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DJ MIXER

MIC

MIC LEVEL



HIGH



LOW



EFFECT

SEND



RETURN



PRE / POST



CUE

EFFECT

C.FADER ASSIGN

ASSIGN A

1 2 3

THRU 4



ASSIGN B

1 2 3

THRU 4



PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL PACK DE MUESTRA



BIENVENIDO A LA GUÍA DE PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL DE ROCKSCHOOL

Este documento interactivo está diseñado para ofrecer una idea de las **Tareas del Curso** contenidas en el Programa de Estudios e información sobre las habilidades técnicas y los conocimientos que se evaluarán en cada Grado.

Esta guía es una introducción al Programa de Estudios que ofrece todos los detalles acerca de los exámenes por Grados de Rockscool de Producción Musical, que van desde Grado 1 hasta Grado 8.

Contiene ejemplos de Tareas del Curso en los Grados 1, 3, 5 y 8 para dar una idea de los contenidos que los estudiantes se van a encontrar a medida que progresan en los grados.

SABER MÁS

Encuentra los libros digitales en la tienda de RSL Awards [aquí](#)

El programa de estudios de Rockscool Music Production se puede estudiar utilizando cualquier hardware y DAW adecuados.

Desde RSL Awards a menudo realizamos ofertas con socios de la industria para ayudarte a empezar y a impartir Producción Musical tanto dentro como fuera del aula. Visita nuestra [página de colaboraciones y descuentos](#) para obtener más información.

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PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL PACK DE MUESTRA



Diseñado para preparar y capacitar a los candidatos para la industria creativa, Rockscool Music Production desarrolla las habilidades técnicas y musicales necesarias para el trabajo de estudio y el entorno del directo. Esto implica tener la comprensión práctica y teórica del software de producción musical, el hardware y las técnicas para poder crear tus propias producciones y colaborar con otros en las suyas.

Los libros de Rockscool se dividen en tres secciones principales:

TEORÍA PARA PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL

El Programa de Estudios de Rockscool proporciona el material necesario para lograr una comprensión de la terminología de la producción musical, así como fundamentos de sonido y audio.

HABILIDADES AUDITIVAS

Utilizando los audios de ejemplo proporcionados, el productor desarrollará una escucha eficaz para aplicarla a la producción.

En esta sección, el Programa de Estudios de Producción Musical de Rockscool se centra en la fidelidad del sonido, la teoría y armonía musical y los conocimientos estilísticos.

LA TAREA DEL CURSO

Con el fin de mejorar las habilidades técnicas, se pide realizar una tarea del curso que demostrará la capacidad de utilizar la estación de trabajo (DAW) que el candidato elija.

El productor tendrá la oportunidad de demostrar sus habilidades y creatividad en una situación profesional simulada, siendo evaluado por su capacidad para resolver situaciones habituales en la industria utilizando técnicas propias de la producción musical.

En los Grados 6 a 8 el candidato puede optar por especializarse en Producción de audio, Música Electrónica o Sonido para Medios de Comunicación.



"Hay un espacio en cada una de las tareas del curso para que los estudiantes piensen "esto podría ser lo que se me da mejor"
Randeep Ahira, Profesor de Tecnología Musical en Twyford School

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TAREAS DEL CURSO:

Las tareas del curso se basan en escenarios reales que, a lo largo de los Grados, permiten al alumno dominar progresivamente la producción musical y familiarizarse con situaciones que se dan en un entorno profesional. Desde los fundamentos del DAW, conocimientos de los equipos de estudio y hardware hasta la comprensión de cuestiones melódicas y armónicas.

Las tareas del curso de Rockscool Music Production son creativas y hacen que el alumno trabaje con el DAW de su elección. En el Grado 1, el candidato tiene la tarea de producir una sesión con un artista, asegurándose de que todo lo que está haciendo está claramente organizado. Trabajando en la escritura de la melodía y la línea de bajo que acompaña a un conjunto de acordes de fondo, el candidato crea su propia pista original, además de aprender las habilidades necesarias para crear pistas 'guía' o 'fantasma' que otro músico puede escuchar para hacerse una idea del sonido que se quiere producir.

A medida que se avanza en los Grados, las técnicas se vuelven más sofisticadas, ya que los candidatos se centran en armonías y estructuras más complejas en el ámbito sonoro, incorporando un uso cada vez más sutil de elementos como la panorámica, la ecualización y la compresión para perfeccionar el sonido.

En el Grado 8, existe la posibilidad de especializarse. Por ejemplo, un productor de EDM (Electronic Dance Music) puede recibir una pista que un cantante ha grabado en su teléfono y en la que le pide que la convierta en un tema de baile.

Algunas de las mejores colaboraciones de los últimos años han empezado así. El candidato ya habrá aprendido a utilizar todo tipo de técnicas y habilidades para poder remezclar el tema, añadiendo profundidad y espacio a

la línea vocal y añadiendo "samples" y su propia música original para crear una mezcla final auténtica.

"El curso nos ayuda a identificar a los alumnos de producción musical para que podamos asegurarnos de que están mejor preparados y tenerles en cuenta en el momento de la contratación."

