

Instrumental Guidelines –NCEA 91949, 91270, 91416

Bass Guitar

These guidelines focus on the technical dimensions of the achievement criteria for solo performance for bass guitar together with consideration of repertoire choice, musicality, and presentation.

The location and orientation of the performer and bass guitar is important so individuals’ hands can be seen, in order that the assessment process for all levels is robust. Students should be given ample opportunity to practice on the, preferably, recently tuned and adequately maintained bass guitar and amplifier they will be using for their assessed performances.

Level 1 91949			Level 2 91270			Level 3 91416		
This achievement standard involves students demonstrating music performance skills.			This achievement standard involves performing two substantial pieces of music as a featured soloist.			This achievement standard involves performing two programmes of music as a featured soloist.		
Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence	Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence	Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Demonstrate music performance skills	Demonstrate effective music performance skills	Demonstrate assured music performance skills	Perform two substantial pieces of music as a featured soloist.	Perform two substantial pieces of music effectively as a featured soloist.	Perform two substantial pieces of music convincingly as a featured soloist.	Perform two programmes of music as a featured soloist.	Perform two programmes of music effectively as a featured soloist.	Perform two programmes of music convincingly as a featured soloist.
Technique Students in their third year of itinerant bass guitar tuition should generally exercise clear finger control in both hands. The fretting hand should use all fingers and stay in position as much as possible. The first few positions of double bass fingering (using fingers 1, 2 and 3/4 together) could be preferable for students especially those with smaller hands. By the 5 th fret one finger per fret should be used with all four fingers being used to fret the notes. The thumb should reside on the back of the neck			Technique Students in their fourth year of itinerant bass guitar tuition will have developed a range of secure technical skills and will generally be moving with confidence around the fretboard. Correct posture and hand position will aid students in creating effective tone, fluency and sound projection (including amplification). Standing is acceptable and to be encouraged to reach further comfort levels in delivery as style appropriate. With experience comes further knowledge of fingering, and effective selection of string/fret positionings and timbral range in fretboard playing together with an effective performance sound.			Technique Students in their fifth year of itinerant bass guitar tuition will have developed, and can make evident, a wide range of secure technical skills. They will further demonstrate a strong sense of control over the bass guitar. Generally, the performer should be secure in holding down a groove and be able to move around the bass smoothly and with precision. They should be very comfortable with double stopping and glissandos and their basslines should be clearly articulated. Their LH should be able to contract and expand in order to change position and play large melodic leaps and		

<p>behind the second finger. The fingers should be nicely curled and not collapse when fretting notes. Changes in position should look tidy.</p> <p>Notes should generally sound clean and without fret buzz.</p> <p>In the right hand (or plucking hand) both the middle and index fingers should be used and generally alternating.</p> <p>The thumb would normally rest on a pickup or on one of the lower strings.</p> <p>Strings 'not being used' should be muted by some combination of the left or right hands.</p> <p>The use of a pick should be for stylistic reasons and not a limitation.</p> <p>Correct posture (preferably standing) and hand position will aid students in creating effective tone and fluency, with importance placed on not having wrists at bad angles.</p> <p>Repertoire Should showcase the instrument and the performer but should also cover the conventional role of the instrument.</p> <p>A/M/E Students performing at Achievement level will play with general accuracy and evidence of adequate preparation. The performance could contain errors. Merit level students will demonstrate secure technical skills, a mostly accurate performance, evidence of effective preparation and an awareness of phrase shape, dynamics, rhythm and feel.</p> <p>To gain Excellence, student bass guitarists will display technical assurance, fluency, accuracy and show evidence of careful preparation. Further,</p>	<p>There will be increased dexterity when compared to Level 1.</p> <p>Student performances may include advanced techniques such as:</p> <p>Slapping: RH could be thumb up (Marcus Miller) or thumb down (Flea). Should sound percussive and tight. The RH should be close to the neck of the bass and should be hitting the strings into the frets. The 'popping' finger(s) should still look tidy and should be pulling the string away from the bass.</p> <p>Tapping: This requires the strings to be fretted (often with both LH and RH) in such a way that they produce string vibration with the additional need to pluck the string.</p> <p>Repertoire There will be a notable step-up in ability seen in students from those who gained Level 1. This will generally be shown through repertoire choice which will be extending students into the 'classics' of their chosen or preferred musical genre.</p> <p>Student bass guitarists at this level will display rehearsed and mostly accurate performances. If errors are made students will be able to continue playing until the end of the music. Attention will be given to dynamics, phrasing and articulation. However, there may not yet be a complete understanding of all stylistic aspects to the music.</p> <p>A/M/E Students performing at Achievement level may make minor errors. However the music will maintain general fluency (students play through their mistakes) and students will be experienced enough to acknowledge the audience at the end and maintain their 'game face'.</p> <p>At Merit and Excellence levels, pieces will be played with</p>	<p>arpeggios and their RH should be able to string cross and rake.</p> <p>Advanced techniques such as Slapping and Tapping may be getting complex.</p> <p>Further, posture and hand position will enhance tone and fluency and allow performers to move effortlessly up and down the fretboard whilst demonstrating aspects of presentation.</p> <p>Finger work may include extended riff, lead line, scalic passages, single to multiple string work, consecutive and intervallic patterns across strings/octaves, a range of chord shapes, interplay between hands and a real sensitivity of 'touch'.</p> <p>Correct posture and hand position clearly enhance the students in creating convincing tone and fluency.</p> <p>Repertoire The two performance programmes will allow players to demonstrate a convincing range of the technical skills above, together with the ability to sustain the delivery and communication of extended pieces of music. Errors hardly detract from a convincing performance. Ideally the student's programmes will allow them to perform technically advanced pieces together with more expressive pieces. Individual pieces within both programmes will be well rehearsed with attention to accuracy of the score/pre-signaled intentions, including articulation, dynamics and phrasing.</p> <p>An example of this type of programme might be a Bach Invention or Bebop head combined with a 'Slapping' funk piece.</p> <p>Contemporary and jazz genres are likely to include students' own musical interpretation and may include improvisation.</p> <p>The student should make it clear if passages are</p>
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students meeting Excellence criterion will provide a performance of any musical genre/style which pays attention to detail and engages the listener.

