

Technical Exercises

In this section the examiner will ask you to play a selection of exercises drawn from each of the three groups shown below. Groups A and B contain examples of the scales and arpeggios you can use when playing the pieces. In Group C you will be asked to prepare the bassline riff exercise and play it to the backing track in the exam. You do not need to memorise the exercises (and can use the book in the exam) but the examiner will be looking for the speed of your response. The examiner will also give credit for the level of your musicality.

Groups A and B should be prepared on the starting notes of E, A and G. Before you start the section you will be asked whether you would like to play the exercises along with the click or hear a single bar of click before you commence the test. The tempo is $\text{♩} = 70$.

Group A: Scales

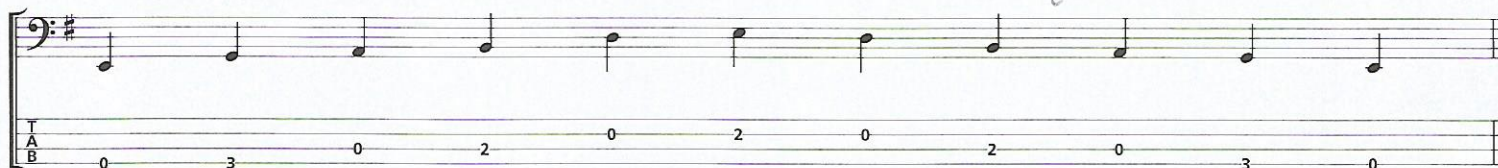
1. Major scale (A major scale shown)

Joined-up writing

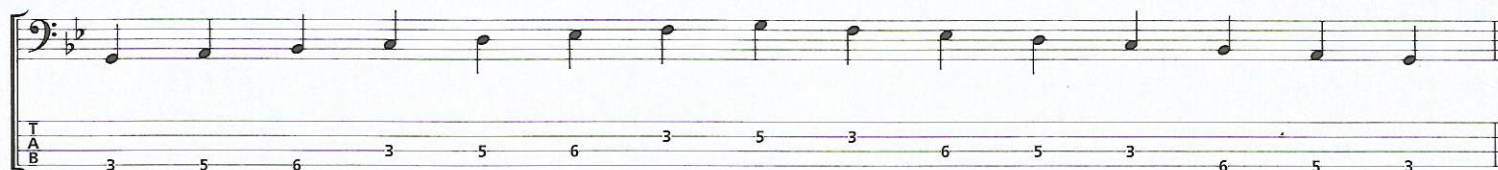


2. Minor pentatonic scale (E minor pentatonic scale shown)

2nd and 6th degree notes are left out.



3. Natural minor scale (G natural minor scale shown)



4. Major pentatonic scale (E major pentatonic scale shown)



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Group B: Arpeggios

One octave and should be played both ascending and descending

1. Major arpeggio (G major arpeggio shown)

3 2 5 5 5 2 3

2. Minor arpeggio (A minor arpeggio shown)

5 8 7 7 7 8 5

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Group C: Riff

In the exam you will be asked to play the following riff to a backing track. The riff shown in bar 1 should be played in the same shape in bars 2-4. The root note of the pattern to be played is shown in the music in each of the subsequent three bars. The tempo is ♩ = 70.

♩ = 70

E A E A

0 0 2 0 2 0 0 0

Sight Reading

In this section you have a choice between either a Sight Reading test or an Improvisation & Interpretation test (see facing page). You will be asked to prepare a Sight Reading test which will be given to you by the examiner. The test is a four bar melody in the key of A minor. The examiner will allow you 90 seconds to prepare it and will set the tempo for you. The tempo is ♩ = 70.

♩ = 70

The image shows a four-bar melody in A minor, written in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 70. The melody consists of quarter notes: A2, G2, F2, E2 in the first bar; D2, C2, B1, A1 in the second bar; G1, F1, E1, D1 in the third bar; and C1, B0, A0, G0 in the fourth bar. Below the staff is a fretboard diagram for a bass guitar, showing the corresponding fret numbers for each note: 0, 0, 2, 3 for the first bar; 0, 0, 3, 3 for the second bar; 0, 2, 3, 2 for the third bar; and 3, 2, 0, 0 for the fourth bar.