Richard Bannister, Director de Música de Highcliffe School

AUDIO / VISUAL:

Dependiendo de la tarea del curso en cada Grado, el audio se proporciona principalmente en forma de clips de audio. En algunos casos también hay un vídeo de acompañamiento.

También se incluyen pistas de audio para las pruebas de escucha, con audios adicionales para apoyar los ejemplos. Los archivos de audio se ofrecen en varios formatos para poder reproducirlos en una amplia gama de dispositivos (MP3, Flac y Wav) mientras que el vídeo está en formato MP4.

Las versiones digitales del libro incluyen archivos de audio descargables. Las versiones físicas del libro incluyen un código para descargar los audios en rslawards.com/downloads.

INFORMACIÓN ADICIONAL:

Los libros también contienen información sobre los procedimientos de examen, incluyendo la inscripción al examen online, esquemas de calificación, modelos de exámenes, glosario de términos y más información.

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EXÁMENES:

Los exámenes de Rockscool Music Production se dividen en tres partes:

Un examen escrito que cubre los conocimientos de:

- Terminología de producción musical
- Fundamentos de sonido y audio

Una prueba de audición dividida en tres secciones:

- Fidelidad del sonido
- Teoría musical y armonía
- Conciencia estilística

Una Tarea del Curso que abarca una serie de habilidades técnicas que los candidatos deben completar antes del examen y subirla durante el mismo.

Los alumnos pueden realizar su examen en cualquier momento a través de nuestro portal online. Los candidatos disponen de un tiempo determinado para conectarse y cargar su tarea del curso después de completar las secciones de teoría y comprensión auditiva. Es posible organizar los exámenes supervisados por medio de la vigilancia remota con el candidato examinándose desde el centro o desde su propia casa.

ENTER NOW

EVALUACIÓN:

Los candidatos son evaluados en función de los resultados de aprendizaje y los criterios de evaluación específicos que se detallan en su totalidad en el Programa de Estudios y en nuestra web.

RESULTADOS DEL APRENDIZAJE:

1. Comprender la terminología clave utilizada en la producción musical.
2. Comprender los fundamentos del sonido y el audio.
3. Demostrar habilidades de escucha efectivas.
4. Demostrar una técnica de producción musical eficaz.

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PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL PACK DE MUESTRA



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

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

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

Section A | Music Production Theory



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SUMMARY

SECTION (<i>Current section highlighted</i>)	MARKS
> Theoretical Written Exam	25 [25%]
Listening Test	15 [15%]
Coursework Task	60 [60%]

The *Theoretical Written Exam* section of Rockscool Music Production Examinations covers the following:

- Music Production Terminology
- Sound & Audio Fundamentals

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

Digital Audio Workstation

The digital audio workstation (abbreviated to DAW) is the name given to the computer system and software that can be used to record and edit the music.

DAWs are used in almost all forms of music production, from rock and pop to electronica and country music. The functionality and flexibility that modern software provides is extremely valuable to the modern music producer.

Looking back a few years, a producer would need to spend over £1000 per day to use a commercial studio with an expensive mixing desk that on its own might have cost over £300,000. Now, a modern DAW is available for the cost of a computer and some software. This has made it possible for almost anyone to make great sounding music.

Hardware: DAWs can be based on any computer hardware, including Apple Mac OS, Windows PCs, Linux PCs and even iPad and iPhones.

Software: There are many different software packages available, but the most common ones are:

Apple Logic Pro



Hardware Controls

While some mixing desks offer additional functionality, there are some functions which you will always find. Such as:

Fader

Controls the level of the audio leaving a channel

Pan pot (Panoramic potentiometer)

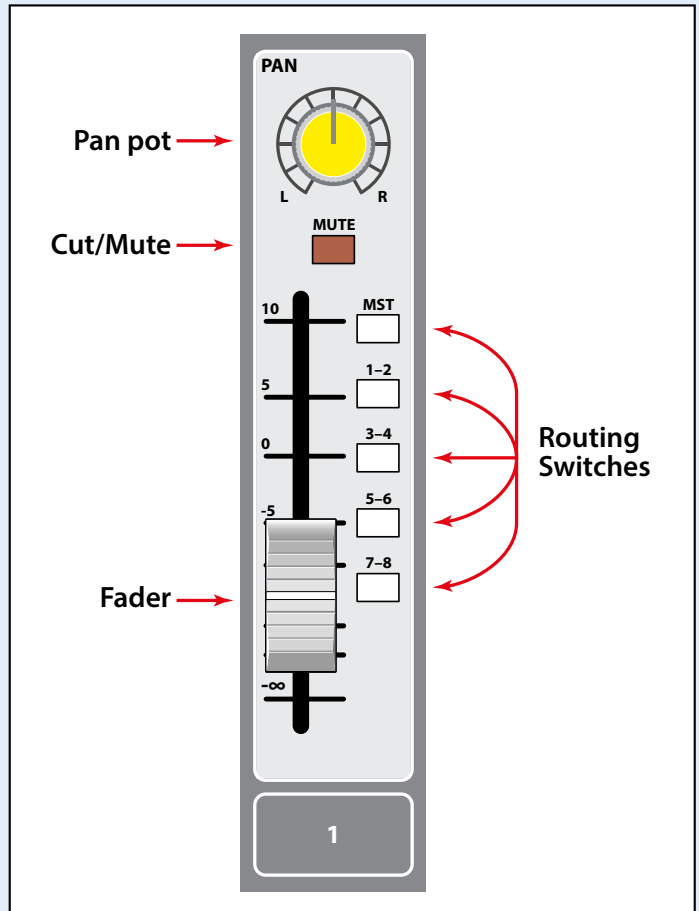
Controls where the sound sits in the stereo spectrum between left and right.

