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# MUSIC PRODUCTION

SYLLABUS SPECIFICATION



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# **Graded Examinations in Music Production Specification**

SEPTEMBER 2016

## Acknowledgements

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## Graded Examinations in Music Production

Qualification Title	Total no. of Units	Guided Learning Hours	Credit	Total Qualification Time
Level 1 Award in Music Production: Grade 1	1	10	5	50
Level 1 Award in Music Production: Grade 2	1	15	8	75
Level 1 Award in Music Production: Grade 3	1	16	11	102
Level 2 Certificate in Music Production: Grade 4	1	21	13	130
Level 2 Certificate in Music Production: Grade 5	1	21	16	158
Level 3 Certificate in Music Production: Grade 6	1	32	20	198
Level 3 Certificate in Music Production: Grade 7	1	42	25	245
Level 3 Certificate in Music Production: Grade 8	1	49	30	292

## Assessment

Assessment	
<b>Form of Assessment</b>	All assessments are carried out by external examiners. Candidates are required to carry out a combination of practical tasks and underpinning theoretical assessment.
<b>Unit Format</b>	Unit specifications contain the title, unit code, credit level, credit value, learning outcomes, assessment criteria, grade descriptor, and types of evidence required for the unit.
<b>Bands of Assessment</b>	There are four bands of assessment (distinction, merit, pass and unclassified) for the qualification as a whole.
<b>Quality Assurance</b>	Quality Assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling and re-assessment of candidates' work. A team of external examiners is appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

## SECTION A: QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

### A.1 Aims and Broad Objectives

The aim of the musical production qualifications is to provide a flexible, progressive mastery approach to the knowledge, skills and understanding required for music production.

RSL's graded qualifications motivate and encourage candidates of all ages and levels through a system of progressive mastery, enabling candidates to develop and enhance skills, knowledge and understanding in a safe and consistent way. The qualifications are beneficial for candidates wishing to progress at their own pace through smaller steps of achievement.

These qualifications are suitable for candidates in the Under 16, 16+, 16–18, 19+ age groups.

### A.2 Progression

Graded qualifications provide a flexible progression route for candidates. They are a positive means of determining progress and enable candidates to learn the necessary techniques to gain entry to FE and HE courses. Graded qualifications operate according to a well established methodology of 'progressive mastery'. They allow candidates to be tested in discrete stages in the development of a wide range of skills. They tend to be more rigorous than other types of exams and for that reason industry is confident that achievement at the highest level gained by candidates of graded qualifications will have the skills necessary to work in other areas of the business.

### A.3 Qualification Structure

A graded qualification consists of a range of both practical and knowledge based tasks which are based on detailed requirements outlined in the relevant syllabus.

Therefore, requirements for each grade will be set out in detail in the Unit Specifications below (page 8 and onwards) and the learning outcomes and assessment criteria for each unit will require knowledge, skills and understanding of these syllabus requirements to be demonstrated at the grade entered.

### A.4 Entry Requirements

There are no entry requirements for these qualifications. However, candidates should be aware that the content at the higher grades will require a level of knowledge and understanding covered in previous qualifications.

For further details on exam dates and fees and to apply for your music production grades please visit the RSL website at [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com)

## SECTION B: ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

### B.1 Assessment Methodology

The graded examinations in Music Production are assessed via an examination. The examination is divided into the following sections:

A **written** examination covering knowledge of:

- music production terminology
- sound and audio fundamentals

A **listening** test divided into three sections:

- sonic fidelity
- music theory and harmony
- stylistic awareness

A **practical** assessment divided into two sections:

- technical skills
- professional scenario

Examination timings for the graded examinations in Music Production are as follows:

- Grade 1: 90 minutes
- Grade 2: 90 minutes
- Grade 3: 90 minutes
- Grade 4: 120 minutes
- Grade 5: 120 minutes
- Grade 6: 180 minutes
- Grade 7: 180 minutes
- Grade 8: 180 minutes

All assessment of these qualifications is external and is undertaken by RSL Examiners.

