

# **Introduction To Bass Guitar Examinations**

## **Internationally Recognised Qualifications**

These examinations offer a formal recognition of the specific talents of bass guitar players. The examinations have developed by the Registry of Guitar Tutors, in association with London College of Music Examinations (one of the world's most established and respected music examination boards – established in 1887), and are awarded and certificated by Thames Valley University. The examinations are accredited by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), and have been placed on the National Qualifications Framework, so establishing a formal and recognised standard by which the skills and abilities of bass guitarists can be assessed. The examinations are endorsed by a range of eminent bass guitarist from the fields of rock, jazz, pop and blues, including Sir Paul McCartney.

## **What happens during an examination?**

The examiner will begin by asking you to play a selection of scales and arpeggios. After this the examiner will ask you which bass pattern you have selected; he will then show you a chord chart and ask you to play through the chord progression using that bass pattern (with variations after the first sequence). Next the examiner will show you another chord chart – but this time he will play through it once on guitar whilst you listen, then you should improvise a bass line over further playings. After this, the examiner will ask you a few spoken questions to test your musical knowledge and knowledge of the instrument. The exam will conclude with the examiner testing your 'ear for music' by giving you a selection of aural assessments. At Grades 6-8 you will be asked to perform your specialism.

## Marking Structure

The following shows the maximum marks that can be awarded in each section of the examination.

### **Section 1: Scales and Arpeggios**

*All Grades: 15*

### **Section 2: Bass Patterns**

*Preliminary to Grade 5: 24*

*Grade 6 to Grade 8: 25*

### **Section 3: Performance**

*Preliminary to Grade 5: 36*

*Grade 6 to Grade 8: 30*

### **Section 4: Musicianship**

*All Grades: 10*

### **Section 5: Aural Assessment**

*Preliminary to Grade 5: 15*

*Grade 6 to Grade 8: 10*

### **Section 6: Specialism (Grades 6-8 ONLY)**

*Grade 6 to Grade 8: 10*

## How Marking Works

*0-54.5 = Below Pass, Lower Level.*

*55-64.5 = Below Pass, Upper Level.*

*65 or above = Pass*

*75 or above = Merit*

*85 or above = Distinction*