Cut/Mute

Prevents any sound from leaving the channel.

Routing

Controls the path that the audio will take through the mixing desk.



Headphone Volume

Controls how loud the mix will be in the sound engineer's or performer's headphones. This might be found on the audio interface, mixing desk or a separate headphone amplifier.



Music Theory & Harmony

Objective: Identify Higher Pitch/Lower Pitch

As a music producer, a basic understanding of music theory and some ear training will be invaluable to you. It is important that you can recognise when pitches are ascending (higher than the previous note) and when they are descending (lower than the previous note). Here are two files for you to listen to so you can hear the differences in pitch. Both files will contain two notes, the first being middle C, the root note in all listening exercises.

- In audio example [LSG1H1.mp3](#), you can hear the second note is a higher pitch than the root note.
- In audio example [LSG1H2.mp3](#), you can hear the second note is a lower pitch than the root note.

Objective: Basic Note Length Recognition

Tempo literally means ‘time’. In practice, tempo is the basic pulse of a piece of music; the rhythm of the music is based on this pulse. In a band, each member might be playing a different rhythmic pattern but for it to sound tight, all of those parts have to be played at the same tempo. A ticking clock divides time into units we call seconds. Music often has a regular ‘ticking clock’ running through it in the form of the pulse which divides the music into beats and bars. Tempo is measured in beats per minute (bpm). A clock ticks at a tempo of 60bpm but music can be played slower than that (at say, 40bpm) or faster (sometimes beyond 200bpm).

The beat is often defined by a note called a crotchet, also known as a quarter note. In much pop and rock, music is written in 4/4 time (also referred to as common time). The snare drum is often played on the second and fourth quarter note (referred to as the ‘backbeat’) and the bass drum is played in or around beats 1 & 3. The quarter note is often the note value we use to describe the tempo of western music and is defined by the bottom note in the time signature $\frac{4}{4}$. This refers to four quarter notes in a bar (sometimes also referred to as a measure).

In reality, music is played with a mixture of really long notes and extremely short notes and everything in between. Each note length has a different symbol that can be combined in any order you like.

This syllabus doesn’t require the student to read standard music notation, but does include some examples purely for illustrative purposes. The table below shows the most common note values, starting with the longest note at the top and the shortest notes at the bottom. At this point, it’s worth mentioning that there are two note-naming systems in use. First, there’s the British system which is more traditional and uses words like ‘crotchet’ and ‘quaver’. Second, there’s the more modern American system which may be easier to understand because it simply divides $\frac{4}{4}$ time into fractions like quarter notes and eighth notes. You should be aware of both names, so we have shown both in the table.

BRITISH NAME	AMERICAN NAME	SYMBOL
SEMIBREVE	WHOLE NOTE	
MINIM	HALF NOTE	
CROTCHET	QUARTER NOTE	
QUAVER	EIGHTH NOTE	
SEMIQUAVER	16TH NOTE	

The whole note is one of the longest note types you’re likely to see in popular music. A whole note sustains for the same amount of time that it takes to count ‘1, 2, 3, 4’ beats at the tempo of the music. By comparison, a half note sustains for exactly half the time of the whole note, or in other words, two halves equal one whole. Likewise, four quarter notes equal one whole note and so on, with 8 eighth notes and 16 16th notes. In music, these fractions are called subdivisions.

- In audio example [LSG1R1.mp3](#), you will hear a piano playing quarter notes on every downbeat of the measure.
- In audio example [LSG1R2.mp3](#), you will hear a piano playing eighth notes on every downbeat of the measure.

From these, you can hear that the eighth notes in example 2 are played for half the length of time than the quarter notes in example 1.

Coursework Task

The Coursework Task element of the grade examination will put you in a situation that you are likely to be in as a working music producer. Your examiner will be assessing how well you respond to that situation, how you choose the technique required and how you demonstrate those skills.

Collaboration is a large part of music, therefore you will find this coming up a lot in the Rockscool grade exams. The scenario will quite often start with “You are working with...”, which might be another producer, an artist or a record label.

Whenever you're working with someone else remotely, it's vital that you can share your work with them without losing any files. Therefore a fundamental skill you must master is organising your files and saving your sessions correctly.

Once you have mastered this, you will be able to work with people whether they are in the next building or on the other side of the planet.

A common scenario you might face is to work with a backing track that has been created by another artist or producer. They might send you their work so far for you to record a vocal, guitar line, or enhance the rhythm track in some way to help take the track in a new direction. For the Grade 1 Coursework Task you will be required to import a backing track into your DAW, record a melody and bounce the resulting mix to a new stereo audio file.