## B.2 Expectations of Knowledge, Skills and Understanding

The graded examination system is one based on the principle of 'progressive mastery': each step in the exam chain demonstrates learning, progression and skills in incremental steps. Successful learning is characterised by a mastery of the fundamentals of the skills demanded in each grade.

Learners will be able to complete a set of practical tasks and be tested on their underpinning knowledge (the complexity and variety of tasks are determined by which qualification is being attempted), which allows them to demonstrate Music Production knowledge, skills and understanding relevant to the grade. These technical skills set a firm platform for further technical and creative development by the learner.

## B.3 Quality Assurance

All RSL examinations and graded qualifications are standardised according to the processes and procedures laid down by RSL.

# SECTION C: CANDIDATE ACCESS AND REGISTRATION

## C.1 Access and Registration

The qualifications will:

- be available to everyone who is capable of reaching the required standards
- be free from any barriers that restrict access and progression
- offer equal opportunities for all wishing to access the qualifications

At the point of application, RSL will ensure that all candidates are fully informed about the requirements and demands of the qualification.

Candidates may enter online for any of the qualifications at various points in the calendar year in territories throughout the world. Dates will be published on the website at [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## C.2 Recommended Prior Learning

Learners are not required to have any prior learning for these qualifications. However, learners should ensure that they are aware of the requirements and expectations of each grade prior to entering for an assessment.

# SECTION D: COMPLAINTS AND APPEALS

All procedural complaints and appeals, including malpractice and requests for reasonable adjustments/special considerations, can be found on the RSL website [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

# SECTION E: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

RSL's Equal Opportunities policy can be found on the RSL website [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## SECTION F: CONTACTS FOR HELP & SUPPORT

All correspondence should be directed to:

**RSL**  
**Harlequin House**  
**Ground Floor**  
**7 High Street**  
**Teddington**  
**Middlesex**  
**TW11 8EE**

Or [info@rslawards.com](mailto:info@rslawards.com)

# Annex 1

# Unit Specifications

Unit specifications are divided into learning outcomes and assessment criteria:

- **Learning Outcome** – a statement of what has been demonstrated as a result of the successful completion of the assessment criteria
- **Assessment Criteria** – the evidence upon which the candidate is assessed

Unit specifications also give details of the Credit Value (notional learning) and the Guided Learning Hours (GLH) which represent indicative teaching time for the unit. Each unit also contains the detailed content to be covered at each grade, telling candidates and teachers everything they need to know about the relevant qualification.

## LEVEL 1

### GRADE 1

Grade 1 is intended as a basic introduction to music production. It is expected that candidates are competent in the fundamentals of music production prior to entering the examination.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 1 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as identifying studio hardware, physical audio formats, analogue connectivity, computer & digital technology, DAW basics, microphones, MIDI basics, basic audio technology and the fundamentals of mono & stereo sound.

#### At Grade 1 candidates will be expected to:

- Identify images of studio equipment to include mixing desks, microphones, DAWs, drum kits, cables
- Identify images of physical formats to include CD, vinyl, cassette tape, Minidisc, DAT
- Identify images of analogue connections to include Jack, XLR, Phono / RCA, DIN, Speakon
- Identify images of computer peripherals to include Audio Interfaces, MIDI keyboards, computer mouse, computer keyboard, computer monitor
- Identify images of the different DAWs, including Logic, Ableton, Pro Tools, Cubase, FL Studio
- Identify images of popular microphone models, to include Shure SM58, Shure SM57, AKG D112, Neumann U87, AKG C451
- Identify images of specific DAW workspaces, to include arrange window, mix window, sample editor, plugins, software instruments
- Identify the function of music production technology from an image, including channel faders, pan, mute, routing, headphone volume
- Briefly describe sound and acoustic terms, including mono, stereo, surround, high fidelity, units of sound level (Db)

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying instruments in isolation and within a mix

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying relative pitch & basic note lengths

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 1 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify instruments in isolation: Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Acoustic Drums, Piano
- Identify a specific instrument within a mix from those listed above e.g. name the instrument playing the melody
- Identify when an instrument is missing from one version of a mix
- Identify consecutive notes as either higher or lower in pitch
- Identify basic note lengths: whole notes, half notes, quarter notes and eighth notes
- Identify common western music genres from a choice of two: pop and rock

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below:

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 1 the task will centre around session creation and basic inputting of notes using a software instrument.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 1 the scenario will require candidates to import a backing track into their DAW, record a melody, and bounce the resulting mix to a new stereo audio file.