The majority of bass pieces place particular emphasis on rhythm as a core component as the instrument's function is to groove.

Musicality

Students should be able to control the tone of their instrument using both technique (i.e. LH placement, RH strength –or vice versa) and the electronic controls on both the bass and the amp.

Much bass guitar repertoire at this curriculum level can be limited by way of dynamic contrast but a key area of musicianship to look out for is groove. Rhythms should be played confidently and lock in with any accompaniment.

Suggested repertoire pieces

- Rockschool Grade 3 -4
- Red Hot Chili Peppers
- Muse
- J.S Bach

technical security (M) and assurance (E). Confidence will be demonstrated through well-rehearsed performances and a degree of interpretive understanding (E). Minor errors will not mar performances. Rhythmic confidence will ensure great 'feel' or 'groove'.

Musicality

Melody lines may begin to exhibit more than technical delivery and may begin to incite audience engagement through expressiveness/contrast, e.g. *rubato* and other interpretive styles such as *cantabile*; both of which could be between both hands and their relationship with the strings, fretboard and sound body.

Performances will be musically expressive with a recognisably more mature interpretation of musical genre from higher end criteria students.

Students in a fourth year of lessons will be developing communication skills which allow them to share the music with their audience rather than being singularly introspective or potentially only focused on playing the notes.

Suggested repertoire pieces

- Rockschool Grade 4-5
- Dune tune by Mark King
- Rio funk – Lee Ritenour
- J.S Bach
- Amazing Grace as performed by Victor Wooten

improvised or have been rehearsed/transcribed.

A/M/E

Students performing at Achievement level may make occasional errors which do not detract from the overall performance. Achievement level appears less confident than Merit (effective) or Excellence (convincing) students. Performing less technically challenging pieces (appropriate to this level) with expressiveness and musicality may benefit judgements for less, as well as more experienced players.

To gain Merit, bassists will perform confidently and consistently. The pieces will be well rehearsed, played with precision (highly accurate) and demonstrate interpretive understanding of different genres or within a genre. For example, legato phrasing for a Bach invention, swing feel for a jazz piece (both swung quavers and walking bass lines) or a 16th note style funk feel.

Learning and playing different genres will allow students to communicate each composer's intentions through breadth of experience. Those students gaining Excellence will do this with imagination, musical expression and a sense of 'ownership' of the music (in their clear intention description prior to the performance). Rhythmic confidence will ensure great 'feel' or 'groove'.

Musicality

In a fifth year of lessons, guitar students could be expected to have gained a level of technical proficiency which affords a degree of confidence for self-expression and contemporary relevance. Musicality will be evident in the astute use of dynamics, phrasing and any equipment along with pre-signalled interpretative

		<p>aspects. Ability to capture the style/mood/delivery of the bass guitar music and communicate this to an audience will create an effective (M) and then a convincing (E) performance.</p> <p>Suggested repertoire pieces Rockschool Bass Guitar Grade 6+ Kid logic by Victor Bailey Teen town by Jaco Pastorius A portrait of Tracy by Jaco Pastorius Arranged Bebop heads J.S Bach</p>
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