MUSIC PRODUCTION COURSEWORK TASK SAMPLE GRADE 1



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PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL PACK DE MUESTRA



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

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

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

Section A | Music Production Theory



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SUMMARY

SECTION (<i>Current section highlighted</i>)	MARKS
> Theoretical Written Exam	25 [25%]
Listening Test	15 [15%]
Coursework Task	60 [60%]

The *Theoretical Written Exam* section of Rockscool Music Production Examinations covers the following:

- Music Production Terminology
- Sound & Audio Fundamentals

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

Outboard Equipment

In a recording studio you will be faced with more than just the mixing desk as there are numerous devices around the studio for you to use to enhance the sound. Here are some of the most commonly used devices you're likely to use:

Compressor

A compressor is a device which reduces the dynamic range of an audio signal, making the loud parts quieter and the quiet parts louder. It does this by reducing the level of the loudest signals, then increasing the overall level to compensate. *A more detailed explanation of compression is included at Grade 4.*

A compressor would normally be connected to the insert send and return of the mixing desk.



Limiter

A limiter is a kind of compressor but with an extremely high compression ratio. The ratio will typically be in the region of 80–100:1. As this ratio is so harsh, it provides the effect of not letting the signal get any louder at all.

The settings available are the same as a compressor, barring the ratio.

A limiter would normally be connected to the insert send and return of the mixing desk.



Gate

A gate is a device which enables the sound engineer to tidy up a recording. It works in a similar way to a compressor (in that it uses threshold, attack and release) except that a gate will only allow the signal to be heard when it is louder than the threshold.

A gate would normally be connected to the insert send and return of the mixing desk.



Section B | Listening Skills

Sonic Fidelity

Objective: Identify Both Mono and Stereo Audio Files

As a producer or sound engineer, your aural skills are extremely important as they enable you to hear the music and production values, so be mindful to always look after them. Avoid listening to music too loud and always be cautious of listening for too long. If you find yourself unavoidably subjected to high volume levels, be prepared to wear hearing protection.

While it is difficult to improve your hearing per se, there are ways you can improve your aural skills. This can be achieved by training your ears and brain to identify the sounds that you hear. Your aural skills are associative in nature i.e. by associating particular labels to particular sounds your brain will associate the label with the sound and subsequently you'll stand a greater chance of identifying (and ultimately using) these sounds in the future. Be prepared to listen intently and always try to label new sounds.

The two most common formats for sound are mono and stereo and we can record and mix in both.

Monophonic, or monaural sound is a single audio signal which can be sent to either one or multiple speakers, whereas a stereo or stereophonic signal is comprised of multiple audio signals (normally two) and must be played through a minimum of two speakers.

Stereo recording and mixing techniques enable the listener to hear direction, space and perspective which mono signals cannot create. The ability to manipulate the resulting stereo image is crucial to the modern producer and engineer.

However, the ability to identify mono and stereo recordings and mixes is a skill like most others i.e. it needs to be practised. Certain stereo mixes may be glaringly obvious (Trevor Horn is one such producer renowned for his ability to manipulate the stereo image to dramatic effect), but quite often stereo mixes may be quite subtle in nature.

The listening skills test at Grade 3 will require you to listen to a pair of audio files and determine which is mono and which is stereo.

- In audio example [LSG3SF1.mp3](#) you will hear an organ recorded in stereo
- In audio example [LSG3SF2.mp3](#) you will hear an organ recorded in mono
- In audio example [LSG3SF3.mp3](#) you will hear a band recorded in stereo
- In audio example [LSG3SF4.mp3](#) you will hear a band recorded in mono

Please note, Rockscool uses the term 'sonic fidelity' to define anything of an audible nature, but it would be just as likely for this to be referenced as 'audio fidelity' and subsequently both terms should be learnt.

Coursework Task

The Coursework Task element of the grade examination will put you in a situation that you are likely to be in as a working music producer. Your examiner will be assessing how well you respond to that situation, how you choose the technique required and how you demonstrate those skills.

Very few music producers work solely as sound engineers. It's very common to also be musical and be part of the songwriting team – if not the sole songwriter.

Therefore it's important to have a basic understanding of chord structure and arrangement.

At Grade 3, the Coursework Task part of the exam will require you to create a piece of music to a given chord progression. All you will be presented with is a sequence of chords, it's then up to you to spend the available time creating a backing track.

The style of music is your choice, as is how you choose to set the pace.

With experience of this technique, you should practice creating new chord sequences, listening to successful pieces of music and recreating their chord sequences. This will help build up an arsenal of progressions which you know will work and inspire you when the time comes to create something under pressure.

MUSIC PRODUCTION COURSEWORK TASK SAMPLE GRADE 3



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PRODUCCIÓN MUSICAL PACK DE MUESTRA



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

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

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

Section A | Music Production Theory



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SUMMARY


SECTION (<i>Current section highlighted</i>)	MARKS
> Theoretical Written Exam	25 [25%]
Listening Test	15 [15%]
Coursework Task	60 [60%]

The *Theoretical Written Exam* section of Rockscool Music Production Examinations covers the following:

- Music Production Terminology
- Sound & Audio Fundamentals

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

Section A | Music Production Theory

Cymbals	As close as possible. Pointing towards the place where the stick strikes the cymbal.	Condenser	AKG C451	Be careful that the cymbal doesn't touch the microphone as it moves.
Overheads	Two microphones above the drum kit, pointing down towards the snare drum.	Condenser	AKG C451	Consider using a stereo technique such as XY.
				