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1 x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1 x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1 x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 1 Award in Music Production – Grade 1
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0049/8
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>Credit Value</b>	5
<b>GLH</b>	10
<b>TQT</b>	50

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 1 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 1 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 1 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 1 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 1 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of briefs</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

<b>PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–14</b>	<b>15–18</b>	<b>19–20</b>	<b>21–25</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
<b>PART B: LISTENING SKILLS</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–8</b>	<b>9–10</b>	<b>11–12</b>	<b>13–15</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
<b>PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS &amp; PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–35</b>	<b>36–44</b>	<b>45–50</b>	<b>51–60</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 1

### GRADE 2

Grade 2 is intended for candidates who have acquired basic music production knowledge and skills.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 2 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as identifying studio hardware, digital file formats, digital connectivity, software components, DAW concepts & capabilities, microphones, non-linear editing concepts, EQ controls and hearing physiology.

#### At Grade 2 candidates will be expected to:

- Identify studio equipment from descriptions, to include mixing desks, computers, microphones, patchbays, outboard effects
- Identify file formats from their suffix, to include Waveform, Audio Interchange File Format, Mpeg-2 layer 3, Logic Pro, Pro Tools
- Identify connections to include Phono/RCA, XLR, ADAT lightpipe, USB, 5 pin DIN
- Identify software and functions, to include operating systems, system preferences, Apple App store, Apple Mac Finder
- Identify the purpose of a DAW
- Identify types of microphone, to include Dynamic, Condenser, Valve, Ribbon
- Identify appropriate purposes for types of microphone, such as for gig vocals, kick drums, and appropriate use of phantom power
- Identify the different types of DAW track, to include Audio Track, Instrument Track, MIDI Track, Auxiliary Track, Automation
- Identify basic editing functions to include cut, copy, paste, delete, duplicate
- Identify both natural and electrical sound sources and receptors, including the meaning of the word 'Transducer'

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying timing and tuning flaws in a performance

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying major and minor triads and basic time signatures

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 2 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify which instrument within a mix is out of tune with the other musicians
- Identify which instrument within a mix is out of time with the other musicians
- Identify out of time drum loops
- Identify major and minor triads
- Identify basic time signatures: 4/4 & 3/4
- Identify common western music genres from a choice of two: blues and metal

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

■ **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 2 the task will centre around MIDI programming using software instruments and basic mix technique.

■ **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 2 the scenario will require candidates to rearrange provided audio and MIDI loops.

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1 x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1 x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1 x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 1 Award in Music Production – Grade 2
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0052/8
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>Credit Value</b>	8
<b>GLH</b>	15
<b>TQT</b>	75

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 2 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 2 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 2 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 2 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 2 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of briefs</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

<b>PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–14</b>	<b>15–18</b>	<b>19–20</b>	<b>21–25</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
<b>PART B: LISTENING SKILLS</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–8</b>	<b>9–10</b>	<b>11–12</b>	<b>13–15</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
<b>PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS &amp; PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO</b>				
<b>Attainment Band</b>	<b>Unclassified</b>	<b>Pass</b>	<b>Merit</b>	<b>Distinction</b>
<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>0–35</b>	<b>36–44</b>	<b>45–50</b>	<b>51–60</b>
<b>Grade Descriptor</b>	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 1

### GRADE 3

Grade 3 is intended for candidates who have a good understanding of music production knowledge and skills.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 3 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as interpreting the functions of studio hardware, digital protocols, analogue connectivity, computer memory & storage, microphones, using loops, the MIDI protocol, dynamic processing and frequency.

