VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

RSL Level 3 Diplomas for Music Practitioners (Performance Tables)

September 2017

RSL Awarding the Contemporary Arts

Rockschool | Performance Arts Awards | Vocational Qualifications

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Introduction

The value of RSL qualifications

RSL advocates an open access approach to qualifications, providing a range of syllabuses, designed to accommodate a wide variety of candidates of different ages, experience and levels of achievement. RSL qualifications are listed on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) in England and Northern Ireland by the Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual), in Wales by Qualifications Wales and in Scotland by the Scottish Qualifications Authority. RSL is committed to maintaining and improving its reputation for excellence by providing high quality education and training through its syllabuses, examinations, music and resources.

RSL Level 3 Diplomas for Music Practitioners

Purpose of this syllabus specification

This specification guide serves the following purposes:

- To provide regulatory information surrounding the qualifications
- To provide an overview of qualification structure and content
- To provide content and assessment specification relevant to the qualifications

Period of operation

This syllabus specification covers qualifications from September 2017

Qualifications covered by this syllabus specification

- RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners
- RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners

For detailed information on all aspects of RSL qualifications visit **rslawards.com**.

Qualifications at a glance

Qualification titles and sizes

Music Practitioners qualifications at Level 3	Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners	Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners
Guided Learning Hours (GLH)	540	1080
Total Qualification Time (TQT)	900	1800
Externally assessed core units	1	2
Internally assessed core units	1	1
Percentage external assessment	33%	33%
Percentage mandatory assessment	50%	41%
UCAS points	Up to 84	Up to 168

Assessment

Form of assessment	The percentage of internal and external assessment within each qualification is indicated in the table above. The externally assessed core units include timed assessment under controlled conditions based on assignments set with input by employers from the music industry, and are marked by RSL. The remaining units are internally assessed (i.e. staff in centres provide assessment opportunities and assess the work produced by learners). One is mandatory (a core unit) and the remaining units are optional, meaning that learners can choose units relevant to their chosen pathway.
Unit format	Unit specifications contain the title, unit code, level, GLH and TQT value, unit context, unit aims/purpose, learning outcomes (what has to be learnt), assessment criteria (evidence on which the learner is assessed), grading criteria (how the evidence will be graded), summative assessment methods, recommended evidence, unit content, skills development and suggested delivery ideas.
Bands of assessment	There are four bands of assessment (Pass, Merit, Distinction and Unclassified) for each unit. Overall grades are banded Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction* and Unclassified. In order to achieve the minimum of a Pass grade, learners must pass every individual assessment criterion within every learning outcome.
External quality assurance	External quality assurance of internally assessed units ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling of learners' work. External quality assurers are appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

Qualification Summary

1.1 Qualification rationale

The Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma and Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners provide music industry qualifications that will equip learners with the skills, knowledge and understanding for entry to employment in the music industry or progression to further study at a higher level.

The qualifications are divided into specific pathways, offering the opportunity to undertake specialised learning that can be accurately matched to specific career sectors in the music industry. The array of optional units within the qualifications also allows learners to cover a range of aspects of the music industry, whichever pathway they select, reflecting the nature of employment within the music industry which often involves individuals undertaking multiple roles as part of a 'portfolio career', many in a freelance capacity.

1.2 Qualification aims and broad objectives

The qualifications aim to offer practical structured learning with the flexibility to specialise in different disciplines directly relevant to employment within the music industry, including composition, performance, business and technology. The flexibility and range of unit choice are directly applicable to the music industry, where portfolio careers are the norm and those seeking employment often require knowledge and skills covering a breadth of relevant disciplines.

Qualification Summary

1.3 Qualification overview

The learner can follow one of four pathways:

- Performance
- Composition
- Technology
- Business

Core externally assessed units

Learners taking the Subsidiary Diploma undertake one externally assessed core unit which is relevant to their chosen pathway. Learners taking the Extended Diploma undertake two externally assessed core units, relevant to their chosen pathway.

Core internally assessed unit

All learners undertake an internally assessed core unit (Planning a Career in Music).

Optional internally assessed units

All learners can select a number of optional units in order to develop their skills and understanding in areas relevant to their chosen pathway.

1.4 Qualification sizes

Qualification	Guided learning hours (GLH)	Total qualification time (TQT)
Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners	540	900
Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners	1080	1800

Qualification Summary

1.5 Levels and final awards available

Levels available

The qualifications are delivered at Level 3, with four separate and distinct pathways in total. The final qualification will be awarded upon successful completion of a specified number of guided learning hours (GLH).

The types of final award available are:

- Subsidiary Diploma
- Extended Diploma

Qualification flexibility

The suite of qualifications has been designed so learners can move between qualifications. For example, a learner who has completed the units required for a Subsidiary Diploma can build on this to work towards an Extended Diploma by completing further units. Similarly, learners working towards an Extended Diploma may subsequently decide to discontinue their studies after having achieved sufficient units to be awarded a Subsidiary Diploma. These changes can be made by completing a 'change of registration' form, available from the RSL website or directly from the Vocational team at vocational@rslawards.com.

