

Bass Guitar Examination

Preliminary Grade – Grade 2

Section 1: Scales and Arpeggios

The examiner will request a selection from the Lists below. All should be played ascending and descending and from memory. Candidates should consult the relevant grade examination handbook, which gives full details of all required scales and arpeggios and includes helpful advice on the techniques involved in scale and arpeggio playing.

Preliminary Grade:

A) One octave scales:

G Major; A Natural Minor; E Natural Minor.

B) One octave arpeggios:

A Major; E Major; G Major; A Minor; E Minor.

Grade 1:

A) One octave scales:

Major and Natural Minor – in the keys of G A B C D E

B) One octave arpeggios:

Major and Minor: G A B C D E

Grade 2:

A) One octave scales:

Major; Natural Minor; Pentatonic Minor – in G A B C D E

B) One octave arpeggios:

G A B C D E : Major 7th; Minor 7th; Dominant 7th.

In all keys: Minor; Major.

Section 2: Bass Patterns

- A) The candidate should select a bass pattern from the range shown in Section 2 of the relevant grade Examination Handbook. The candidate will then be shown a chord chart (NOT one taken from the handbook) and will be asked to play through the chord progression using the selected bass pattern. During the first playings, whilst still following the chord progression and keeping within the musical style, the candidate should add variations to the bass pattern. The range and complexity of such variations will be expected to increase as the grades progress.
- B) At the examiner's discretion, a further performance but with an alternative pattern and chord chart may be required.

Section 3: Performance

- A) The examiner will play a chord progression on guitar (or on a recording) containing some of the chords listed below for each grade. The candidate will be shown the chord progression and allowed to hear it played once. The candidate will then be asked to improve an appropriate bass line over further playings of the progression.
- B) At the examiner's discretion, candidates may be given an additional chord progression to play over.
- **The chords may appear in the chord progression for each grade.

Section 3: Performance (cont.)

Preliminary Grade:

Major or minor chords – G; A; B; C; D; E.

The candidate is not expected to play more than the root, and possibly the fifth, of each chord. The chord progression will be played a total of three times.

Grade 1:

Major or minor chords – G; A; B; C; D; E.

The candidate is expected to be fluent in playing the root and fifth of each chord and should demonstrate some ability in incorporating minor or major thirds when musically appropriate. The chord progression will be played a total of three times.

Grade 2:

Major 7th, Minor 7th and Dominant 7th chords – G A B C D E.
Minor and Major chords with any root note.

The candidate is expected to be able to incorporate minor, major and dominant sevenths when musically appropriate. The chord progression will be played a total of three times.

Section 4: Musicianship

Candidates will be asked questions relating to any of the topics listed below:

- A) Musical Knowledge;
- B) Playing the bass guitar;
- C) Knowledge of the instrument.

Knowledge of notes on the fingerboard [taken from the scales and arpeggios listed in the relevant Grade Section 1] is a core requirement – particularly earlier grades.

The range and complexity of questions will increase as the grades progress.

**Candidates should consult the relevant grade examination handbook, which gives full details and examples of this section of the examination.

Section 5: Aural Assessment

Candidates aural abilities will be assessed via tests appropriate to the grade which will include some of the following:

- A) Repetition of rhythms.
- B) Repetition of phrases.
- C) Beating of time.
- D) Harmony tests.
- E) Pitch tests, including [from Grade 1, onwards] recognition of intervals.

**Candidates should consult the relevant grade examination handbook, which gives more information regarding this section of the examination.