

AXMusic

COMPOSE,
PLAY LIVE!

The Academy of Excellence in Music

www.axmusic.co.uk

Compose Play LIVE

Syllabus Guide



Examination guitar grade information booklet

Valid from 2012 until further notice

AXMusic



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GUITAR GRADE 1

THE CONTEMPORARY GRADE IN GUITAR
PLAYING

Compiled by AXMusic

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AXMusic Syllabus.

This syllabus is aimed at giving teachers, learners and candidate's useful information on AX Music's Grade One examination. If there are any queries regarding the examinations for guitar, please do not hesitate to contact us:

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All information regarding our examinations, including downloads and audio backing tracks, can be found at www.axmusic.co.uk

This syllabus guide covers the following examination:

Guitar Grade 1. 'Compose, Play live!'

The purpose of this syllabus is to provide teachers, learners and candidates with the practical information they will need to make best use of the 'Compose, Play LIVE!' Grade book and the examination terms and conditions required by AXMusic.

A. Examination Procedure

'Compose, Play LIVE!' Grade 1 Guitar consists of four elements listed below:

1. **Composition**
2. **Technical Skills**
3. **Lead Solo Performance**
4. **Recognition By Listening**

1. Composition Exam Procedure

- For this section of the examination, the candidate is expected to have entered two, completed compositions, in two different styles of music, ready to perform with the professional musicians - one drummer and one guitarist, either of which may be the examiner on the examination day. The candidate would have entered his/her composition before the examination closing date (these dates can be found in at www.axmusic.co.uk.)
- It is recommended that all candidates wear ear - plugs when playing alongside the drum - kit. AXMusic will provide these on the examination day, but it is a worthwhile investment for all musicians to have a pair of their own.
- The candidates must have their own instrument, which needs to be tuned before entering the examination room. Also the candidate must bring a copy of his/her own compositions, which will be needed on the day of the examination. All other equipment will be provided by AXMusic but the candidate may bring his/her own amplifier if preferred.

- Electric or acoustic guitars may be used in the exam. Acoustic guitars will, be amplified using an unobtrusive microphone, which the examiner will provide and attach to the candidates guitar. (This will not damage the guitar whatsoever but will allow an even balance in volume for all instruments in the examination room).
- The candidate will enter the room, accompanied by a steward, who will introduce the candidate to the examiner and the professional musician.
- The examiner/professional musician would have already prepared for the candidate's entered compositions and will be ready to perform the compositions with the candidate.
- The drummer will accompany the candidate in his/her composition with the chosen drum groove and style from the "Compose, Play LIVE!" Book. The drum groove played will be exactly as contained on the Cd in the chosen style.
- The professional drummer will play throughout the candidate's composition.
- The guitarist will accompany the candidate by playing the chords and rhythms written, whilst the candidate plays the melody.
- The candidate will be permitted one rehearsal of each composition with the accompaniment of the professional guitarist and drummer. The rehearsal of each composition will be the first thing that the candidate will undertake in the examination. Both compositions will be rehearsed consecutively. The candidate will not be marked when the rehearsal of each composition is taking place. The candidate should use this time to set the amp and guitar volume controls to appropriate levels. The candidate must make sure that he/she can hear the other instruments played by the professional musicians clearly and also that his/her own instrument can be heard.
- The examination will begin after the rehearsal of each composition. The candidate can choose which composition he/she would like to play first.
- The candidate will begin with the melody section, with both the professional guitarist playing the candidate's chords and rhythm and the professional drummer playing the groove that the candidate has used for the composition.
- The candidate will play the 'Chord Rhythm' section he/she has written, without accompaniment from the professional guitar player. Only the professional drummer will continue to play with the candidate.

- When the candidate repeats the melody section of the composition, the professional guitarist will accompany by playing the chords and rhythms again.
- A few minutes will be allocated at this point for the examiner to write. The marking system can be found in this syllabus and in the “Compose, Play LIVE! Book. This will bring the candidate to the end of the first Composition Skill section of the examination. The candidate will follow the same procedure for the second Composition Skill.
- One re – start will be permitted for each section of the exam except the ‘recognition by listening’ element. More than one re – start will result in marks being deducted from that part of the exam. The number of marks deducted will be at the examiner’s discretion on the day of the examination and will reflect the overall performance of that section of the exam.

Compositions are required to be written using elements of music notation drawn from the following:

Rhythms.

- *All types of rhythms and rests are permitted.*
- *A minimum of two different rhythms, are required within each composition.*
- *No extra marks will be given for exceeding the minimum requirements.*

Dynamics.