1.6 Certification titles

The qualification will be shown on the certificate as one of the following:

RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diplomas for Music Practitioners

- RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Performance)
- RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Composition)
- RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Technology)
- RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Business)

RSL Level 3 Extended Diplomas for Music Practitioners

- RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners (Performance)
- RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners (Composition)
- RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners (Technology)
- RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners (Business)

Qualification Summary

1.7 Entry requirements and progression

Entry requirements

These qualifications are available for all learners aged 16 and older. There are no specific requirements for entry, though learners are likely to hold related qualifications at Entry Level, Level 1 or Level 2 or have related musical experience.

Progression

As Tech Level qualifications, these are rigorous advanced (Level 3) technical qualifications, on a par with A Levels and recognised by employers. Tech Levels are for post-16 students wishing to specialise in a specific industry, occupation or occupational group. They equip a student with specialist knowledge and skills, enabling entry to employment or progression to a related higher education course.

Employment in the music industry

Employment opportunity in the music industry is centred on self-employment or small-team operations rather than contracted employment with large companies and organisations. This qualification contains specific units related to career options in the industry.

Progression to higher education

Learners can progress to higher education courses such as popular music, music technology and music business degrees. There are many courses in higher education institutes offering degrees in popular music or music technology, enabling students to develop further the knowledge and skills obtained from the RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma or Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners, preparing them for work in the music industry. The Subsidiary Diploma carries up to 84 UCAS points and the Extended Diploma carries up to 168 UCAS points (see Section 4.7).

Qualification Structure

2.1 Qualification pathways

Choice of pathway

Learners select one pathway from the following:

- Performance
- Composition
- Technology
- Business

Each pathway embodies a specific profile of study and this informs the core unit choices, which you are guided to make. Learners will be led by centres when choosing the pathway options available to them, and the units within their chosen pathway. The profile of each pathway is described in more detail in Section 2.2.

Pathway rationale

The aim of each pathway is to equip learners with a variety of abilities relevant to the music industry, ranging from knowledge development through to nearing professional skill acquisition. These skills will form a skill set whereby the successful learner at Level 3 is able to work in a near professional capacity. Examples of the types of employment and occupational areas that these qualifications may lead to include, but are by no means limited to:

- Songwriter, recording artist, performer, session musician
- Producer / engineer
- Promotion, management / artist support services
- Live music production promotion and organisation

Switching pathways

On any particular size qualification, learners accumulate guided learning hours (GLH) within their chosen pathway to work towards a qualification title. It is possible for learners to switch qualification pathways only if the core units of the new pathway can still be delivered and assessed and if all other GLH and pathway requirements are met.

2.2 Pathway profiles

Performance

Learners will:

- Perform effectively on their instrument/voice
- Rehearse and display musicianship skills
- Initiate and develop repertoire
- Rehearse effectively and perform music live
- Understand contextual issues relating to music style, audience and the music industry
- Understand relevant aspects of music technology

Composition

Learners will:

- Compose and arrange music
- Initiate and develop repertoire
- Develop musicianship skills through using a harmony instrument
- Use computers and sequencing and recording software/hardware
- Understand contextual issues relating to music style, audience and the music industry

Technology

Learners will demonstrate:

- Sound recording skills
- Mixing and mastering skills
- Sequencing and production skills
- Live sound skills
- Radio programming skills
- Video production skills
- Understanding of contextual issues relating to music technology

Business

Learners will demonstrate:

- Sound business and financial skills
- Marketing skills
- Understanding of music contracts
- Media communication skills
- Freelance practice
- Artist management and artist representation skills
- Event management skills

Qualification Structure

2.3 Types of unit

The qualifications consist of three types of unit:

- Externally assessed core units
- Internally assessed core unit
- Optional units

Externally assessed core units

The externally assessed core units are mandatory units, which define each pathway. These externally assessed units require learners to work to a brief, set with input from industry practitioners (employers), specific to their area of specialism. These units are labelled as 'core' in the unit selection tables (Section 3).

Internally assessed core unit

All learners undertake the internally assessed core unit, Planning a Career in Music. This unit is labelled as 'internal core' in the unit selection tables (Section 3).

Optional units

Learners can choose from a selection of optional units to make up a programme, which qualifies for the chosen qualification. These units are labelled 'optional' in the unit selection tables (Section 3)

2.4 Externally assessed core units

Subsidiary Diplomas

Candidates taking a Subsidiary Diploma undertake the externally assessed core unit for their chosen pathway, as listed below:

- **Performance**
  MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills & Live Music Performance
- **Composition**
  MUSPRA 390E Composing Styles & Music Sequencing
- **Technology**
  MUSPRA 388E Live Sound Recording & Sound Reinforcement
- **Business**
  MUSPRA 389E Music Promotion & Event Management

Extended Diplomas

Candidates taking an Extended Diploma undertake both of the externally assessed core units for their chosen pathway:

- **Performance**
  MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills & Live Music Performance
  MUSPRA 391E Composing Collaboration & Recorded Music Performance
- **Composition**
  MUSPRA 390E Composing Styles & Music Sequencing
  MUSPRA 394E Composing Solo & Remixing and Production
- **Technology**
  MUSPRA 388E Live Sound Recording & Sound Reinforcement
  MUSPRA 392E Studio Sound Recording & Mixing
- **Business**
  MUSPRA 389E Music Promotion & Event Management
  MUSPRA 393E Setting up a Music Business & Selling Music

Qualification Structure

2.5 Internally assessed core unit

All learners take the following internally assessed core unit:

- MUSPRA 349 Planning a Career in Music

2.6 Optional units

Selecting optional units

In addition to the mandatory core units, learners can select from a number of optional units, which are open to all pathways. The number of optional units selected will depend on the chosen type of qualification.

