

London College of Music Examinations

# Early Learning Syllabus

Certificates for children aged three to six years

Valid from:

2013 until further notice

**Updated 15.11.2023**



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[This list was correct at the time of printing.]

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# London College of Music

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The London College of Music (LCM) is one of the largest specialist Music and Performing Arts institutes in the UK. It has a long history of music education dating back to 1887, when it was situated in Great Marlborough Street, London, where the college began as an examination body. In 1991 LCM became part of Thames Valley University, which was renamed the University of West London in 2011.

The London College of Music offers an impressive range of innovative courses, respected worldwide and delivered with creativity and passion by practising industry experts. Courses include Performance and Composition, Popular Music Performance and Recording, Performing Arts, Music Management, Music Technology and Theatre Production.

Further information about full-time programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate students, in addition to the Junior College, is available from:

- the UWL Learning Advice Centre - tel: 020 8579 5000; email: [learning.advice@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:learning.advice@uwl.ac.uk)
- the Faculty of the Arts office - tel: 020 8231 2304; email: [music@uwl.ac.uk](mailto:music@uwl.ac.uk)
- [uwl.ac.uk/music](http://uwl.ac.uk/music)

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## London College of Music Examinations

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External examinations have been awarded by the London College of Music since the institution's founding in 1887. Today, examinations are held throughout the United Kingdom, Republic of Ireland and at many overseas centres, and are unique in the graded examinations world in being awarded by a university.

LCM's graded and diploma examinations in most subjects are regulated by Ofqual, which serves as a UK governmental stamp of approval and quality assurance, confirming parity of standards with other similar examinations boards. Furthermore, the resulting mapping of LCM Examinations onto the RQF (Regulated Qualifications Framework) means that candidates applying to UK universities through the UCAS system can increase their points tariff if they have been awarded a Pass or higher at Grades 6–8 in a regulated subject.

LCM Examinations are distinctive, both in the qualifications offered and in the administration and running of the exams. We have retained the well-known traditional atmosphere and qualities of the London College of Music: informality, friendliness and approachability, although set in a fully professional and modern context. We are small enough that enquiries to the head office can be dealt with speedily and efficiently, and we are able to get to know many of our representatives and teachers personally by name. Examiners pride themselves on being friendly and approachable, ensuring candidates are put at their ease and are thus able to perform to their full potential; yet they are professional, applying thorough and objective assessment criteria in forming their judgements.

Our range of syllabuses and exam formats is exceptionally wide. Examinations may be taken in piano, all orchestral instruments, classical singing, music theatre, popular music vocals, guitar, electronic keyboard, electronic organ, drum kit, percussion, church music, Irish and Scottish traditional music, jazz (piano, wind and brass), ensemble, early learning, theory (both classical and popular) and composition. Examinations in acoustic, electric and bass guitars are offered in partnership with the Registry of Guitar Tutors (RGT). Our diplomas are internationally recognised and include composition, conducting, thesis and theoretical diplomas as well as performing and teaching diplomas in all instruments, across four levels.

We offer a number of pre-Grade 1 Step exams. Graded exams include a viva voce element, which encourages candidates to think, both technically and critically, about the music they perform in the exam. Syllabuses contain a wide range of repertoire options, sometimes including an own choice element.

We offer the very popular *Leisure Play* option, where candidates perform four pieces but do not attempt any of the additional components of the exam.

Recent additions to the range of exam formats are the *Recital Grades*, allowing candidates to enter for a graded exam focusing entirely, or predominantly, on performance, and the *Performance Awards*, assessed via DVD submission.

Graded and diploma syllabuses are available free of charge via our website, or on request from the LCM Examinations office and local representatives.

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# 1. Syllabus introduction

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## 1.1 Coverage of this syllabus

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This London College of Music Examinations syllabus is designed to prepare students for the following examinations awarded by University of West London Qualifications:

- Early Learning Individual Examinations
- Pre-Preparatory Examinations in Piano and Recorder
- Early Learning Group Examinations

## 1.2 Validity of this syllabus

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This syllabus is valid from 1 January 2013 until further notice.

## 1.3 Availability of examinations and entry details

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Practical examinations take place throughout the year according to location. In the UK and Ireland, practical examinations are held three times a year at public centres: Spring (March/April), Summer (June/July) and Winter (November/December). The dates when each year's sessions begin and end are published in the preceding Autumn. Completed entry forms, together with full fees, must be submitted to the representative of the chosen examination centre on or before the closing date, as listed on entry forms. The representative is responsible for devising the timetable.

In addition, LCM conducts examinations at schools, colleges and teaching studios on a private centre basis, provided the practical grade entries total at least five hours' examining time, and any venue-related costs are covered by the applicant. The co-ordinating teacher is responsible for timetabling the examination day. Some flexibility is possible, and teachers are invited to telephone LCM Examinations on 020 8231 2364 to discuss the arrangements in advance.

## 1.4 Duration of examinations

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Early Learning Individual	Pre-Preparatory Piano & Recorder	Early Learning Group
10 mins	10 mins	20 mins

## 1.5 Candidates with particular needs

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Information on assessment, examination and entry requirements for candidates with particular needs is published in the document *Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustments and Special Consideration*. Copies are available free of charge via our website, or on request from the LCM Examinations office.

## 1.6 Progression

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After Early Learning assessments, children may progress to Steps and then Grades, in a wide range of Music and Drama & Communication subjects. Syllabuses are available from LCM Examinations (details on page 2).

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## 2. Syllabus content

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### 2.1 Syllabus overview

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London College of Music recognises the excellent work being done in kindergartens, in nursery and infant school reception classes introducing children to music and developing their interactive oral communication skills. This brings enormous educational and social benefits as well as enjoyment.