- *Appropriate dynamics may include p, mp, mf, and f. Crescendo, and Diminuendo.*
- *A minimum of two dynamics are required within each composition.*
- *No extra marks will be given for exceeding the minimum requirements.*

Playing Techniques.

- *All types of left and right hand techniques.*
- *A minimum of two techniques must be used within each composition.*
- *No extra marks will be given for exceeding the minimum requirements.*

Music Keys.

- *Compositions must be submitted in any of the following keys. C major, A minor, G major & E minor.*
- *No other keys are permitted.*

Time Signature.

- *Compositions must be submitted in 4/4 time.*
- *No other time signatures are permitted.*

Tempo

- *Tempos for drum grooves can be found on the Cd contents page.*
- *No other tempos are permitted.*

Composition Template Instructions

1a. The Blank Template

- The candidate can use the blank templates provided in the “Compose, Play LIVE!” book to submit his/her two compositions for examination entry.
- Any music software maybe used to help score and arrange the candidate’s composition, however it must follow the template layout found within the “Compose, Play LIVE!” book.
- The candidate can enter hand written or music software written templates for his/her composition.
- The candidate is required to choose two out of the four drum grooves provided on the accompanying Cd, which are in four different music styles: Rock, Blues, Reggae and Indie. No other style of music may be used.

1b Filling out your Template

- The candidate is required to write his/her name in the space provided.
- The candidate is required to write the chosen style of his/her composition in the space provided e.g. Style Reggae
- The candidate is required to write the tempo of his/her track in the space provided Tempo = 70. Tempos for each drum groove can be found on the Cd Contents page.
- The candidate is required to use the drum grooves provided on the Cd
- The musical notes and tab need to be clearly written, if not the candidate's submission will be returned.
- The candidate is required to write both musical notation and tab on the template provided.
- The candidate’s composition is required to be twenty-six bars in length, which includes the count in and drum fill.
- Bars1 and 2 consist of a one bar count in and a one bar drum fill. The candidate is not required to play his/her guitar on the count in bar but may play a single line melody on the drum fill bar. No double stops or chords are to be played.

1c Melody Section.

- Bars 3 - 10 (**Melody Section**) the candidate may choose one of the scales, or a combination of scales, from either the Group A Scales or the Group B Scales to compose his/her melody. Also, other scale patterns that are not written in the book can be used. The candidate cannot write any power chords, triads or any other type of chords, including two note intervals in the Melody Section. Only single line melody notes are allowed.
- The candidate may refer to the examples in the book and Cd for help but must not use AXMusics melody examples found on the Cd or in the 'Compose Play LIVE' book.

1d Chord Rhythm Section.

- Bars 11 - 18 (**Chord Rhythm Section**) may consist of power chords, triads, or any other type of chord including two note intervals. Candidates must not write single melody lines, riffs or arpeggiate any type of two note intervals, triads or chords in this section.
- The candidate may refer to the examples in the book and Cd for help but must not copy any of the melody examples found on the Cd or in the 'Compose Play LIVE' book.
- Bars 19 - 26 (**Melody Section**) The candidate may repeat his/her melody section in bars 3 - 10. This would mark the end of his/her composition.
- Repeat the melody again after taking the 'ds al fine' and finish at the 'Fine' bar.

2. Technical Skills Exam Procedure.

- In this section of the examination, the candidate is expected to have full knowledge of the following scales shown below. These are contained in two different groups, Group A and Group B. The examiner will choose one group to be played.
- On the Cd both Group A and Group B scale notes are played with chord accompaniment and drum backing. A further two tracks have also been included for practice with chord accompaniment and drum backing only. In the examination, the professional drummer and guitarist will accompany the candidate whilst he/she plays the scale notes requested. The test is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 70 bpm.

2a Group A Scales:

- C major, A minor and A minor pentatonic. One octave scales only.

2b Group B Scales:

- G major, E minor and E minor pentatonic. One octave scales only.

2c The Process:

- The examiner will ask the candidate if he/she is ready to begin.
- The candidate will hear a one bar count in by the professional drummer, then the candidate will start the scale group chosen by the examiner.
- All three scales contained in the chosen group must be played continuously.
- The candidate will not be permitted a rehearsal; this is a continuous test once started.
- A few minutes will be allocated for the examiner to write on the report sheet. This will bring the candidate to the end of the Technical Skills section of the examination.

