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Online Music	RQF* credits	EQF**	Qualification title	Qualification	Other equivalent	
Exams Vocals		credits		number	qualifications	
Grade 1	1	2	TLM Music Grade 1	603/4575/5	G.C.S.E.	
Grade 2	1	2	TLM Music Grade 2	603/4576/7	(D-G)	
Grade 3	2	3	TLM Music Grade 3	603/4577/9	G.C.S.E	
Grade 4	2	3	TLM Music Grade 4	603/4578/0		
Grade 5	2	3	TLM Music Grade 5	603/4579/2		(A*-C)
Grade 6	3	4	TLM Music Grade 6	603/4580/9		
Grade 7	3	4	TLM Music Grade 7	603/4581/0	AS/A Level	

Grade 8	3	4	TLM Music Grade 8	603/4582/2		
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* Regulated Qualifications Framework in England, Wales and Northern Ireland ** European Qualifications Framework

Duration of Study

The duration of study needed to gain a qualification is dependent on each individual. Regulated qualifications are all assigned a total qualification time as set out below. The total qualification time is an estimate of the hours spent learning with a teacher and the hours spent learning individually.

	Guided learning hours	Independent learning hours	Total qualification time (hours)
Debut	8	32	40
Grade 1	12	48	60
Grade 2	18	72	90
Grade 3	18	102	120

Grade 4	24	126	150
Grade 5	24	156	180
Grade 6	36	184	220
Grade 7	48	222	270
Grade 8	54	266	320

Our partnership with Online Music Exams enables candidates to take their exams anytime and from anywhere. Instant Exam Access!

What You Will Need:

Camera	Sound
Built in camera or external	Any speaker system that you

HD camera with microphone	can hear comfortably (not
	available for headphones)

A Computer or Laptop Stable wi-fi or Ethernet (Not compatible with tablets for best results or mobile phones)

At the start of an exam,	An automated examiner will	Your performance will then
candidates will be asked to	ask the candidate to perform	be marked by an instrument
confirm their identity. If the	their songs. The candidate	specific examiner and you
candidate is under the age	will need to introduce the	will receive your results
of eighteen, a parent or legal	name and artist of each song	between 1-5 working days
guardian must be present	before each performance.	later.
at the exam recording and	From Grade 1 onwards, the	

must verify their identity.		candidate is expected to give		
		a short introduction about		
		each song.		

Exam Specifications

This syllabus offers the opportunity for vocalists to choose which songs to sing for each of their performances, allowing a greater freedom for each vocalist to develop in their own style and personality.

Exam Structure

The Debut exam consists of performing three songs, Grades 1–5 – four songs and Grades 6–8 – five songs.

For Grades 1–8, the candidate is expected to give a short introduction to each song.

Debut

Three songs

Grades 1–5

Rhythmic Feel	Speed
Simple rhythms with balanced phrases and little syncopation, are easier to master than faster rhythms, e.g in rap.	Slow songs with long phrases require good breath control and diaphragm support and are usually harder to sing than mid-tempo songs, which is why the “Big
Songs with more freedom in their timings and rhythms are also harder to master, e.g “Fields of gold” (Eva Cassidy).	Ballads” are often showstoppers in auditions. Fast songs often have a more challenging rhythmic feel, as the

Songs which use more common		lyrics generally need to be sung	
time signatures such as 4/4, are		faster, which test vocal tone in a	
usually easier to master in feel		different way.	
compared to songs in 6/8 or			
swinging tempos that are more			
widely used in Jazz and Blues.			

Four songs with a short introduction to each song

Grades 6–8

Five songs with a short introduction to each song

Parameters for Choosing Your Songs

What Characterises the Difficulty Level of a Song?

The difficulty of a song level can be characterised by various elements.

Here are some characteristics to think about when choosing songs:

Duration of a Song

Shorter songs tend to be easier to memorise, require less stamina than singing longer songs and enable less room to demonstrate a variety of technical skills which is why longer songs are generally more suitable to choose when performing higher grades.