This syllabus is designed for these young children, to provide encouragement and a basis for assessment in music and speech at very early stages of development. At all three Stages, the development of skills and confidence is the main aim.

The following assessments are offered:

#### Individual

- Early Learning Individual: Stage One, Stage Two, Stage Three
- Pre-Preparatory: Piano, Recorder

#### Group

- Early Learning Group: Stage One, Stage Two

#### The teacher

In order to provide as relaxed an environment as possible, the teacher may come into the exam room with each candidate.

#### The assessment report

This will be compiled during the examination and couched in positive terms.

- Early Learning: The report will not include marks but will award Pass, Merit or Distinction.
- Pre-Preparatory: Marks are given, and successful candidates are awarded a Pass (65–74 %), a Pass with Merit (75–84 %) or a Pass with Distinction (85–100 %).

#### The certificate

- Early Learning: All children who complete the assessment will receive at least a Pass certificate.
- Pre-Preparatory: Candidates achieving a Pass or higher will receive a certificate.

## 2.2 Early Learning Individual

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### Stage One

The candidate will:

1. Exchange greetings and introductions with the examiner.
2. Speak a nursery rhyme or sing a song from memory. Movement and gesture may be included in the performance.
3. EITHER (a) Perform a prepared descriptive animal mime, to show an observation of animal movement.  
OR (b) Perform a short elementary piece on any instrument.

*The examiner will look for concentration and real involvement from the candidate.*

### Stage Two

The candidate will:

1. Exchange greetings and introductions with the examiner.
2. Speak a nursery rhyme or poem of similar standard or sing a song from memory. Movement and gesture may be included in the performance.
3. EITHER (a) Perform a prepared mime to show an occupation or a sequence of events, to demonstrate mood, e.g. happy or sad.  
OR (b) Perform a short elementary piece on any instrument.

*The examiner will look for concentration, eye contact, involvement and enjoyment from the candidate.*

### Stage Three

The candidate will:

1. Give a simple, personal introduction of themselves during a conversation which will be led by the examiner. The candidate may bring one or two family photographs or a favourite possession as stimulus.
2. EITHER (a) Speak a poem, action rhyme or nursery rhyme of their choice.  
OR (b) Sing a nursery rhyme or a simple song.
3. EITHER (a) Act a brief drama speech in character (maximum 10 lines).  
OR (b) Speak a contrasting second poem, action rhyme or nursery rhyme of their choice.  
OR (c) Perform an elementary piece on any instrument.

*The examiner will look for concentration, enjoyment, and the ability to respond to simple questions.*



## 2.3 Piano Pre-Preparatory

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Candidates will find all the required material for the examination in:

- LCM Piano Handbook 2021-2024: Pre-Preparatory (LL453)

Degree of difficulty: five-finger position, without hand shifts. No accidentals.

In order to reassure candidates, a parent or teacher is allowed to be present (in a silent capacity).

### **Component 1 – Exercises**

**25 marks**

Candidates play any five exercises from the handbook.

### **Component 2 – List A Pieces**

**20 marks**

Candidates play any two pieces from List A included in the handbook.

### **Component 3 – List B Pieces**

**40 marks**

Candidates play any two pieces from List B included in the handbook.

### **Component 4 – Recognition of Notes**

**15 marks**

Notes C – G in the Treble Clef and C – F in the Bass Clef to be recognised.

## 2.4 Early Learning Group

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Teachers may prefer to enter children as a group. A group of between 5 and 9 in number is considered suitable. Each child should wear a large name badge. On successful completion of the examination a single report will be issued. Each child taking part in the group will receive a certificate. Teachers are expected to take an active part in the children's work during the examination and are invited to work 'in role' in all three sections.

*The examiner will look for:*

- *involvement by the children*
- *response to other members of the group*
- *control, but not inhibition, by the teacher*
- *ability to complete the examination*
- *ability and willingness to talk to the examiner about the examination work, and subjects that arise from it*
- *coherence in the progress of the examination work*

There are two stages:

### Stage One

1. The candidates will perform an action rhyme, singing/acting game, as a group. Untuned percussion may be used. The songs from such books as *Okki Tokki Unga* are useful and suitable. The teacher may direct the group and prompt.
2. The candidates will take part in a story told by the teacher. For instance, the house building and 'huffing and puffing' in *The Three Little Pigs*, or to 'show the group' Cinderella trying on the slipper. There are many methods where children are included in the story-telling techniques used by the teacher.
3. The examiner will sit with the children and talk with them about the work presented.

### Stage Two

1. The candidates will perform an action rhyme, singing/acting game as for Stage One. Each child should stand in his/her place in the group. For this stage the examiner will expect that memory is clear, and that the children are able and willing to co-operate as a group with very little prompting from the teacher.
2. The candidates will take part in an original 'game' during the examination. This should be devised by the teacher and 'played' before the examination so that it is familiar to the children. It is envisaged that the teacher will be 'in role' and that there will be no props. The title of the 'game' could be 'The Birthday', 'The Tea Party', 'A Visit to the Zoo', 'A Trip to the Seaside', 'The New Baby' or a similar title devised by the teacher. It is not acceptable to base this part of the examination on a film or television programme.
3. The examiner will talk to the children about the work presented and other subjects which arise.

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## **3. Awarding and reporting**

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### **3.1 Issue of results**

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A written report will be compiled for each examination. Candidates will be informed of the result of examinations as soon as possible, and not later than four weeks after the examination date, by post. Representatives are not allowed to issue results over the telephone.

Certificates are normally dispatched within eight weeks of the date of the examination, but very often they will be received sooner than this.

This time is necessary to ensure that all results are properly standardised and have been checked by LCM Examinations.

### **3.2 Regulations and information**

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For all regulations and more information about our exams, please see the link at the bottom of our website.