3. Lead Solo Performance .

- In this section of the exam, the candidate will be expected to play a lead solo using one or a combination of scales that fits the key. The candidate's solo is required to consist of single line notes only. No two note intervals, triads or chords are to be played. The candidate will be reminded of the key by the examiner.
- The chord progressions will be taken from the harmonised C major and G major or A minor and E minor keys which will be played by the guitarist. The candidate will be accompanied by the professional drummer playing a 4/4 time signature with a one bar count in followed by a one bar drum fill .The candidate can find full mixed tracks of each style required for the exam on the CD and in the book. These tracks are exactly what you may expect the guitarist and drummer to play during your exam.

3a First Solo Writing Exercise

- The music styles used for the candidate's first solo writing exercise will differ from those used in the candidate's compositions.
- This is a continuous test once started.
- The candidate will not be given any rehearsal.
- A few minutes will be allocated at the end for the examiner to write.
- The candidate will then prepare for the second solo writing exercise test.

3b Second Solo Writing Exercise

- The music style used for the candidate's second solo writing exercise will again differ from those used in the candidate's compositions and previous solo writing exercise.
- This is a continuous test once started.
- The candidate will not be given any rehearsal time.
- A few minutes will be allocated at the end for the examiner to write.
- This brings us to the end of the solo writing exercise section.

“An example of a rock style solo can be found on the Cd and inside the book; however this must not be copied in anyway.”

4. Recognition by Listening

- In this section of the examination there are two tests.
- The candidate can find examples of both listening tests on the cd.

Test 1: Identify scale type. (Major, Minor or Minor pentatonic scale).

- The professional guitarist will play one of the scales - major, minor or minor Pentatonic from either Group A or Group B of the scale section written in the book. The scale chosen will be played twice, then the candidate will give his/her answer. This scale must then be played back by the candidate.
- The candidate may use his/her guitar to identify the scale
- The examiner will move on to test 2.

Test 2: Recalling a one bar rhythm.

- The professional drummer will ask the candidate if he/she are ready; the drummer will then play a one bar count in followed by a one bar rhythm. On the second playing the candidate is required to clap back the rhythm in time with the drummer. A few minutes will be allocated at the end for the examiner to write.
- This is the end of the examination. The examiner and the professional musicians will thank the candidate for taking part in a ‘Compose, Play LIVE!’ Examination.

A. Exam Regulations

- In accordance with the AXMusic Equal Opportunities Policy, examinations are open to any person irrespective of race, gender, religion or disability. Full details of the above policy can be found at www.axmusic.co.uk
- Candidates are required to bring a copy of their compositions with them on the day of the exam. Failure to do so may result in the exam being cancelled.
- Full payment and all relevant documentation must reach AXMusic before the exam closing date. AXMusic cannot guarantee an exam for applications received after this date.
- Any changes to the exam times or dates will incur a fee to the candidate.
- Exam entries will only be accepted for named individuals and may not be transferred to a third person.
- Cancellation of exams will result in the loss of the full fee, unless caused by an illness or injury. In such circumstances a medical certificate must be produced. In the event of this, the exam will be re-scheduled with no fee.
- Names on certificates will be as stated on the candidate's entry form.
- Examinations may be held on any day of the week, including weekends.
- Examinations may be held during or outside of the school term.
- AXMusic will ordinarily dispatch results within 2 – 3 weeks of the exam date. Please note results will not be issued over the telephone.
- Only the examiner, the professional musician and candidate are to be present in the examination room.
- Any candidates who have special needs must notify AXMusic prior to the exam and send a letter outlining their specific needs. Please see 'Special needs' section.
- Replacement certificates may be obtained by successful candidates; however all replacements will incur a charge.
- AXMusic operates an appeals process. All appeals must be made in writing to the Chief Examiner no later than 7 days after the exam date.
- No refunds are given.

A. Special needs.

- AXMusic will make every effort to ensure that candidates who have special needs have equal access to the exam process. In order for this to happen, AXMusic would like to make all concerned aware of the following:
- Confirmation of any special needs will be required (in writing) at least 2 weeks prior to the exam date. A supporting medical letter will also be required from the candidate by AXMusic.
- Late entries, which do not contain full details of the nature of the disability, may not be able to be processed in time for the examination.
- AXMusic reserve the right to refuse requests for provision if this above information is not provided, although every effort will be made to accommodate the candidate's special needs.