Families of units

To aid unit selection, the optional units are grouped into the nine different families below:

- Performance
- Dance in Popular Music
- Practical Musicianship
- Composition
- Technology
- Live Music Production
- Business
- Contextual
- Facilitation

Qualification Structure

2.7 Unit selection

Externally assessed core units are worth 180 GLH. The internally assessed core unit, Planning for a Career in Music is worth 90 GLH. Optional units can have a GLH value of 30, 60 or 90. To achieve each type of qualification there is a minimum number of GLH required. The required units need to achieve each type of qualification are listed below.

Subsidiary Diploma (540 GLH)

- One externally assessed core unit, specific to the chosen pathway (180 GLH)
- One internally assessed core unit, relevant to the overall qualification (90 GLH)
- Further optional units (minimum of 270 GLH in total)

Extended Diploma (1080 GLH)

- Two externally assessed core units, specific to the chosen pathway (360 GLH)
- One internally assessed core unit, relevant to the overall qualification (90 GLH)
- Further optional units (minimum of 630 GLH in total)

2.8 Examples of unit selection

Below are examples of what units a learner might choose to take for a Subsidiary and Extended Diploma on different pathways.

RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Performance)

- **Externally assessed core unit**
  MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills and Live Performance (180 GLH)
- **Internally assessed core unit**
  MUSPRA 349 Planning a Career in Music (90 GLH)
- **Optional units**
  MUSPRA 364 Music Improvisation (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 386 Practical Musicianship (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 362 Lead Performer (60 GLH)
  MUSPRA 315 Understanding Music Influences (30 GLH)

RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma for Music Practitioners (Technology)

- **Externally assessed core units**
  MUSPRA 388E Live Sound Recording and Sound Reinforcement (180 GLH)
  MUSPRA 39E2 Studio Sound Recording and Mixing (180 GLH)
- **Internally assessed core unit**
  MUSPRA 349 Planning a Career in Music (90 GLH)
- **Optional units**
  MUSPRA 366 Music Sequencing and Production (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 367 Music Sequencing and Production (Media) (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 353 Music Event Management (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 351 Music Management (60 GLH)
  MUSPRA 354 Setting up a Music Business (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 306 Composing Music (Collaboration) (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 348 Understanding the Creative Process in Music (90 GLH)
  MUSPRA 378 Digital Synthesis (60 GLH)
  MUSPRA 321 Evolution of the Record Industry (30 GLH)

Qualification Structure

2.9 Employer involvement

The involvement of employers in the assessment of this qualification (in their input to the set assignments within the externally assessed units) provides a clear 'line of sight' to work and enriches learning, ensuring that learners develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required for a particular role in the music industry. In addition, it is expected that centres will provide further meaningful activities involving employers to support learning. This could take the form of masterclasses or guest lectures, directly related to the content of one or more units, and must enable all learners taking the qualification to benefit from this input.

Centres will be asked to confirm to RSL that employer involvement has been provided for every student on the course. Failure to provide evidence will not penalise learners, but may result in centre approval being removed.

Unit Selection Tables

3.1 Core units (pathway specific)

Core units				Qualification pathways			
Code	Unit title	GLH	TQT	Performance	Composition	Technology	Business
MUSPRA 387E	**Rehearsal Skills & Live Performance**	180	300	**Core**	–	–	–
MUSPRA 391E	**Composing Collaboration & Recorded Music Performance**	180	300	**Core (Ext Dip only)**	–	–	–
MUSPRA 390E	**Composing Styles & Music Sequencing**	180	300	–	**Core**	–	–
MUSPRA 394E	**Composing Solo & Remixing and Production**	180	300	–	**Core (Ext Dip only)**	–	–
MUSPRA 388E	**Live Sound Recording & Sound Reinforcement**	180	300	–	–	**Core**	–
MUSPRA 392E	**Studio Sound Recording & Mixing**	180	300	–	–	**Core (Ext Dip only)**	–
MUSPRA 389E	**Music Promotion & Event Management**	180	300	–	–	–	**Core**
MUSPRA 393E	**Setting up a Music Business & Selling Music**	180	300	–	–	–	**Core (Ext Dip only)**

3.2 Internal core unit (all pathways)

Core units				Qualification pathways			
Code	Unit title	GLH	TQT	Performance	Composition	Technology	Business
MUSPRA 349	**Planning for a Career in Music**	90	150	**Internal core**	**Internal core**	**Internal core**	**Internal core**

Unit Selection Tables

3.3 Optional units (open to all pathways)

Optional units are open to all pathways except where labelled with an * in the tables below. Where the content of an optional unit is covered by one of the mandatory core units in a pathway the unit is not open to learners on that pathway – for example, learners on the Performance pathway can't take the unit MUSPRA 358 Rehearsal Skills, as the unit content will be covered in the external core unit MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills and Live Performance.