#### At Grade 3 candidates will be expected to:

- Interpret functions of a mixing desk, to include gain, EQ, auxiliaries, faders, pan
- Interpret and identify digital transfer protocols, including their relative data transfer rates, including USB, Thunderbolt, MADI, SPDIF, ADAT
- Interpret analogue connections and their purpose, to include XLR, ¼" Jack, Mini Jack, Phono/RCA, D-Sub
- Interpret the purpose and advantages of computer systems, to include RAM, Hard Disks, Solid State Drives, including choosing the appropriate option in relation to data transfer rates
- Interpret appropriate use for DAW functions, to include templates, markers, bounce, piano roll / MIDI editors, quantise
- Briefly explain what a microphone is for and how it works
- Briefly explain the creation, use and advantages of audio loops
- Understand MIDI, including what the acronym stands for, what it is, and how it works from a user perspective
- Interpret and briefly explain audio technology, including compression, limiting, gating, expanding
- Understand frequency, including its units of measurement, the difference between Hz and kHz, human hearing range

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Distinguishing between mono and stereo recordings and hearing different stereo widths

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying major, minor and blues scales and eighth note triplets

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 3 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify the difference between Mono and Stereo recordings
- Identify the difference between Mono and Stereo mixes
- Identify differences in stereo width
- Identify major, natural minor and blues scales
- Identify eighth note triplets in 4/4
- Identify common western music genres from a choice of two: reggae and soul

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 3 the task will centre around creating audio loops from provided material.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 3 the scenario will require candidates to programme a simple backing track using a set chord structure. Therefore candidates must be confident in creating chords in the key of C major and G major.

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1 x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1 x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1 x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 1 Award in Music Production – Grade 3
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0054/1
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>Credit Value</b>	11
<b>GLH</b>	16
<b>TQT</b>	102

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 3 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 3 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 3 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 3 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 3 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of briefs</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–14	15–18	19–20	21–25
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 2

### GRADE 4

Grade 4 is intended for candidates who have a detailed understanding of music production.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 4 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as describing equipment controls, surround formats, wireless connectivity, backing up files, plugin concepts, stereo microphone techniques, non-linear editing, software instruments, side-chaining and sound propagation.

#### **At Grade 4 candidates will be expected to:**

- Describe the controls on studio equipment, to include threshold, ratio, attack, release, hold, on compressors, gates and expanders
- Describe sound formats including mono, stereo, 2.1, 5.1, 7.1, quadraphonic
- Describe the importance of file management and backing up
- Describe plugins, what they are for, their advantages and formats
- Describe stereo microphone techniques, to include XY, AB, MS
- Describe linear and non-linear editing, destructive and non-destructive editing
- Describe software instruments, their purpose, formats and common uses including synths, samplers and real instrument emulation
- Describe production techniques to include side-chaining, de-essing, including both dedicated plugins / devices, and using standard equipment to achieve the same result
- Describe basic acoustic concepts, including how sound travels through air / solids, sound waves, compression / rarefaction

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying use of compression on instruments and mixes

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying semi tones and tones and compound time signatures

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 4 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify the difference between compressed and uncompressed audio recordings
- Identify the difference between compressed and uncompressed mixes
- Identify when a compressor is being controlled by a side-chain
- Identify semi tones (chromaticism) and whole tones
- Identify compound time signatures: 6/8 and 12/8
- Identify common western music genres from a choice of two: country and funk

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 4 the task will centre around use of equalisation (EQ) for corrective / creative purposes.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 4 the scenario will require candidates to remove unwanted noise from a recording using appropriate techniques, such as manual editing, gating, crossfades.

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1 x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1 x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1 x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 2 Certificate in Music Production – Grade 4
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0055/3
<b>Level</b>	1
<b>Credit Value</b>	13
<b>GLH</b>	21
<b>TQT</b>	130

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 4 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 4 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 4 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 4 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 4 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of an intermediate level brief</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–14	15–18	19–20	21–25
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 2

### GRADE 5

Grade 5 is intended for learners who have practical experience of modern music production.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 5 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as signal routing, the Compact Disc format, patch bays, networking, file sharing, ambient microphone technique, multitrack recording, MIDI controllers, PCM theory and constructive interference.