Timing

Melodic Landscape

The landscape of a melody refers to:

1	2
The range of the entire song	The Intervallic movement of
	the melody



For example, songs can move in step by step motion, have leaps, use a big range or a small range etc.

A song with a small range that mainly uses step by step intervals in its melody makes it easier for a vocalist to maintain more control over their voice.

However, songs with smaller ranges don't allow much opportunity for vocalists to demonstrate their ability to move fluently between different registers of their voice i.e. chest, mid, head voice; which is why as the range and intervals in a melody increase, so does the difficulty level and hence why songs with more challenging ranges and melodic landscapes are more suitable for higher grade levels.

However, both characteristics can be demonstrated separately, for example, a song may have a large range but can be very easy in its melodic landscape if it mainly uses step-by-step motion; or a song may have a small range, but the melodic landscape may be very melisma in style, with frequent large intervallic leaps.

Pitch/Intonation

Singing the right notes and being "in tune" are crucial aspects of singing to a high standard. As the difficulty level of a song increases, whether it be due to using a wider range of notes; larger leaps in the melody; more complicated rhythms; a faster tempo or a slower tempo using more sustained notes; hitting the notes in the centre becomes more challenging.

Diction/Phrasing

The Lyrics	Melodic Decorations
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Some songs are harder to sing than	Decorating words (melisma) is	
others due to their lyrics.	technically challenging.	
The shapes of words consist of	Singing a song by Mariah Carey,	
vowels and consonants and some	Whitney Houston or Ariana Grande	
shapes are more challenging to sing	who are known for “decorating words”	
with a clear diction than others.	can sound unpleasant, if not delivered	
This can be heard in fast songs	correctly.	
where diction must be clear and	Developing agility in the voice gives	
also in slower songs that use	a vocalist the freedom, confidence	
sustained words which make it more	and security to “decorate”, whilst	

challenging to convey clear diction		maintaining pitch, breath control, good	
of consonants at the ends of these		tone and weight.	
words.		The difficulty level of melisma is	
Having a variety of articulation and		two-fold:	
phrasing of words is also more			
indicative of a vocalist who has more		1. Melisma itself can be defined by	
mastery of their vocal palette and		just a few words decorated, such as	
shows an ability to express a more		ends of words, or big melisma sections	
emotional interpretation and personal		throughout, such as typical Sam Smith	
style to the lyrics.		and Ariana Grande songs.	

		2. Range of Melisma can be	
		demonstrated by decorating up high	
		in falsetto; more in chest/mid voice; or	
		across a wide range.	

Tone

1		2
Variety of tones/voice		Landscape related to tone - e.g.
positions.		Belting out high is more technically
		challenging than using a strong

		chest voice low.

Tone of a song – The tone of a song can be very soft/chilled (e.g. *A Thousand Years* by Christina Perri) or it can vary in tone e.g. *Moonlight* by Ariana Grande which uses a mix of voice tones from mid voice with a breathy tone to belted parts then falsetto.

So again, it is two-fold:

Breath Control/Support

Breath control and support is the most fundamental and important part of singing as it affects all areas.

Whether it's projection enabling a singer to sustain long notes; having the breath control to communicate clearly and confidently; being able to produce various tones or having enough stamina to maintain an even tone throughout the song, the root of all mastery comes down to "THE BREATH".

Songs which consist of shorter phrases in the lower registers and with small variation in dynamics are easier to sing than songs which have long phrases with a large range, big intervallic leaps, quick changes through low and high registers and a variety of dynamics.

Belting up high requires the correct support and technique to keep a vocalist's voice healthy so it is imperative that this is approached correctly to avoid damage.

Song Parameter Requirements for Each Grade

The following tables serve as a guide on which structural and technical elements are expected to be shown in song performances per grade. We recommend that minimum levels should always be met when choosing songs. Although it is advised that guideline parameters are met as much as is reasonably possible, a candidate may choose a song within which a maximum parameter is exceeded, for example a song chosen to be performed at grade 1 level may go beyond the range of an octave.