Unit family: Performance			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 358	**Rehearsal Skills***	90	150
MUSPRA 359	**Live Performance***	90	150
MUSPRA 360	**Recorded Performance***	60	100
MUSPRA 361	**Music Performance to Camera**	60	100
MUSPRA 362	**Lead Performer**	60	100
MUSPRA 363	**Session Musician**	60	100
MUSPRA 364	**Music Improvisation**	90	150
MUSPRA 365	**Auditioning for Music**	90	150

*Not open to Performance learners

Unit family: Dance in Popular Music			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 331	**Choreographing Popular Music**	60	100
MUSPRA 332	**Dance for Musicians**	60	100

Unit family: Practical Musicianship			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 385	**Improving Instrumental Performance**	90	150
MUSPRA 386	**Practical Musicianship**	90	150

Unit family: Composition			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 302	**Music Arrangement (Orchestration)**	90	150
MUSPRA 303	**Arranging Music (Applications)**	90	150
MUSPRA 304	**Composing Music (Styles)***	90	150
MUSPRA 305	**Composing Music (Collaboration)****	90	150

Unit Selection Tables

MUSPRA 306	**Composing Music (Solo)***	90	150
MUSPRA 307	**Composing for Film and Documentary**	90	150
MUSPRA 308	**Composing for Interactive Media**	90	150
MUSPRA 309	**Composing for Adverts and TV**	90	150
MUSPRA 310	**Composing Lyrics**	30	50
MUSPRA 311	**Practical Harmony Application (Chords and Progressions)**	90	150
MUSPRA 312	**Practical Harmony Application (Chord Substitutions)**	60	100
MUSPRA 313	**Practical Harmony Application (Counterpoint)**	60	100
MUSPRA 314	**Practical Harmony Application (Pedals)**	60	100

*Not open to Composition learners

**Not open to Performance learners

Unit family: Technology			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 366	**Music Sequencing and Production***	90	150
MUSPRA 367	**Music Sequencing and Production (Media)**	90	150
MUSPRA 368	**Live Sound Recording****	90	150
MUSPRA 369	**Digital Recording and Production**	90	150
MUSPRA 370	**Studio Sound Recording****	90	150
MUSPRA 371	**Studio Sound Mixing****	90	150
MUSPRA 372	**Studio Audio Mastering**	60	100
MUSPRA 373	**Mixing for Surround Sound**	90	150
MUSPRA 374	**Remixing and Production***	60	100
MUSPRA 375	**Radio/Podcast Production**	60	100
MUSPRA 376	**Music Video Production**	90	150
MUSPRA 378	**Digital Synthesis**	60	100
MUSPRA 379	**Analogue Synthesis (Software Based)**	60	100
MUSPRA 380	**Creating a Sample Library**	60	100
MUSPRA 381	**Using Dynamic Processors**	60	100
MUSPRA 382	**Using Effects**	90	150
MUSPRA 383	**Using Equalisation and Filters**	60	100
MUSPRA 384	**Using a Keyboard with a DAW**	90	150

*Not open to Composition learners

**Not open to Technology learners

Unit Selection Tables

Unit family: Live Music Production			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 333	**Live Sound Engineering: Front of House**	90	150
MUSPRA 334	**Live Sound Engineering: Monitors**	60	100
MUSPRA 335	**Sound Reinforcement***	90	150
MUSPRA 336	**Lighting for Music Events**	60	100
MUSPRA 337	**Music Stage Management**	60	100
MUSPRA 338	**Music Event Health and Safety**	60	100

*Not open to Technology learners

Unit family: Business			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 339	**Revenue Flow in the Music Industry**	60	100
MUSPRA 340	**Copyright in the Music Industry**	90	150
MUSPRA 341	**Royalties and Music**	60	100
MUSPRA 342	**Contracts in the Music Industry**	60	100
MUSPRA 343	**Music Marketing**	60	100
MUSPRA 344	**Music Promotion***	90	150
MUSPRA 345	**Selling Recorded Music***	60	100
MUSPRA 346	**Music Publishing**	60	100
MUSPRA 347	**Getting Work in Music**	90	150
MUSPRA 348	**Understanding the Creative Process in Music**	90	150
MUSPRA 350	**Music Press and Journalism**	60	100
MUSPRA 351	**Music Management**	60	100
MUSPRA 352	**Working as a Freelance Music Practitioner**	90	150
MUSPRA 353	**Music Event Management***	90	150
MUSPRA 354	**Setting up a Music Business***	90	150

*Not open to Business learners

Unit Selection Tables

Unit family: Contextual			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 315	**Understanding Musical Influences**	30	50
MUSPRA 316	**Understanding Musical Styles**	30	50
MUSPRA 317	**Contextualising Music**	30	50
MUSPRA 318	**Listening to Music**	60	100
MUSPRA 319	**Music Artist and the Media**	30	50
MUSPRA 320	**Music Dissertation**	90	150
MUSPRA 321	**Evolution of the Record Industry**	30	50
MUSPRA 322	**Music Instrument Development**	30	50
MUSPRA 323	**Development of Sound Sources**	30	50
MUSPRA 324	**Development of Music Sequencing**	30	50
MUSPRA 325	**Development of Music Recording Technology**	30	50
MUSPRA 326	**Understanding Recording Studio Design**	30	50
MUSPRA 327	**Understanding Recording Techniques**	30	50
MUSPRA 328	**Understanding Live Sound Design**	30	50
MUSPRA 329	**Using a Digital Audio Workstation (Analysis)**	30	50
MUSPRA 330	**Using a Digital Audio Workstation (Research)**	30	50

Unit family: Facilitation			
Code	**Unit title**	**GLH**	**TQT**
MUSPRA 355	**Leading Music Making Activity**	60	100
MUSPRA 357	**Musical Director**	90	150

Assessment Information

4.1 Assessment methodology

The underlying philosophy for assessment is that learners should receive credit for achievement, and that all should be encouraged to reach their full potential in all aspects of the course. To this end, a wide variety of assessment methodologies can be used in the delivery of these qualifications. Tutors are encouraged to find the mode of assessment which best suits the learner in terms of their strengths, and will best prepare them for their future activities within the music industry or in further study.