#### **At Grade 5 candidates will be expected to:**

- Outline functions of studio equipment, to include routing, buses, auxiliaries, inserts, patchbays
- Outline the Compact Disc format and its associated standards, to include bit depth, sample rate, history, data and audio capacities
- Outline studio connectivity in the studio, including the function of the patchbay, normalisation, open / closed connections and hard wiring
- Outline computer networking technology, including LAN, WAN, Ethernet, network standards, Wifi standards
- Outline routing techniques within a Digital Audio Workstation
- Outline multi-microphone techniques, such as recording kick drums, snares, tom toms, hi-hats, overheads and ambience
- Outline multitrack recording, its advantages, disadvantages, history and limitations
- Outline MIDI technologies, including controller keyboards, MIDI pickups, electronic drum triggers

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying resonant frequencies

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying seventh chords and swung rhythms

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 5 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify the frequency range that has been boosted in a provided recording
- Identify the frequency range that has been boosted in a provided mix
- Identify the frequency range of a sine wave
- Identify maj7, dom7 and min7 chords
- Identify swung rhythms in 4/4
- Identify common western music genres from a choice of two: jazz and hip-hop

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 5 the task will centre around session management and organisation, such as creating, naming and colour coding tracks, creating markers, session file management.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 5 the scenario will require candidates to add musical layers to material using software instruments. Candidates are encouraged to practice listening to and duplicating melodies.

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1 x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1 x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1 x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 2 Certificate in Music Production – Grade 5
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0056/5
<b>Level</b>	2
<b>Credit Value</b>	16
<b>GLH</b>	21
<b>TQT</b>	158

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 5 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 5 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 5 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 5 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 5 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of an intermediate level brief</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–14	15–18	19–20	21–25
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 3

### GRADE 6

Grade 6 is intended for candidates who have mastered basic music production technique and can use creativity to enhance their productions.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 6 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as creative uses for studio hardware, lossy audio formats, balanced audio, cloud storage, plugins, multi microphone technique, automation, basic software synthesis, dynamic range and sound isolation.

#### At Grade 6 candidates will be expected to:

- Explain how to use studio equipment for creative purposes, to include adding reverberation, creating a pumping sound with a compressor, ducking
- Explain the terms 'lossy' and lossless audio formats, naming examples of each
- Explain balanced audio, its purpose, advantages, technology
- Explain cloud storage, its purpose, advantages, disadvantages
- Explain creative uses of specified plugins, to include EQ, reverb, delay, compressors, gates, pitch correction
- Explain stereo ambient microphone techniques, to include enhancing drum recordings, specifying appropriate technique
- Explain automation, its purpose, advantages, and techniques
- Explain the basics of sound synthesis, including oscillators, low frequency oscillators, envelopes, amplifiers
- Explain dynamic range, headroom and signal to noise ratio

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying industry standard effects

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identify diminished and augmented triads and genre specific drum grooves

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 6 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify the difference between spatial effects: reverb and delay
- Identify the difference between phase effects: chorus and flanger
- Identify multiple effects stacked on one sound
- Identify diminished and augmented triads
- Identify genre by solo drum grooves alone
- Introducing modern electronic music genres – house and modern R'n'B

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 6 the task will centre around adding effects using buses and auxiliaries.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 6 the candidate may choose to specialise in Audio Production, Electronic Music Production or Sound for Media:
  - **Audio Production:** The scenario will require the use of automation to fix a dynamically uneven vocal recording
  - **Electronic Music Production:** The scenario will require the creation of an original synth patch that works with the provided drum groove
  - **Sound for Media:** The scenario will require the candidate to create a suitable sonic or musical atmosphere to the provided image

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Music Production – Grade 6
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0057/7
<b>Level</b>	3
<b>Credit Value</b>	20
<b>GLH</b>	32
<b>TQT</b>	198

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 6 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 6 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 6 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 6 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 6 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of an professional brief</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol> 4.3 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 6 in the areas of Electronic Music Production: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of professional briefs</li> <li>Electronic music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol> 4.3 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 6 in the areas of Sound for Media: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of professional briefs</li> <li>Audio creation or editing to enhance a visual medium</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–14	15–18	19–20	21–25
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 3

### GRADE 7

Grade 7 is intended for candidates who are competent in music production technique, and are capable of overcoming challenging situations.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 7 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as working around equipment faults, format incompatibility, connectivity faults, software optimisation, latency, phase, stereo width, groove / quantisation, signal noise and studio monitoring.