Improvisation & Interpretation

You will be asked to play an improvised bassline to a backing track of four bars in the keys of either C major or A minor. You have 30 seconds to prepare then you will be allowed to practise during the first playing of the backing track before playing it to the examiner on the second playing of the backing track. This test is continuous with a one bar count-in at the beginning and after the practice session. The tempo is ♩ = 70–80.

♩ = 75 *Rock*

The image shows a four-bar backing track for improvisation, written in bass clef with a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked as ♩ = 75 *Rock*. The first bar has four 'x' marks above the staff, indicating a count-in. The subsequent three bars are marked with 'Am', 'C', and 'Dm' respectively, indicating the key changes. The notation for these bars consists of diagonal lines, representing a continuous improvisation.

Ear Tests

There are two Ear Tests in this grade. The examiner will play each test to you twice. You will find one example of each type of test printed below.

Test 1: Melodic Recall

The examiner will play you three notes in sequence. You will identify whether the notes are higher or lower (up or down) in sequence. You will hear the test twice.

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

♩=85



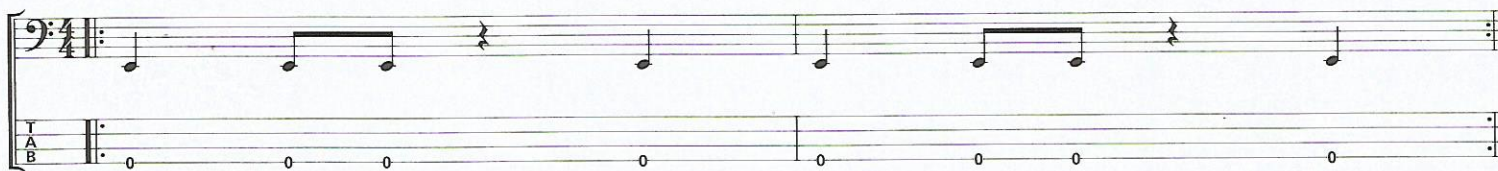
Candidate may answer either: "higher/lower" or "up/down".

Test 2: Rhythmic Recall

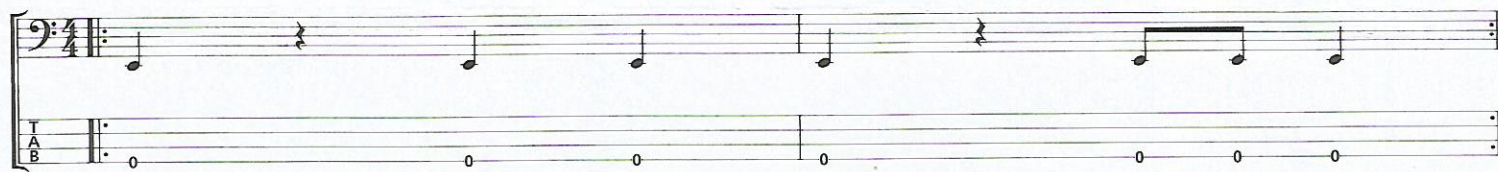
The examiner will play you a two bar rhythm played to a drum backing on the E string. You will hear the test twice. You will be asked to play the rhythm back. You will then be asked to identify the rhythm from two printed examples shown to you.

Each time the test is played it is preceded by a one bar count-in. There will be a short gap for you to practise. Next you will hear a vocal count-in and you will then play the rhythm to the drum backing. The tempo is ♩=90.

♩=90



♩=90



General Musicianship Questions

In this part of the exam you will be asked five questions. Four of these questions will be about general music knowledge and the fifth question will be asked about your instrument.

Music Knowledge

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

In Grade 1, you will be asked to identify:

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

Instrument Knowledge

The examiner will also ask you one question regarding your instrument.

In Grade 1 you will be asked to identify:

- The following parts of your bass – neck, fretboard, body, tuning-pegs, pick-ups and bridge
- One main bass make other than that of the bass you are playing
- Names of the open strings

Further Information

Tips on how to approach this part of this exam can be found in the *Syllabus Guide* for bass, the *Rockschool Bass Companion Guide* and on the Rockscool website: www.rslawards.com