4.2 External assessment

Summary

Learners must undertake external assessments in the form of a task-based controlled assessment. These will be assignments that are set in consultation with industry practitioners and marked by RSL. The assignments provide the opportunity for learners to demonstrate and also integrate their knowledge, understanding and skills from across the area of study (i.e. synoptic assessment). They also enable learners to develop study skills and to underpin practical skills with core knowledge and understanding. Sample external assessment briefs are available, which set out precisely how external assessment will be conducted, including general information, task details, required evidence and grading criteria.

Timeframe

There is one controlled assessment window per year. Centres will have 12 weeks from the assessment period start date until the assessment deadline – the assignment will mirror industry practice and learners need to plan their response in a systematic fashion that takes into account contingencies and allows for time to make revisions where necessary. The assignment papers must be kept secure throughout the duration of the assessment period. Centres must ensure that all assessments are submitted to RSL for marking in accordance with the deadlines given.

Preparation period

Learners will be given 10 hours preparation time, which can be spread over several weeks. It can include guided learning and independent work. Learners can use the centre's intranet and the internet to support their research and inform their final piece of work, however, they cannot copy directly from the internet. Any information used from the internet must be acknowledged in their work.

Assessment Information

Controlled assessment period

The controlled assessment period will then take place over 40 hours. The activities in the assignments must take place inside the school/college community to ensure that the assessment can be administered by centre staff under controlled conditions. Learners should complete all work under a limited level of control but ensuring that plagiarism does not take place. Guidance should be given to learners about availability and choice of materials, health and safety, and completion of work in accordance with specification requirements. However, learners are required to reach their own judgments and conclusions and produce their own work. Assessors must be able to authenticate the contributions of individual learners, particularly where learners are working in groups. Learners must sign an Assessment Declaration Sheet on completion of their assessment to declare that the evidence produced is their own.

Evidence limits

Maximum evidence limits are stated in order to prevent learners from preparing and submitting work which is surplus to the requirements of the qualification. The evidence supplied must be sufficiently long enough to allow learners to achieve the grading criteria, but learners do not need to use the entire evidence allowance – marks are awarded purely for how effectively the learner has met all assessment criteria within the maximum requirement boundary. A 20% leeway on top of all maximum evidence limits will be offered – any evidence that exceeds this will not be considered during grading. Where there is a minimum evidence limit for a practical task (e.g. a live performance), if the audio/video footage falls more than 20% below the minimum stated length, the criteria will be marked as 0 (Unclassified).

Further guidance

An RSL guide to Conducting External Assessment is available for all centres running external assessment and can be found at: rslawards.com/vocational/syllabus
This document will detail in full all the requirements for what is permitted during the assessment period.

Example assignments

Specimen assignment briefs, learner work and assessor commentary are available from the RSL website.

Assessment Information

4.3 Retaking externally assessed learning outcomes

One resit is permitted per learning outcome, within the published resit window. Any learning outcome that has been reattempted will be capped at a Pass grade. Further retakes are not permitted.
Full details can be found in RSL's Resit Policy:
rslawards.com/vocational/delivery/deliver-qualifications

4.4 Internal assessment

Centres delivering these qualifications are encouraged to find creative and engaging ways to assess their learners. Assessment may involve various activities or types of evidence, and must be conducted in a way that ensures that all learners can access the assessment.

Types of evidence

In general, the types of evidence required from learners may include:

- Participation in public performance events (organiser and/or performer/composer/technician)
- Written and recorded (performed) musical compositions
- Project work
- Written assignments
- Presentations
- Recorded discussions
- Rehearsal logs (either written or recorded)
- Video evidence of rehearsals/discussion/performances
- Tutor observation
- Interactive web-based elements (such as blogs, vlogs and websites)
- Reports identifying specific skill development
- Business plans
- Risk assessments
- Unit-specific documents (CV, application forms etc)
- Diagrams/graphs
- Illustrations/screenshots/images
- Simulation
- Witness statement

Assessment Information

4.5 Retaking internally assessed learning outcomes

On receipt of summative assessment results, learners are permitted one further attempt at any or all learning outcomes within any internally assessed unit. This should be uncapped (learners can obtain any grade on the retake) and is available to any learner, regardless of the original grade awarded. For resubmissions after the assessment deadline, see RSL's Resubmission Policy: rslawards.com/vocational/delivery/deliver-qualifications

4.6 Formative assessment

Externally assessed units

For the externally assessed units, tutors are encouraged to use the published assessment criteria to carry out informal assessments prior to the external assessment period to enable learners to work to their full potential during the external assessment.