B. Equal Opportunities.

- AXMusic is committed to providing equality of opportunity for all persons involved with any AXMusic examination. The full AXMusic Equal Opportunities Policy can be downloaded from www.axmusic.co.uk

C. Appeals.

- Candidates who wish to appeal an examination outcome should contact the Chief Examiner. This must be done in writing within seven days of the exam and appeals will be judged within one calendar month. There are two grounds on which an appeal will be considered:
 1. Errors in modus operandi
 2. Difference in comments and marks

First level of appeal

- The first level of appeal is free of charge.
- Appeals must be made in writing and sent to the Chief Examiner by the person who signed the entry form.
- The original form should be sent by post. No photocopied AXMusic reports are permitted.
- The appeal grounds should be set out clearly and concisely.
- Appeals will not be discussed over the telephone.
- Appeals should be postmarked no later than 7 days after the candidate has received the results.
- AXMusic will send an acknowledgement within 7 days of receipt of the postmarked appeal, which will be referred to the examiner and musicians.
- The Chief Examiner will reach a decision after receiving the comments of the examiner and musicians in order to collate all the information needed.
- Appeals will, in general, be resolved within one month from the date of receipt.
- The outcome of a successful appeal may result in the candidate being awarded a free re-examination.

Second level of appeal

- The second level of appeal, per candidate is £ 30.00
- Those who are not satisfied with the decision of the Chief Examiner may proceed to a second level of appeal addressed to AXMusics Board of Directors.
- Such appeals should state the grounds on which the Chief Examiner's decision is challenged, and should be postmarked no later than 7 days from the date of receipt of the previous decision.
- A second stage appeal will be handled in the same way as above.
- Where the appeal is upheld the fee will be returned.

Unit Title: Composing for the guitar

Level: One

Credit Value: 3

Unit Code: *LH51CY016 / CCZ259*

Purpose and Aim of the Unit	To develop the learners' ability to compose and arrange music.
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This unit has 1 learning outcome.

LEARNING OUTCOMES	ASSESSMENT CRITERIA
The learner will:	The learner can:
LO1. Be able to compose two instrumental pieces of twenty- five bars in length using drum backing tracks.	For two of the four following styles, produce a music composition using the five line music staff and the six line tablature staff Rock Reggae Blues Indie Construct a one bar introduction consisting of single melody notes or a minimum of two strings Construct an eight bar single line melody Construct an eight bar chord rhythm section with a minimum of two notes composed in time with drum backing.

*** If it is appropriate to map this unit to NOS please enter mappings in brackets above**

Any other mappings – please indicate below
Assessor requirements None
Assessment requirements For LO1 - Through completion of both compositions the following should be incorporated: A minimum of two rhythms including: Semibreves Minims Crotchets Quavers a minimum of two dynamics including: Moderately Loud Loud Moderately Quiet Quiet Gradually getting louder Gradually getting quieter a minimum of two right and left hand techniques including: Palm Muting Vibrato Hammering on to strings Pulling off strings Bending strings

Unit Title: Composition performance

Level: One

Credit Value: 3

Unit Code: *LH51CY017 / CCZ260*

Purpose and Aim of the Unit	To develop the learners' ability to perform own composed music in a live set up.
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This unit has 5 learning outcomes.

1. Perform six scales.	1.1 Execute, in a live set up, the following: C Major A Minor A Minor Pentatonic G Major E Minor E Minor Pentatonic scales
2. Be able to select and play scales over a given chord progression	2.1 Perform live two lead guitar solos each incorporating a minimum of two of the following techniques: Vibrato Hammering On to strings Pulling off strings Sliding up or down strings
3. Be able to identify and play a given scale	Identify then repeat one scale from auditory recognition.
4. Be able to identify and repeat a given 1 bar rhythm	4.1 Identify and repeat a one bar rhythm from auditory recognition which includes; Minims Crotchets Quavers
5. Be able to perform own composition in a live set up.	Perform live both of the pieces composed in

Criteria For Compose Play LIVE Grade 1

Compose Play Live Composition Criteria Unit

Category 1	Category 1
Marks	Standard of Submitted Composition
	Distinction
14/13/12	Clearly written with all markings and notation easily identifiable.
Merit	Merit
11/10	Majority of markings were clear with correct pitch, beaming, and tablature shown.
Pass	Pass
9/8	Markings were mostly identifiable with some errors in pitch, beaming and tablature.
Fail	Fail
7/1	Markings were unclear with errors in pitch, beaming, and tablature. Less than a minimum of two dynamics or right and left hand techniques or both were not written in the score.

