each of the following chord types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G.

When announced by the examiner, candidates must demonstrate the root note, followed by both inversions (positions) in the key and chord type(s) stated

- Dominant 9 | in two positions
- Minor 9 | in two positions
- Major 9 | in two positions

The following exercise needs to be played in the key stated only, to continuous click. The tempo is ♩=100 bpm.

- 7th chords in F major | two voicings for each chord type (Imaj⁷, VIIm⁷, IIIm⁷, VIIIm^{7b5}, Imaj⁷)

TECHNICAL WORK | CONTINUED

Group D : Stylistic Studies

Candidates will prepare a stylistic study from the grade book, drawn from one group of styles from the list below and perform it to the backing track. The choice of style will determine the style of the Quick Study Piece, for example, if candidates choose a rock & pop Stylistic Study then the examiner will give a rock & pop Quick Study Piece in that section of the exam.

Styles:

- Rock and Pop
- Soul, Jazz and Blues
- Ukulele Specialist

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Quick Study Piece

At this grade candidates will be asked to prepare and play a short Quick Study Piece (QSP). The QSP chosen will be a previously unseen example, but similar to those provided as exemplar material in the grade book.

Candidates will be shown the test and played the track with the notated parts played. Any bars that require improvisation will not be demonstrated. Candidates will then have three minutes to study the test with the option of a click track. The backing track will be played twice more. Candidates will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track, with the notated parts now absent, before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track.

The style of the QSP is determined by the Stylistic Study selected by the candidate in the technical exercise section. The QSP is in the form of a lead sheet and candidates must create their own interpretation of the music in the parts where instructed to do so.

Styles:

- Rock & Pop
- Blues & Country
- Ukulele Specialist

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a bass and drum backing using the F major or F natural minor scale. The first note of the melody will be either the root note or the fifth and the first interval will be either ascending or descending. Candidates will play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next there will be a vocal count-in and candidates will need to play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play a tonic chord followed by a four bar chord sequence in the key of F major played to a bass and drum backing. The sequence will be a selection drawn from the following chords: I, II^m, III^m, IV, V and VI^m. The chords may occur in any combination. The II^m, III^m and VI^m chords can be either minor or minor 7th chords.

Candidates will be asked to play the chord sequence to the drum backing in the rhythm shown in the example in the grade book. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. Candidates will then be asked to identify the sequence.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap to practise after the second playing. Candidates will hear the count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in, and will then need to play the chords to the drum backing. Candidates will then need to name the chord sequence, including the chord type and any extensions. The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions about a performance piece of their choosing. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about technical knowledge.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask candidates four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 7 the examiner can draw on the following subject areas for these questions:

- The names of pitches
- Any expressive musical marking found in the piece such as palm muting, accents, *staccato*, *legato*, *vibrato*
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- One type of scale that can be used appropriately in the solo section of the chosen piece and its relation to the underlying harmony of the piece (if relevant)

or:

How a section of the piece was developed (if relevant)

or:

A stylistic feature of the piece characteristic of its genre

Technical Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding a technical consideration of the piece, in relation to:

- Picking hand: Strumming or picking technique for a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable
- Fretting hand: Fretting position and fingering used to play a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable

The examiner will choose the section of music and will ask candidates to give a brief explanation as to why the technique was appropriate for the chosen section.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 7

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 7 Performance Certificate lasts 27 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 7

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 7 there are four groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

GRADE 8

The Grade 8 Ukulele exam is for candidates who have been typically learning for five years or more and have now consolidated their playing to a high level. They have mastered the key skills up to Grade 7 and developed heightened technique, use of expressive devices, rhythmic complexity, fluency, co-ordination and musical understanding. Candidates will be able to improvise to an advanced level with effortless assurance and personality plus demonstrate seamless musical form and structure. There will be an innate stylistic conviction and distinctive musicality with strong individuality. Communication will be commanding.

There are three types of exam available at Grade 8, a Grade Exam, Graded Certificate or Performance Certificate. (Refer to the Introduction for an explanation of the differences).

GRADE EXAM | GRADE 8

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and Technical Exercises which cover Scales, Arpeggios, Chords and Stylistic Studies.

Unprepared Work

Candidates are required to complete a Quick Study Piece and two Ear Tests which continue to develop melodic and harmonic recall.

EXAM STRUCTURE

The Grade 8 exam lasts 32 minutes and is taken in the following order:

- Performance Pieces*
- Technical Exercises*
- Quick Study Piece
- Ear Tests
- General Musicianship Questions

* These elements can be taken first or second at the candidate's request

TECHNICAL WORK

At Grade 8 there are four groups of technical work: Scales, Arpeggios, Chords, and Stylistic Studies. All exercises need to be played in straight feel, in the keys, octaves and tempos shown. Candidates may use their book during the exam for all groups.