Internally assessed units

For internally assessed units, tutors are to ensure that work is assessed on a regular basis. A record of any forms of formative assessment should ideally be kept on rslawards.com – all tutors and centre managers should have access to this record. If this is not possible then records of formative assessment should be kept for RSL's external quality assurers (EQAs) to view. EQAs will expect to see evidence of formative assessment having taken place, integrated with regular feedback to learners about their progress. This is to ensure that students are able to check their understanding during the learning process and for teaching and learning to be adjusted accordingly. Evidence could take the form of two or three of the following methods:

- **Observations**
  With notes taken during lessons reflecting on specific aspects of students' learning and progress towards reaching the learning outcome, using spreadsheets/ forms to record observations.
- **Discussions**
  Enabling assessors to determine the extent to which learners are understanding concepts through open-ended questions and encouragement of creative and reflective thinking.
- **Exit slips**
  Written responses to questions at the end of a session to assess understanding of key concepts, enabling the assessor to identify learners needing further help.
- **Learning logs**
  For learners to make their own reflections on the material they are learning, the processes they undertake and any concepts requiring clarification.

Assessment Information

- **Self and peer assessment**
  Enabling learners to check the quality of their work against the grading criteria, helping them to think about their own learning and articulate what they understand and what they still have to learn, and to offer feedback and discuss the work of other learners.
- **Practice projects/presentations**
  Allowing learners to improve their skills at the same time as enabling assessors to gauge the level of understanding.
- **Visual representations**
  Learners use graphic means such as mind maps to represent concepts, allowing assessors to assess depth of learning.

4.7 External quality assurance

Externally assessed units
The externally assessed units are assessed by RSL, and therefore are subject to rigorous standardisation procedures, ensuring that assessment is comparable across time and place.

Internally assessed units
A sample of units assessed by RSL approved centres are externally verified and quality assured by a team appointed, trained and standardised by RSL.

External quality assurance process
A sample of the units which have been assessed internally by each centre is externally verified and quality assured by an external team – appointed, trained and standardised by RSL. External quality assurance ensures that all assessments are carried out to the same standard by objective sampling of learners' work. Centres will be notified of the external moderation processes on approval and thereafter at the beginning of each new academic year.

The main functions of external quality assurance are to:

- Sample learner evidence, to ensure that centres' assessment decisions are valid, reliable and fair, and consistent with the national standards for the qualification
- Provide feedback to RSL and centres on the outcome of the quality assurance activities
- Provide support and guidance for centres offering RSL's Diplomas for Music Practitioners

Action plans
In cases where certain issues arise during the quality assurance process, RSL will advise the centre what issues need to be addressed and make recommendations of how this may happen. Subsequent checks will be made to ensure that these action plans are being followed and that the centre is supported in their ongoing improvement.

Assessment Information

4.8 Archiving learner work

Each centre should create an archive of learner work for each of the Music Practitioners qualifications they offer. The archive should be kept a minimum of five years or for as long as the units remain valid. The purpose of archiving is to provide a record of learner work over time and to give external quality assurance teams a range of exemplars, which cover the full spread of learner abilities within each unit.

The archive should cover the following, where possible:

- 20% of all learner work, including a sample of each grade category, where available
- All externally verified and moderated work
- Examples of each type of assessment method in each unit
- Examples covering each tutor in each unit

4.9 Authenticity of work

Tutors are expected to take all necessary steps to ensure that learners' work is authentic and original. It is accepted that tutors will supervise and guide learners who are undertaking work, which is internally assessed. However, for all internally assessed work, tutors must:

- Exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism
- Be able to supply evidence of their continuing supervision and authenticate all work submitted for assessment
- Ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the programme requirements and can be assessed using the specified grading criteria and procedures
- Be satisfied that the work produced by the learner is their own
- Ensure that any material used which is not the learner's own creation is acknowledged

Assessment Information

4.10 Preparation of work for submission

Externally assessed units
Centres will receive detailed information about the submission of externally assessed work prior to the external assessment period.

Internally assessed units
It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all learner work is available for assessment and sampling. All work must be suitably labelled with the learner's name, unit code, unit title and centre name.

4.11 Submission of grades

Centres will access a secure registration and assessment website (rslawards.com), in which the grades will be entered. Centres are encouraged to update this on a regular basis to avoid heavy workload at the end of the academic year. The final deadline for the completion of the database will be indicated in the key dates calendar for that academic year (rslawards.com/vocational/vocational-qualifications-dates-fees).

RSL will use data provided on the database for achievement reporting and benchmarking purposes.

Assessment Information

4.12 Results and certification

Centres will be able to check their learners' provisional results online upon completion of the assessment of their units. Results will be verified after the completion of the external quality assurance process and information on the verified results will be available online. All certificates will be issued after the formal completion of all quality assurance processes.

4.13 Accessing data and information

Centres will be able to review the progress of their learners' grades through the learner registrations. These are learner specific and can be accessed through a personal password system, which will allow a centre to look at their learners' records of unit registration and achievement. Centres will be able to view the information relating to all learners enrolled on each qualification at that centre through the operation of the same website and password system.

Grading Information

5.1 Summary

Grading criteria are specific to each unit and a detailed document accompanies each unit, outlining what is expected to achieve each grade (Unclassified, Pass, Merit and Distinction). In order to achieve the minimum of a Pass grade, learners must pass every individual assessment criterion within every learning outcome.