Compose Play Live Guitar G1 Marking Criteria for Live Performance Unit

	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4
Marks	Pitch Accuracy	Rhythm and sync Accuracy.	Technical Accuracy	Dynamical Accuracy
12 - 14	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
	Pitch was faultless and musical in both A and B sections.	Pulse and sync was exemplary throughout the A and B sections.	Techniques were free flowing and articulate in both A and B sections.	Dynamics played were faultless in either the A or B sections or both.
10/11	Merit	Merit	Merit	Merit
	Pitch was faithful to the score in both A and B sections.	Pulse and sync was strict with noticing of rhythms in the A and B sections clearly defined.	Techniques were controlled in an accurate maner throughout the Aand B sections.	Dynamics played were valid throughout either the A or B sections or both.
8/9	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Pitch had sporadic errors in either A/B sections.	Pulse and sync was mostly correct with minimal rhythm errors occuring in either A/B sections.	Techniques were mostly appropriate with occassional glitches in either A/B sections.	Dynamics were occasionally left out in either the A or B sections or both.
1/7	Fail	Fail	Fail	Fail
	Pitch had constant mistakes in both A and B sections.	Pulse and sync had frequent errors in both A and B sections with numerous phrases/bars pushed ahead or played behind the beat.	Techniques were not played throughout the A and B sections. Techniques were unsuitably played in both A and B sections.	Dynamics were entirley ignored or incorrectly played throught either the A or B sections or both.

Technical Criteria Compose Play Live Guitar G1

Marks	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
	Accuracy of Scale pitch and Triads	Pulse	Right and left hand technical accuracy.
9/10	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
	Pitch was highly accurate throughout all scales and triads	Pulse was musical and effortless throughout all scales and triads.	Technical work was highly accurate throughout all scales and triads.
7/8	Merit	Merit	Merit
	Pitch was correct in all scales and triads.	Pulse was accurate with scales and triads correctly played.	Technical work was correctly executed in both right and left hands.
5/6	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Pitch was mostly correct with some pitch errors in scales and triads.	Pulse was mostly correct with occasional timing errors in scales and triads.	Technical work had some glitches in scale patterns and triads.
1/4	Fail	Fail	Fail
	Pitch had inaccuracies in the majority of scales and triads.	Pulse was inconsistent for the majority of the scales and triads.	Technical work was inconsistent with errors in the majority of scales and triads.

Marking Criteria Compose Play Live Grade One Lead Solo Performance

Marks	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3
	Pitch accuracy over the chords and Solo development	Rhythm and sync Accuracy	Technical Accuracy
10/11/12	Distinction	Distinction	Distinction
	Phrases were fluently developed and played with eloquent note choice.	Rhythm and sync was musical and all ideas played were free-flowing.	Techniques were articulate and a natural command of the instrument was shown.
8/9	Merit	Merit	Merit
	Phrases were developed correctly and played with a well built choice of notes.	Rhythm and sync was accurate with valid ideas played.	Techniques were precise. A solid right and left hand display was shown.
6/7	Pass	Pass	Pass
	Phrases began to develop and were mostly correct with some errors in note choice.	Rhythm and sync was mostly correct with the odd intermittent timing error in ideas played.	Techniques were mostly exact with some glitches in the right or left hand.
1/5	Fail	Fail	Fail
	Incorrect notes were used for the majority of the performance. Little or no development was shown.	Rhythm and sync had frequent errors in the majority or all of ideas played.	Techniques were in consistently delivered with errors throughout interrupting the flow of the solo.

Criteria For Compose Play Live Aural Tests
Grade One

Aural Marking Criteria

Marking Bands	Question One Test 1	Question Two Test 2
Marks 10	Scale Identification and Playback	Rhythmic Clap Back
	Distinction	Distinction
9/10	The scale was swiftly identified and played fluently without hesitation.	The rhythm was fluently and confidently clapped.
	Merit	Merit
7/8	The scale was correctly played and identified.	The rhythm was correctly clapped.
	Pass	Pass
5/6	The scale was mostly correct with some hesitation in identification.	The rhythm had occasional errors in clap back.
	Fail	Fail
1/4	The scale had frequent errors in playback with incorrect identification.	The rhythm was hesitantly clapped and was largely incorrect.

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Syllabus Guide

A unique opportunity to compose in modern music styles and play live as part of a three piece band with professional musicians.

CREATE MELODY AND RHYTHM

Use our backing tracks to write your own compositions and improve your timing.

IMPROVE TECHNICAL SKILLS

Learn how to use scales - fundamental to any player.

LEARN A RANGE OF STYLES

Rock, Reggae, Blues and Indie.

PERFORM WITH EXPERIENCED MUSICIANS

Hear your compositions come alive when professional musicians accompany you.

This is the first music qualification of its kind where the student can create their own music and perform it along with a live backing band which is the cornerstone for all budding musicians.

BLUES, ROCK, REGGAE, INDIE, COMPOSE, MELODY, RHYTHM, LEAD
PLAYING THEORY

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