Group A: Scales

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following scale types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G

- Whole tone
- Diminished
- Altered

Each of the following scales needs to be prepared from the root notes shown only:

- Chromatic scale on one string | starting on any open string (G, C, E or A)
- E phrygian mode | campanella style
- C major | in sixths on strings 3 & 4

In addition, candidates must prepare the following from previous grades:

1. Linear scales with root notes on any of the four open strings (G, C, E or A) as specified by the examiner.
 - Major
 - Natural minor
 - Melodic minor
 - Harmonic minor
2. Any of the following scales or modes from previous grades played campanella style:
 - D natural minor
 - D harmonic minor
 - E natural minor
 - E dorian mode
 - C major
 - G major

Tempo: ♩=100

One octave

Eighth notes, finishing on a quarter note.

Ascending and descending

TECHNICAL WORK | CONTINUED

Group B: Arpeggios

Tempo: ♩=100bpm

Rhythms: Eighth notes

Range: As shown in grade book

Each of the following arpeggio types needs to be prepared from the root notes E, F, F# and G:

- Dominant 7^{#5} arpeggio
- Dominant 7^{b5} arpeggio
- Dominant 7^{b9} arpeggio
- Minor/major 9 arpeggio

In addition, candidates must prepare the following from previous grades:

Tempo: ♩=100

One octave

Eighth notes, finishing on a quarter note

Ascending and descending

- E minor 6 arpeggio on four strings
- G minor 7 arpeggio on four strings

Group C: Chords

Altered chords. Candidates must perform both voicings to continuous click

- F dominant 7^{#5} | two voicings
- F dominant 7^{b5} | two voicings

Altered chords. Candidates must perform the voicing shown in the grade book when directed by the examiner

- C dominant 7^{#9} | one voicing only, as shown in grade book
- C dominant 7^{b9} | one voicing only, as shown in grade book

Group D : Stylistic Studies

Candidates will prepare a stylistic study from the grade book, drawn from one group of styles from the list below and perform it to the backing track. The choice of style will determine the style of the Quick Study Piece, for example, if candidates choose a rock & pop Stylistic Study then the examiner will give a rock & pop Quick Study Piece in that section of the exam.

Styles:

- Rock and Pop
- Soul, Jazz and Blues
- Ukulele Specialist

SUPPORTING TESTS

Section 1 | Quick Study Piece

At this grade candidates will be asked to prepare and play a short Quick Study Piece (QSP). The QSP chosen will be a previously unseen example, but similar to those provided as exemplar material in the grade book.

Candidates will be shown the test and played the track with the notated parts played. Any bars that require improvisation will not be demonstrated. Candidates will then have three minutes to study the test with the option of a click track. The backing track will be played twice more. Candidates will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track, with the notated parts now absent, before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track.

The style of the QSP is determined by the Stylistic Study selected by the candidate in the technical exercise section. The QSP is in the form of a lead sheet and candidates must create their own interpretation of the music in the parts where instructed to do so.

Styles:

- Rock & Pop
- Blues & Country
- Ukulele Specialist

Section 2 | Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test twice.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play a two bar melody with a bass and drum backing using the F major, F harmonic minor or F natural minor scale. The first note of the melody will be either the root note or the fifth and the first interval will be either ascending or descending. Candidates will play the melody back on their instrument. The test will be played twice.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by four clicks. There will be a short gap for candidates to practise. Next there will be a vocal count-in and candidates will need to play the melody to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

Test 2: Harmonic Recall

The examiner will play a tonic chord followed by a four bar chord sequence in the key of F major played to a bass and drum backing. The sequence will be a selection drawn from the following chords: I, II^m, III^m, IV, V and VI^m. The chords may occur in any combination. The I and IV chords can be either major or major 7 chords.

Candidates will be asked to play the chord sequence to the drum backing in the rhythm shown in the example in the grade book. This rhythm will be used in all examples of this test given in the exam. Candidates will then be asked to identify the sequence.

The test will be played twice. Each time the test is played the sequence is: count-in, tonic, count-in, chords. There will be a short gap to practise after the second playing. Candidates will hear the count-in and tonic for the third time followed by a vocal count-in, and will then need to play the chords to the drum backing. Candidates will then need to name the chord sequence, including the chord type and any chord extensions. The tempo is ♩=90.

SUPPORTING TESTS | CONTINUED

Section 3 | General Musicianship Questions

Candidates will be asked five questions about a performance piece of their choosing. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question asked will be about technical knowledge.