5.2 How grades are awarded

All assessment is criterion referenced, with the grade for each learning outcome being based on the achievement of specified assessment criteria (ACs). If the work submitted is not all of an equal standard, the assessor team will select the grade corresponding to the majority of the work submitted for that learning outcome – for example, if the learner achieves a Merit for two of the assessment criteria and a Distinction for the third, the grade awarded will be a Merit. Where there is no majority grade, for example if two Passes and two Merits are awarded, the grade for the learning outcome will be the higher of the grades, in this case a Merit.

Unclassified grades

If work pertaining to one of the assessment criteria is Unclassified, the grade for the learning outcome is also Unclassified, regardless of the grades awarded for the other assessment criteria.

Examples of possible combinations

Assessment Criteria (AC)			Learning Outcome (LO)
AC1	AC2	AC3	
Merit	Distinction		**Distinction**
Pass	Distinction	Merit	**Merit**
Unclassified	Merit	Pass	**Unclassified**
Pass	Pass	Merit	**Pass**

Grading Information

5.3 Unit grading

The overall unit grade is based on the achievement of specified learning outcomes (LOs). If the work submitted is not all of an equal standard, the assessor team will select the grade corresponding to the majority of the work submitted for that unit - for example, if the learner achieves a Merit for two of the learning outcomes and a Distinction for the third, the grade awarded for the unit will be a Merit. Where there is no majority grade, for example if two Passes and two Merits are awarded, the grade for the unit will be the higher of the grades, in this case a Merit. However, if grades stretch across Pass, Merit and Distinction then an average should be provided. Further details on this can be found in the RSL How To guide 'Conducting Internal Assessment' Appendix 1.

Examples of possible combinations

Learning Outcome (LO)			Unit Grade
LO1	LO2	LO3	
Pass	Pass	Merit	**Pass**
Pass	Merit	Distinction	**Merit**
Unclassified	Pass	Pass	**Unclassified**
Distinction	Distinction	Pass	**Distinction**

5.4 Grade bands

Grading criteria are 'banded' into the following categories:

Distinction
A Distinction grade will be awarded where a learner has excelled in all of the tasks contained within the unit. They will use a highly developed and extensive range of skills and be able to produce very convincing and memorable work. They will be capable of producing highly original material/ideas and of presenting them in a very effective way. They will show acute understanding of concepts, including relationships between areas of knowledge, select and successfully use a range of techniques/processes/skills and manipulate them as appropriate. They communicate ideas well and reflect on and review their work insightfully.

Merit
A Merit grade will be awarded where a learner has produced effective work in all of the tasks contained within the unit. They will produce original work and will be able to present this in an effective way. They will apply detailed knowledge appropriately in various contexts, use a wide range of sound techniques/processes/skills and know how to adapt these to suit their purposes. They review their work effectively and in detail.

Pass
A Pass grade will be awarded where a learner has demonstrated all assessment criteria within the unit. They will be able to produce work that is structured and have some grasp of a core range of methods of presentation. They will demonstrate key areas of knowledge well and use basic techniques/process/skills appropriate to the learning outcome. They can make a clear but basic review of their own work.

Unclassified
An Unclassified grade will be awarded where the learner has failed to demonstrate every assessment criteria within the unit.

Grading Information

5.5 Qualification grade

The process for formulating an overall grade is given in the following section. The pass bands for the qualifications are as follows:

Grading bands

94%–100%	Distinction*
87%–93%	Distinction
63%–86%	Merit
50%–62%	Pass

Distinction*

A Distinction* grade is an aggregated one for the whole qualification based on consistently high achievement across the full range of units within the Level 3 qualification. In order to achieve the Distinction* grade, learners must gain an overall percentage score of 94% or over. Learners achieving a Distinction* grade will be consistently working at Distinction level as outlined in the individual unit grading criteria. Their work will display a depth of insight, analysis and initiative and a breadth of understanding in each of the units they are working on. Those gaining a Distinction* will have applied their knowledge and displayed skills at an advanced level in all, or the vast majority, of their work.

5.6 How the qualification grade is formulated

The grades for the external core units (which are determined by RSL) and the grades given by tutors for the internally assessed units will be stored on the rslawards website, which will then formulate an overall qualification grade. Points are allocated per 30 GLH portion. In cases where the number of GLH undertaken exceeds the number of GLH required to gain the qualification, the GLH carrying the least value will be disregarded.

Calculating the points achieved per unit

For every 30 GLH:
A Distinction is worth a score of 4
A Merit is worth a score of 3
A Pass is worth is worth a score of 2

For example, a Distinction grade for a 90 GLH unit would be worth a score of 12 points; a Distinction grade for a 60 GLH unit would be worth a score of 8 points. To calculate the overall grade, the total points achieved are divided by the maximum points available. For example:

RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma for Music Practitioners (Performance)

Core unit:
MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills & Live Music Performance (180 GLH)
Internal core unit:
MUSPRA 349 Planning for a Career in Music (90 GLH)
Optional units:
MUSPRA 366 Music Sequencing and Production (90 GLH)
MUSPRA 368 Live Sound Recording (90 GLH)
MUSPRA 318 Listening to Music (60 GLH)
MUSPRA 319 Music Artist and the Media (30 GLH)

