

Philosophy Behind These Examinations

Aims:

To offer a structured and comprehensive method of studying the bass guitar which is relevant to the practical musical needs of the modern-day bass guitarist.

To encourage students of bass guitar to develop their musical skills, abilities and potential by forming and exploring aspirations and aiming to achieve excellence.

To provide a reliable system of assessing progress therein offering a formal recognition recognized of the musical skills and talents of bass guitar players, via the award of an internationally recognized qualification.

Objectives:

To offer opportunities and set proper standards for students of bass guitar. The examinations focus upon assessing the ability to play musically and fluently via the command of relevant technical skills and knowledge of the instrument. Proper recognition is given to practical musical skills and the practical demonstration of relevant theoretical knowledge and aural abilities.

Traditionally written (notated) music has no significant role in most modern bass guitar musical styles (e.g. rock, pop, blues, soul, country, etc) consequently no specific restrictions will be imposed upon candidates in respect of being compelled to sight-read traditional music notation. However, an optional music sight-reading test is offered from Grade 6 onwards. Candidates considering taking this option are advised to begin their sight-reading studies from a much earlier stage.

Methods:

The examination syllabus aims to recognise and evaluate the following skills:

- 1) Knowledge of, and practical demonstrations of the use of, arpeggios and scales;
- 2) Improvisation, stylistic interpretation, inventiveness and musical communication;
- 3) The musical results of good technique, with emphasis upon accuracy, fluency, articulation, evenness and clarity.
- 4) Theoretical knowledge of intervals, and the relationship of chords and keys, and the practical application thereof;
- 5) Fluency in the realisation of chord progression charts;
- 6) Aural abilities;
- 7) Knowledge of the mechanism of the instrument and knowledge of notes on the fingerboard;
- 8) Demonstration of specialist techniques.