Music Knowledge

The examiner will ask candidates four music knowledge questions based on a piece of music they have played in the exam. Candidates will nominate the piece of music about which the questions will be asked.

In Grade 8 the examiner can draw on the following subject areas for these questions:

- The names of pitches
- Any expressive musical marking found in the piece such as palm muting, accents, *staccato*, *legato*, *vibrato*
- Any dynamic marking found in the piece
- One type of scale that can be used appropriately in the solo section of the chosen piece and its relation to the underlying harmony of the piece (if relevant)

or:

How a section of the piece was developed (if relevant)

or:

A stylistic feature of the piece characteristic of its genre

Technical Knowledge

The examiner will also ask candidates one question regarding a technical consideration of the piece, in relation to:

- Picking hand: Strumming or picking technique for a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable
- Fretting hand: Fretting position and fingering used to play a short phrase (up to one bar)
 - demonstration is acceptable

The examiner will choose the section of music and will ask candidates to give a brief explanation as to why the technique was appropriate for the chosen section.

PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE | GRADE 8

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play five performance pieces. There is no unprepared work in the Performance Certificate.

The Grade 8 Performance Certificate lasts 30 minutes.

GRADED CERTIFICATE | GRADE 8

EXAM OVERVIEW

Prepared Work

Candidates are required to play three performance pieces and the technical exercises. There is no unprepared work in the Graded Certificate.

At Grade 8 there are four groups of technical exercises. Candidates must perform all of them, as detailed in the guidance that you can download at [rslawards.com](https://www.rslawards.com)

REVISION HISTORY

REVISION HISTORY

24 July 2017

The grading criteria tables for each unit have been removed, and replaced with one unified table within the preface section. The replacement tables include streamlined criteria each of which comprises clarified wording in a unified format, along with definitions of terms used. This is to facilitate digital mark sheet assessment whilst maintaining the recognition of knowledge skills and understanding attained at each grade level.

8 April 2020

The 'Mark Range' row in the tables on pages 19, 20 and 21 have been corrected to reflect the marking schemes on page 11.

9 April 2020

On p.40 the 4th bullet point in the Sight Reading list has been updated as follows:

"Pitches and instrumental compass: Open-4th fret, any diatonic notes in D or B^b major on 1st, 2nd or 3rd string"

pp.69, 76 and 83 | Supporting Tests | Section 2 | Ear Tests | Test 2: Harmonic Recall:

In Grades 6-8, changes were made to the text to make it clearer that the chords may occur in any combination.

pp. 66 & 67 (Grade 6), 73 & 74 (Grade 7) and 80 & 81 (Grade 8):

In Grades 6-8, changes were made to the text to include reference to Stylistic Studies in the list of groups that appear in the technical work at these grades.

15 April 2020

p.55 | Grade 4 | Supporting Tests | Test 1: Melodic Recall:

The tempo has been corrected to  = 90.

p.55 | Grade 4 | Supporting Tests | Test 2: Harmonic Recall:

This test is two bars in length. The text has been updated accordingly.

p.55 | Grade 4 | Supporting Tests | Test 2: Harmonic Recall:

The requirement to name the chord types (i.e. major or minor) has been removed.

p.60 | Grade 5 | Technical Work | Group B: Arpeggios:

The tempo has been corrected to  = 90.

p.74 | Grade 7 | Technical Work | Group B: Arpeggios:

"C dominant 7 arpeggio | across four strings" has been corrected to

"C dominant 7 add 4 arpeggio | across four strings"

Debut to Grade 8 | Technical Work:

Where scale, arpeggio or chord types are required to be prepared in a range of keys (for example E, F, F# and G), the term 'keys' refers to the root note of the exercise. In this syllabus revision (dated 15th April) and subsequent reprints of the syllabus books the term 'in the keys of...' has been replaced with 'from the root note(s)' for clarification purposes.

5 May 2020

Grading criteria tables updated to include clarification of descriptors at 'Below Pass 1' band of attainment.

13 November 2020

Qualification titles updated.

31 March 2022

p.7 | QUAN codes have been updated.

p.17 | Guidance around adaptation and personalisation of repertoire pieces has been updated.

13 July 2022

p.32 In Technical Exercises - Group A - Scales, "C major on 3rd and 4th strings" has been updated to "C major pentatonic on 3rd and 4th strings"

12 July 2023

p. 21 Addition of a Premiere Performance Certificate

REVISION HISTORY

31 March 2025

Added information about Graded Certificate exam type, including exam information and Qualification codes.

p.10 | Learning Outcomes added to Syllabus

p.14 | Added guidance on selection of performance pieces stipulating that candidates may not be assessed on the same performance pieces more than once

9 May 2025

Syllabus cover updated