#### At Grade 7 candidates will be expected to:

- Explain how to overcome technical challenges, such as faulty cables, faulty microphones
- Explain how to overcome format incompatibility, to include transferring projects between different Digital Audio Workstations using OMFs
- Explain how to find a fault in chain of devices, such as a drop in level, low frequency hum
- Explain how to optimise operating systems for audio work
- Explain latency and how to overcome it
- Explain phase issues and how to overcome them
- Explain how to add stereo width, using techniques to include the HAAS effect, dedicated plugins, manual use of delays and phase effects
- Explain quantisation and groove templates
- Explain how to minimise noise, through matching level and impedance
- Explain studio monitor designs, and how to set monitor speakers for optimum listening experience

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying stereo phase issues on instrument and full mix recordings

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying harmonic & melodic minor scales, son and rumba clave

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 7 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify phase issues in a recording
- Identify phase issues within a mix
- Identify harmonic and melodic minor scales
- Identify son and rumba claves (3:2 & 2:3)
- Introducing modern electronic music genres – drum & bass and techno

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 7 the task will centre around correcting the timing in a performance.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 7 the candidate may choose to specialise in Audio Production, Electronic Music Production or Sound for Media:
  - **Audio Production:** The scenario will focus on creating a harmony to a vocal performance from a range of software techniques
  - **Electronic Music Production:** The scenario will require a drum break to be edited and re-timed to a new tempo
  - **Sound for Media:** The scenario will require the candidate to create a sonic solution to an animated logo

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Music Production – Grade 7
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0058/9
<b>Level</b>	3
<b>Credit Value</b>	25
<b>GLH</b>	42
<b>TQT</b>	245

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 7 terminology related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Music production equipment</li> <li>Industry standard formats &amp; protocols</li> <li>Industry standard connectivity</li> <li>Digital technology</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstations</li> </ol>
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 7 fundamentals related to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microphone technology and technique</li> <li>Audio recording, editing and processing</li> <li>MIDI &amp; audio programming</li> <li>Audio Technology</li> <li>Acoustics</li> </ol>
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 7 level aural skills in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sonic fidelity</li> <li>Music theory</li> <li>Stylistic awareness</li> </ol>
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 7 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>File management</li> <li>Digital Audio Workstation programming</li> <li>Audio mixing</li> </ol> 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 7 in the areas of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of an professional brief</li> <li>Music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol> 4.3 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 7 in the areas of Electronic Music Production: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of professional briefs</li> <li>Electronic music creation or editing</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol> 4.4 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 7 in the areas of Sound for Media: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpretation of professional briefs</li> <li>Audio creation or editing to enhance a visual medium</li> <li>File sharing to industry standards</li> </ol>

Please note: candidates are required to achieve a minimum overall mark of 60% in order to achieve a pass. Regardless of the overall mark, candidates must also achieve a minimum of 40% in every part (part A, B & C), therefore demonstrating a knowledge and understanding of every learning outcome.

PART A: TERMINOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–14	15–18	19–20	21–25
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated an understanding of the key terminology used in modern music production and the fundamentals of sound and audio more than 84% of the time.
PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.

## LEVEL 3

### GRADE 8

Grade 8 is intended for candidates who have mastered music production and are capable of critiquing their own work, therefore achieving a professional finish to their productions.

## THEORETICAL WRITTEN EXAM

This will assess the candidate's knowledge and understanding of the following two sections.

- **Music Production Terminology**
- **Sound & Audio Fundamentals**

At Grade 8 the theory content covered will include subject areas such as comparing studio hardware, audio file formats, analogue vs. digital technology, microphone technique choice, vocal comping, triggered samples, balanced audio advantages and acoustic room design.