Debut

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

1.5 minutes – 3.5 minutes

4/4, 2/4, 3/4

Within an Octave (minimum 5th)

Simple, mainly step-by step

Simple with occasional syncopation

Simple contrasts

Simple breath control with balanced phrase lengths

Grade 1

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

2 minutes – 4.5 minutes

4/4, 2/4, 3/4

Within an Octave (minimum 6th)

Simple, mainly step-by step with occasional leaps

More rhythmic variety with syncopation featuring more often

Simple contrasts between loud and soft with occasional hairpins (Crescendo/ Decrescendo)

Variation to occur occasionally, mainly legato singing over balanced phrase lengths.

Grade 2

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

2 minutes – 4.5 minutes

4/4, 2/4, 3/4

Up to a 10th (minimum 1 octave) use of both low and high registers with no fast changes between the two

Intervals of a 3rd and 4th more common, with occasional leaps of a 5th

Wider range of rhythmic variety with syncopation becoming a common feature of the melody

Greater contrasts of dynamics in the song and within individual phrases of the song

Variation to occur, use of Longer notes and sustained phrases more common

Grade 3

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

2 minutes – 4.5 minutes

4/4, 2/4, 3/4, 6/8, 12/8

Up to a 10th (minimum 1 octave), use of both low and high registers with occasional fast changes between the two

Intervals of a 3rd and 4th are standard and leaps of 5ths are more frequently used with some 6ths and 7ths may appear.

More complex rhythms used and syncopation may be present throughout

Variety of dynamics with increased use of hairpins (crescendo/ diminuendo) in long phrases

Greater variation, longer phrase lengths, use of grace notes, staccato and accented words to enhance emotion

Grade 4

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

2.5 minutes – 4.5 minutes

All time signatures

Up to an 11th (minimum 1 octave) frequent changes between low and high registers with fast changes more common

Variety of intervals used throughout with occasional octave leaps and chromaticism

A variety of all rhythms used with syncopation present throughout

All dynamics

Increasing variation and complexity of phrases and decoration of words with grace notes and articulation

Grade 5

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

2.5 minutes – 5 minutes

All time signatures

Up to a 12th (minimum 1 octave) frequent changes between low and high registers with fast changes more common

Variety of intervals used throughout with occasional octave leaps and chromaticism

A variety of all rhythms may be used with syncopation present throughout

All dynamics

Increasing variation and complexity of phrases, melisma may be present

Grade 6

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

3 minutes – 5 minutes

All time signatures

Up to a 13th (minimum 1 octave) frequent changes between low and high registers with fast changes common

Leaps of an octave and over may be used, more challenging intervallic melody shown throughout

A variety of all rhythms with increasing complexity than previous grades

All dynamics

Increasing variation and complexity, melisma and rap can be used, effects may be used such as growls and screams

Grade 7

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

3 minutes – 6 minutes

All time signatures

Up to a 14th (minimum 1 octave) frequent changes between low and high registers with fast changes common

A more challenging intervallic melody shown throughout with Leaps of an octave and over are more common

A variety of all rhythms with increasing complexity than previous grades

All dynamics

Increasing variation and complexity, melisma and rap can be used, effects may be used such as growls and screams

Grade 8

Duration of Song

Time Signature

Range and Register

Melodic Composition

Rhythmic Values

Dynamics

Phrasing/Articulation Ornamentation

3 minutes – 6 minutes

All time signatures

Up to 2 octaves (minimum 10th) frequent changes between low and high registers with fast changes common

A more challenging intervallic melody shown throughout, Leaps across the entire range may be present

A variety of all rhythms with increasing complexity than previous grades

All dynamics

Increasing variation and complexity, melisma and rap can be used, effects may be used such as growls and screams