Room Ambience	One or more microphones, place further back in the room to add reverberation to the sound.	Condenser	Rode NT1 AKG C414 Neumann U87	This captures the sound of the room, so make sure the room sounds good.
Trash Microphone	One or more microphones placed far away, pointing away from the drum kit.	Any	Any	This is to provide a low fidelity recording which can be mixed in with the kit. Consider placing a microphone outside the room and leaving a door open to capture the distant reverberation.

Section B | Listening Skills

Stylistic Awareness

Jazz

The term jazz covers a multitude of subgenres. Some, such as dixieland and swing are simpler and more diatonically based. Others, such as bebop, cool and modal jazz tend to be more harmonically sophisticated, making more use of extended and altered chords and modes. Many jazz chord sequences revolve around the chords II, V and I rather than the I, IV and V so typical of pop. They are also likely to make more use of chords built upon the second, third and seventh degrees of the major scale.

Jazz has remained popular since its evolution from blues, ragtime and other styles in the late 19th century. Part of its enduring appeal can be attributed to jazz musicians absorbing other styles of music, creating endless fusions, such as jazz blues, Latin jazz and jazz funk. While jazz is often played solo (e.g. piano), it is also played in a variety of instrumental combinations from duos to Big Bands. A typical sextet might comprise piano, double bass, drums, trumpet, alto sax and electric guitar. However, all kinds of skilled instrumentalists have achieved popularity in jazz such as the acoustic guitarist Django Reinhardt and the harmonica player Toots Thielemans.

Diatonic Chords

This chord sequence shows a simple extract of 'rhythm changes', a progression named after Gershwin's 'I've Got Rhythm'. As you loop back round from the repeat you complete the chord progression IIm V I which forms the backbone of many jazz standards such as 'Autumn Leaves', 'Perdido' and 'Giant Steps'.

$\frac{4}{4}$ ||: C / Am / | Dm / G / :||
I VIIm IIm V

Extended Chords and Altered Chords

This progression is much more harmonically challenging. It uses extended chords (the A^b13 and $Cmaj7$) and altered chords (such as the $A7\#5$). The B^b7^b5 and A^b13 chords are rooted on notes not found within the home key, however, they are chromatic passing chords, adding complex tensions and resolutions to the underlying chord sequence. Don't worry, you're not expected to analyse scores to this depth but it is worth becoming familiar with both the sound and look of jazz harmony.

$\frac{4}{4}$ B^b7^b5 $A7\#5$ A^b13 $G7^b9$ | $Cmaj7$ $E7\#5\#9$ ||
VI V I III

Chromatic Walking Bass

Other styles of music such as rockabilly, rock 'n' roll and blues, all make heavy use of the walking bassline but jazz adds its own slant by approaching the main chord tones from a note a semitone above or below.

Swing Ride Patterns

Ride and hi-hat parts featuring a repeated pattern of a quarter note followed by a pair of swung eighth notes are common, appearing on recordings such as 'Straight, No Chaser' (Thelonious Monk), 'Take Five' (Dave Brubeck) and 'Milestones' (Miles Davis).

- In audio example [LSG5SA1.mp3](#) you will hear a jazz recording

Coursework Task

A music producer is more than simply someone who can operate the equipment. They also need to have a musical ear.

While they don't need to be a virtuoso musician, the ability to hear, identify and repeat melodies is a key skill.

In the Grade 5 Coursework Task candidates will be required to add musical layers to tracks using software instruments. This layering technique is a common one in modern music production as it will add weight to an instrument or melody. A piano on its own can sound very nice but layer it with strings and it will sound like an epic film soundtrack.

This is not only a useful practical skill for layering, this skill will also enable you to better communicate with musicians. It's far more effective to demonstrate to someone what you want them to do rather than try and explain it and correct them when they misunderstand.

MUSIC PRODUCTION COURSEWORK TASK GRADE 5 SAMPLE



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

Learning Outcome You will:	Assessment Criteria You can:
1. Understand the key terminology used in modern music production	1.1 Demonstrate a knowledge of Grade 8 terminology related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Music production equipment b. Industry standard formats & protocols c. Industry standard connectivity d. Digital technology e. Digital Audio Workstations
2. Understand the fundamentals of sound and audio in relation to modern music production	2.1 Demonstrate an understanding of Grade 8 fundamentals related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Microphone technology and technique b. Audio recording, editing and processing c. MIDI & audio programming d. Audio Technology e. Acoustics
3. Demonstrate effective listening skills relevant to modern music production	3.1 Demonstrate Grade 8 level aural skills in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sonic fidelity b. Music theory c. Stylistic awareness
4. Demonstrate effective music production technique	4.1 Demonstrate skills appropriate to Grade 8 in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. File management b. Digital Audio Workstation programming c. Audio mixing 4.2 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 8 in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpretation of a professional brief b. Music creation or editing c. File sharing to industry standards 4.3 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 8 in the areas of Electronic Music Production: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpretation of professional briefs b. Electronic music creation or editing c. File sharing to industry standards 4.4 Demonstrate skills and understanding appropriate to Grade 8 in the areas of Sound for Media: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Interpretation of professional briefs b. Audio creation or editing to enhance a visual medium c. File sharing to industry standards