#### At Grade 8 candidates will be expected to:

- Compare two pieces of studio equipment, making reference to differences in specification
- Compare two audio file formats
- Compare analogue and digital connectivity, stating advantages and disadvantages
- Evaluate the impact that digital technology has had on music production
- Evaluate the impact that the Digital Audio Workstation has had on music production
- Choose appropriate microphone techniques for a given situation
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of audio editing, to include compositing vocals, drum timing versus re-recording
- Evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using MIDI triggered samples
- Evaluate the advantages of using balanced audio, and how to connect balanced and unbalanced devices together in the same audio system
- Explain acoustic terms to include standing waves, room modes, diffusion, absorption

## LISTENING TEST

The listening test will present candidates with questions relating to sonic fidelity, music theory and harmony and stylistic awareness. Audio files will be presented to the candidates and questions will relate specifically to the relevant audio file. This will assess the candidate's ability to hear and interpret:

**Sonic Fidelity** – Identifying high and low resolution audio files

**Music Theory & Harmony** – Identifying modes of the major scale and irregular time signatures

**Stylistic Awareness** – Identifying specific genres

**At Grade 8 candidates will be expected to:**

- Identify the difference between MP3 and Wav versions of the same recording
- Identify the difference between MP3 and Wav versions of the same full mix
- Identify the difference between 128Kbps and 320Kbps MP3's
- Identify three modes of the major scale – Dorian, Mixolydian and Lydian
- Identify irregular time signatures – 5/4, 7/8
- Introducing modern electronic music genres from a choice of two: dubstep and edm

Candidates are advised to practice these techniques using the mock assessment files available from [www.rslawards.com](http://www.rslawards.com).

## PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

The Practical Assessment is divided into **two** sections as detailed below.

- **Technical Skills** – The candidate will be asked to complete a series of specified tasks, which must be completed using a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW). At Grade 8 the task will centre around creative music production technique such as parallel compression.
- **Professional Scenario** – The candidate will be presented with a situation, and must choose and implement appropriate technique to resolve the scenario. At Grade 8 the candidate may choose to specialise in Audio Production, Electronic Music Production or Sound for Media:
  - **Audio Production:** The scenario will focus on mastering a final mix with EQ, compressors and limiters
  - **Electronic Music Production:** The scenario will focus on creating a remix using the supplied vocal sample
  - **Sound for Media:** The scenario will require the candidate to synchronise sound effects, including foley, to the provided video

The completed session files must be appropriately named, saved and shared with your examiner as instructed, including all associated audio files. It is vital that candidates are able to accurately save their work as failure to do so will result in an unclassified mark.

**On your exam day, you must bring:**

- 1x closed headphones with a ¼ inch jack  
(Candidates without their own headphones will be unable to sit the exam)
- A hard copy of your Music Production syllabus book or your proof of digital purchase

**Your exam centre will provide:**

- 1x computer; running either of the latest two versions of Cubase, Pro Tools, Logic, Ableton Live or GarageBand  
(Please note; GarageBand, Cubase Elements and Cubase LE are only suitable for grades 1 to 5)
- 1x midi controller keyboard – minimum 4 octaves, including a sustain pedal and pitch wheel

<b>Title</b>	RSL Level 3 Certificate in Music Production – Grade 8
<b>Qualification No.</b>	603/0059/0
<b>Level</b>	3
<b>Credit Value</b>	30
<b>GLH</b>	49
<b>TQT</b>	292

<b>Learning Outcome You will:</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria You can:</b>
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PART B: LISTENING SKILLS				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–8	9–10	11–12	13–15
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production less than 60% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 60% and 74% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production between 75% and 84% of the time.	Demonstrated effective listening skills relevant to modern music production more than 84% of the time.
PART C: TECHNICAL SKILLS & PROFESSIONAL SCENARIO				
Attainment Band	Unclassified	Pass	Merit	Distinction
Mark Range	0–35	36–44	45–50	51–60
Grade Descriptor	Demonstrated effective music production technique in less than 60% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 60% and 74% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in between 75% and 84% of the practical tasks.	Demonstrated effective music production technique in more than 84% of the practical tasks.