Grading Information

Unit	GLH	Grade	Points
MUSPRA 387E Rehearsal Skills & Live Music Performance	180	Distinction	**24**
MUSPRA 349 Planning for a Career in Music	90	Merit	**9**
MUSPRA 366 Music Sequencing and Production	90	Merit	**9**
MUSPRA 368 Live Sound Recording	90	Pass	**6**
MUSPRA 318 Listening to Music	60	Merit	**6**
MUSPRA 319 Music Artist and the Media	30	Distinction	**4**

In this example, the maximum number of points available is 72:

- **Core unit** (180 GLH): 24 points
- **Internal core unit** (90 GLH): 12 points
- **Optional units** (270 GLH): 36 points

As the learner has achieved a score of 58 points out of a maximum of 72, their overall percentage is 81%, resulting in an overall grade of Merit:

- (58 ÷ 72) × 100 = 81

5.7 UCAS points

Both the Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma and the Level 3 Extended Diploma carry UCAS points, as shown below:

RSL Level 3 Subsidiary Diploma

Grade	Tariff points
Distinction*	84
Distinction	72
Merit	48
Pass	24

RSL Level 3 Extended Diploma

Grade	Tariff points
Distinction*	168
Distinction	144
Merit	96
Pass	48

Programme Delivery

6.1 Programme delivery models

Centres are free to offer these qualifications using any mode of delivery that meets the needs of their learners. They may be offered through traditional classroom teaching, open learning, distance learning or a combination of these. Whatever the mode of delivery, centres must ensure that learners have appropriate access to the resources required for high quality delivery of the course, and subject specialist staff.

Further information on delivery can be found in the VQ Centre Handbook: rslawards.com/vocational/deliver-qualifications.

Learner Access and Registration

7.1 Access and registration

These 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 and/or interview, centres will ensure that all learners are fully informed about the requirements and demands of the qualification. Centres will take appropriate steps to assess each applicant's potential, and make a professional judgement about their ability to successfully complete the programme and achieve the qualification. This evaluation will need to take account of the support available to the learner within the centre during their programme of study, and any specific support which may be necessary to allow the learner to access the assessment for the qualification. RSL advise the use of initial assessment testing to verify the level of support needed by individual learners.

7.2 Recommended prior learning

When reviewing the combinations of qualifications and/or experience held by applicants when applying for a Level 3 course, the following may be taken into account:

- Related Level 1, Level 2 or Level 3 qualifications
- Related musical experience
- Portfolio of music making activity, which will support Level 3 work

These are suggestions, which may help with the selection process. However, it should be remembered that in some cases, commitment and dedication may supersede a lack of experience or any obvious academic qualifications. RSL support the notion of open access to these courses, with appropriate guidance being given to the learner at all times throughout the application process.

Learner Access and Registration

7.3 Recognised prior learning (RPL)

RSL encourages centres to recognise learners' previous achievement and experience through recognised prior learning (RPL). Learners may have evidence that has been generated during previous study or in their previous or current employment or whilst undertaking voluntary work that relates to one or more of the units in the qualification.

RPL is of particular value to learners without formal qualifications who are either in employment, preparing to enter, or returning to employment. It may apply to, for example, RSL Grades, BTEC qualifications, GCSEs in vocational subjects, VCEs, Key Skills and NVQs.

Approved centres will ensure that they have appropriate RPL advisory processes and personnel in place.

All evidence presented for RPL must be mapped against RSL's assessment criteria. RPL must adhere to the assessment and internal verification processes of the centre and must be documented in order for RSL to moderate.

Centre Approval

8.1 Centre approval application procedures

Centres must apply for approval by RSL prior to enrolling learners. All approval documentation can be found on the RSL website. Centres seeking approval should consult the VQ Centre Handbook for full details on the approval process and the documentation they are required to submit.

8.2 Approval criteria

In order to gain approval to offer any or all of the RSL qualifications, the following criteria must be met:

- **Management systems**
  There are appropriate systems for managing the effective delivery of the qualifications (for example, regular team meetings and clear lines of responsibility)
- **Access to assessment**
  The centre has a clear commitment to equal opportunities
- **Assuring standards of assessment**
  There are arrangements for managing assessment which will ensure consistent standards across the centre
- **Assuring course quality**
  The centre's teaching team has the commitment and the expertise to deliver the programme according to the learning schedules established by RSL
- **Induction and learning programme**
  There is a commitment to providing effective induction and learning support for learners
- **Staff resources**
  There is an appropriate staff development plan and appropriate provision to allow this to be implemented
- **Physical resources**
  Each centre needs to have appropriate resources for the qualifications which they wish to offer to learners

Help and Support

9.1 Policies

The following policies and procedures can be obtained from rslawards.com:

- Complaints and Appeals
- Equal Opportunities
- Sanctions
- Malpractice
- Centre Withdrawal
- Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations*

* Note that reasonable adjustment applications are the responsibility of the centre and will be monitored by RSL. Special consideration applications should be submitted directly to RSL.

9.2 Professional development and training

Centres wishing to provide these qualifications can obtain support and guidance from RSL through the following means:

- Telephone support: 0345 460 4747
- Email support: vocational@rslawards.com
- Syllabus document and unit specifications
- Ongoing curriculum, delivery and assessment support
- Help and support available on the RSL website (webinars, training videos, exemplars)

Help and Support

9.3 Contacts for help and support

All email correspondence about these qualifications should be directed to: vocational@rslawards.com

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