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

Section A | Music Production Theory



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SUMMARY

SECTION (<i>Current section highlighted</i>)	MARKS
> Theoretical Written Exam	25 [25%]
Listening Test	15 [15%]
Coursework Task	60 [60%]

The *Theoretical Written Exam* section of Rockscool Music Production Examinations covers the following:

- Music Production Terminology
- Sound & Audio Fundamentals

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

Technique:

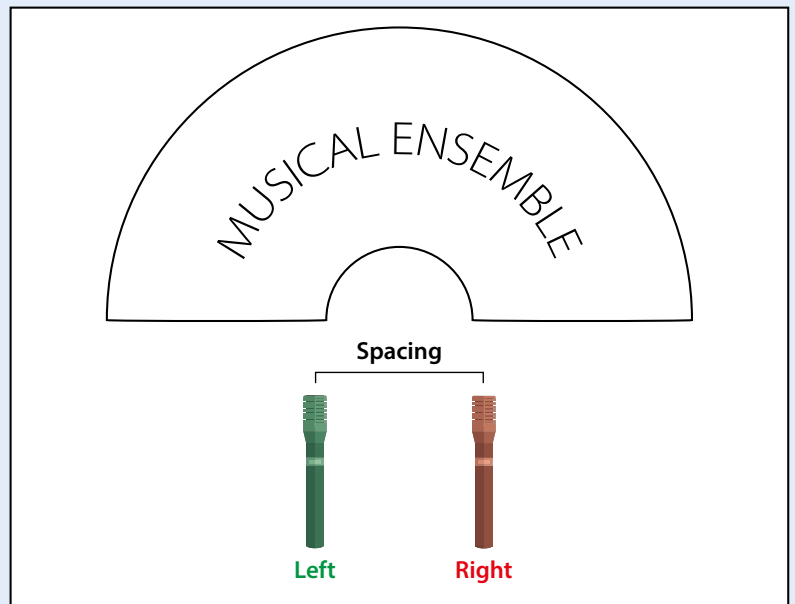
Spaced Pair (AB)

Description:

Two omnidirectional microphones (or cardioid if omnis aren't available) spaced apart by several feet.

Sound:

Stereo, with a wide stereo image, good balance of room sound and source which can be adjusted by moving the microphones closer or further from the source.



Technique:

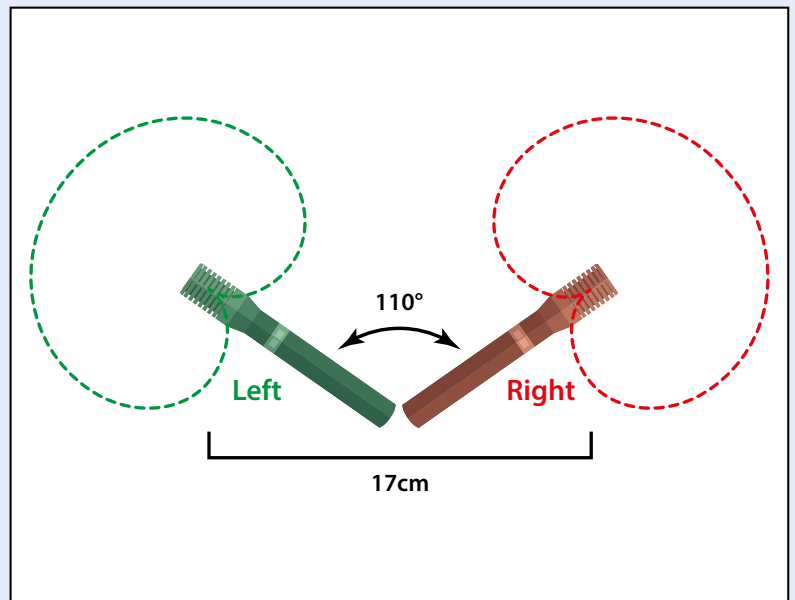
Near coincident pair (ORTF)

Description:

Two cardioid microphones, placed with each capsule pointing away from the other about 18cm apart.

Sound:

Similar to coincident pair, but with a slightly wider stereo image. Not quite as mono compatible due to the time distance between the capsules.



Technique:

Mid-Side

Description:

One cardioid pointing directly at the source, and a figure of 8 microphone placed perpendicular to capture the left and right stereo image. Requires coding and decoding by the mixing desk (see Glossary).

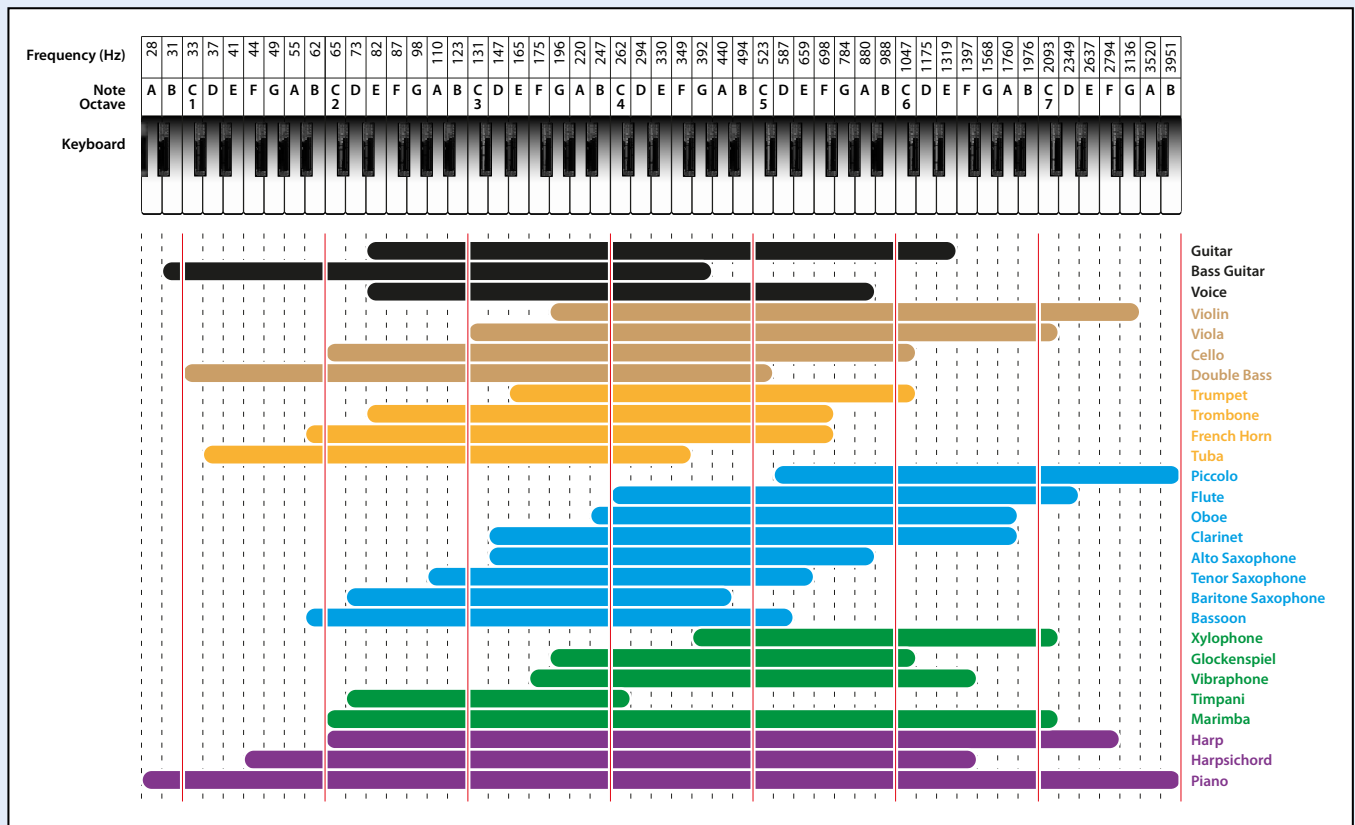
Sound:

When used in stereo the image is very good, with good focus on the source due to the cardioid. Not as wide an image as spaced pair. Good mono compatibility because left and right will phase cancel.



Section A | Music Production Theory

Frequency Content Of Instruments Diagram



Equalisation

When working with multiple mixes, even from the same producer/engineer, it is quite common for there to be a difference in tonal balance. It would then be the mastering engineer's role to ensure consistency. These differences may be very subtle, so will require a very keen ear, and subtle adjustments, to the EQ settings.

It's worth remembering that any changes to tone have a counter effect. If a mix sounds dull it could be one of two things causing the problem:

- The mix doesn't contain enough high frequencies
- The mix contains too many low frequencies.

Try cutting the lower frequencies before you add high frequencies and listen to how it sounds. Experience will help you identify which it is.

It's also important to carefully monitor the bass frequencies within the mix, particularly in bass heavy music styles. It's possible that there could be bass frequencies in the mix that you can't hear because they're too low in the spectrum for your hearing. These frequencies are particularly problematic, as any compression or limiting you apply will be triggered by the high level in the bass, even though you can't hear what is pushing the signal over the threshold.

A high pass filter may be appropriate to keep these extremely low frequencies under control.

Compression

Dynamic control should be taken care of at the mix stage, however, some subtle compression using a high quality compressor may help tighten up a mix and match it to the expectations of radio, TV, games or other broadcasters.

Section B | Listening Skills

Sonic Fidelity

Objective: Identify High and Low Quality Audio File Formats

As a producer or sound engineer, your aural skills are extremely important as they enable you to hear the music and production values, so be mindful to always look after them. Avoid listening to music too loud and always be cautious of listening for too long. If you find yourself unavoidably subjected to high volume levels, be prepared to wear hearing protection.

Whilst it is difficult to improve your hearing per se, there are ways you can improve your aural skills. This can be achieved by training your ears and brain to identify the sounds that you hear.

Your aural skills are associative in nature i.e. by associating particular labels to particular sounds, your brain will associate the label with the sound and subsequently you'll stand a greater chance of identifying (and ultimately using) these sounds in the future. Always be prepared to listen intently and be aware that the producer's analytical ear is one of his/her greatest tools.

In your role as producer or sound engineer it is your responsibility to ensure that the quality of the audio is as good as it can possibly be, therefore you should develop your ability to listen critically to what you are hearing.

You should therefore be able to identify if a recording is high or low fidelity, for example if an audio file is a full quality wav or a compressed MP3, or even if it is a high quality 320Kbps MP3 or a low quality 128Kbps MP3.

For the Grade 8 audio fidelity test, you will be required to identify the difference between two audio files.

- In audio example [LSG8SF1.mp3](#) you will hear a guitar recording converted from a full resolution WAV file
- In audio example [LSG8SF2.mp3](#) you will hear a guitar recording converted from a low resolution MP3 file
- In audio example [LSG8SF3.mp3](#) you will hear a full mix converted from a full resolution WAV file
- In audio example [LSG8SF4.mp3](#) you will hear a full mix converted from a low resolution MP3 file
- In audio example [LSG8SF5.mp3](#) you will hear a full mix converted from a high resolution MP3 file
- In audio example [LSG8SF6.mp3](#) you will hear a full mix converted from a low resolution MP3 file

Please note, Rockschool uses the term 'sonic fidelity' to define anything of an audible nature, but it would be just as likely for this to be referenced as 'audio fidelity' and subsequently both terms should be learnt.

Coursework Task

At Grade 8 you will be able to specialise in one of three areas:

- **Audio Production** – focusing on traditional studio production technique.
- **Electronic Music Production** – focusing on techniques for electronic music genres.
- **Sound For Media** – focusing on techniques relevant to film and TV sound.

Audio Production

Mastering is a skill which enables you to demonstrate that you can think about the last 5% of a production, helping make the difference between a good mix and a finished production.

For the Audio Production Grade 8 Coursework Task you will be required to master a final mix with EQ, compressions and limiters.

Electronic Music Production

As an electronic musician, you will be creating music and collaborating with others constantly. The type of collaboration will vary massively, but perhaps the most common collaboration will be with vocalists.

Almost all successful electronic music in the commercial sector features some kind of vocal performance, however, what we hear in the end is probably not what the singer originally performed, in fact the producer and singer may never have even met.

For the Electronic Music Production Grade 8 Coursework Task you will be required to create a remix using the supplied vocal sample.

Sound For Media

The sound used in media can be split into these categories:

- **Location Sound** – the sound which was recorded at the same time as the visuals.
- **Dialogue** – the speech of the actors
- **Sound Effects** – any artificial sound added to enhance the audio track
- **Foley** – sounds that are added to enhance the realism, such as clothes rustling or footsteps
- **Music**

Most people don't think about the sound when they watch a film or TV show. It's just there.

It's easy to get drawn into the story and assume that the sound was always there, part of the action that ensues on screen.

However, the reality is that it has taken a huge amount of work to put that sound together, whether it be the sound effects on a James Bond film, or the footsteps on creaky floorboards in a horror movie, or the epic soundtrack that tells us that Harry Potter is about to have another magical adventure.

It's not just film and TV that need sound. Let's not forget computer games, which in some cases have larger production budgets than Hollywood films.

The sound effects we hear are seldom created with the on location sound, as reality would be far less exciting. For example, the real sound of a car driving fast around a corner wouldn't feature nearly as much squealing from the tyres, but adding those sound effects makes it seem like the car is driving so much faster, implying that the action is more dangerous and exciting.

In order to make sounds more exciting, the sound designer on a project will be responsible for coming up with new ways of creating these sounds and layering them together with other sounds to make them sound big and impressive.

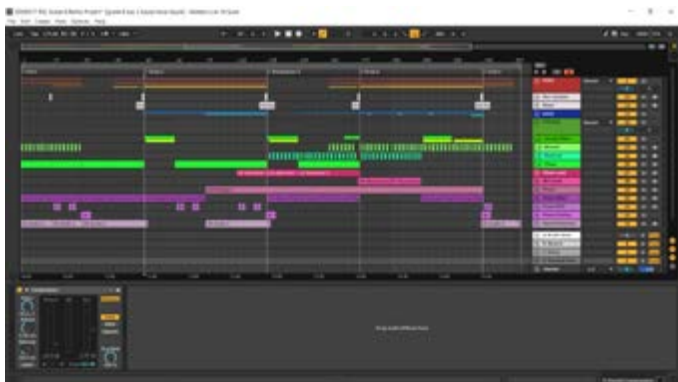
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MÁS LECTURAS

Consulta las siguientes publicaciones del blog de RSL sobre Music Production, que esperamos que te resulten útiles:

- **Getting Started in Music Production**
- **Careers in Music Production**
- **An Introduction to Rockscool Music Production – Virtual RSL on Tour Playback**
- **Music Production A - Z**
- **A Brief History of Music Production**