

DIGITAL GRADES & DIPLOMAS FILMING GUIDANCE: MUSIC



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The following guide is designed to support candidates in filming their performance for their digital music graded exam or diploma. Please watch the short video on the Trinity website which accompanies this for an introduction to filming.

Before you begin

There are six important instructions to note before you start planning your filming:

1. All exams must be submitted as one, continuous performance (this includes all pieces/songs and technical work). If there is any evidence of editing then we will not be able to assess your exam.
2. Please read the 'overall performance' criteria for graded exams and consider the importance of setting up the shot to enable a smooth continuous performance. Read carefully the instructions for your instrument to ensure you have the correct angles to enable the examiners to assess you according to the overall performance criteria.
3. You can be given assistance to film your performance and another person can be present as an accompanist or to operate your backing tracks. However, indications of pulse, verbal or non-verbal entry cues, or the playing of an additional instrument are not allowed and will result in a syllabus infringement. The exception to this is where candidates would prefer a verbal prompt when performing the technical work. Please see the technical work information documents available at trinitycollege.com/digital-cj-grades for further information for each instrument.
4. Audio and video must be recorded simultaneously and no pre- or post-production techniques should be applied.
5. You do not need to provide any information at the beginning of your performance – simply start the recording and begin your performance. Make sure your files are appropriately labelled (please see the syllabus for information).
6. Your books/legally downloaded copies must be in shot when you film your performance. Please make sure they will be visible to the examiner so that they can confirm that you are playing from a legal copy – even if you choose to perform from memory. In the case that you have purchased a digital copy and are playing from a tablet or eReader, please show the copy on screen to the camera, ensuring that the watermark is clearly legible, so the examiner can confirm the purchase.

YOUR FILMING ENVIRONMENT

Here are a few considerations when choosing where to film your performance:

- ▶ Choose a quiet room without disruptions, and remember to put devices such as phones or tablets on 'silent'.
- ▶ Make sure the recording device has enough battery and storage capacity.
- ▶ Check light levels before recording to ensure you are clearly visible on screen and avoid standing in front of a light source to ensure you do not appear as a silhouette on screen.
- ▶ Check sound levels to ensure the recording device captures the range of the instrument/speaking voice clearly, without any distortion.

TROUBLESHOOTING SOUND ISSUES

The microphones in mobile devices are built for speech, so you might find that the audio on your recording is either cutting out or distorting. There may be some audio settings that you can change to help with this.

- ▶ Some devices have an 'automatic microphone compression' or similar function, which may cause the volume of your recording to change suddenly. Where possible, switch these off in your audio settings.
- ▶ If your audio is distorted and you have the option in your device settings, try reducing the microphone input level. If not, try moving your recording device further away.
- ▶ Your device may have a setting labelled 'suppress background noise', 'noise reduction' or similar. Try turning this function off if the option is available.
- ▶ Other problematic functions you may wish to disable include 'echo cancellation', 'sound correction' and 'audio stability'.

Accompaniment

LIVE ACCOMPANIMENTS

Before filming your full performance, make sure that you check the balance between your instrument and the accompaniment. You may need to move closer or further away from the camera and any microphone to achieve the perfect balance.

RECORDED ACCOMPANIMENTS (IN THE CASE OF LOCKDOWN ONLY)

If, due to lockdown restrictions, you are using a recorded accompaniment, this must be clearly audible on the submitted video. You may need to move the speaker closer or further away from your camera and microphone in order to find the perfect balance. Recorded accompaniments should be played through an external speaker rather than directly from a phone or tablet. The accompaniment must be loud enough for you to hear it while you are performing, and for the examiner to hear it on the video. Please refer to the **'Covid-19 special arrangements for digital music exams'** document on our website for further information.

BACKING TRACK ACCOMPANIMENTS

Exams that require backing tracks must be performed to a track which is clearly audible on the submitted video. Backing tracks should be played through an external speaker rather than directly from a phone or tablet. The backing track must be loud enough for you to hear it while you are performing, and for the examiner to hear it on the video.

Backing tracks should be played without the click for all instruments, with the exception of specific cases in Drum Kit and Rock & Pop Drums exams.

Before filming your full performance, make sure you run a soundcheck and adjust the balance between the track and your instrument or voice. You may need to move the speaker closer or further away from your camera to find the perfect balance.

INSTRUMENT-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE



Drum Kit, and Rock & Pop Drums

These guidelines apply to candidates performing on either acoustic or electric drum kits.

There are two key factors to consider when filming your performance on drum kit – **sight** and **sound**.

SIGHT 1.1

The camera should be placed at a right-angle from the candidate, looking **through** the Hi-Hat stand on a standard drum kit setup.

1. Camera



SIGHT 1.2

Place the camera at the candidate's eye level to give the best view.

1. Camera



SIGHT 1.3

The on-screen image must include the whole of the candidate, from head-to-toe. The full drum kit must also be in view – you may need to position the camera quite far from the instrument to achieve this.



SIGHT 1.4

The music stand should be placed so the candidate can easily see it while they are performing. If this blocks the camera's line of sight, try moving the camera across slightly, ensuring the 'right-angle' view is still largely achieved.

1. Camera
2. Music stand



SOUND

Both the Trinity Rock & Pop and the Trinity Drum Kit & Percussion exams require candidates to perform with a recorded backing track. The candidate will need to hear the backing track while they are playing, and the backing track must be audible on the recording.

1. Your speaker must have enough volume to balance with your instrument, so the examiner can hear the backing track on your video. Laptop, mobile phone or tablet speakers will not be loud enough, so you will need to use an external speaker.
2. Experiment with speaker positioning to find the best balance between the backing track and the drum kit, for both the candidate and the recording device (if using E-Drums you may need to adjust the main volume setting of your instrument).
3. Before you record your full performance, run a soundcheck on one of the loudest sections of your exam. Listen back to your recording and make sure you can hear both the drum kit and the backing track clearly.
4. If so, you are good to go! If not, and try an alternative position for your speaker, repeating the soundcheck process until you have a clear sound.
5. Alternatively, a headphone splitter can be used, enabling the track to be routed to headphones for the candidate and to a speaker near the recording device.
6. Users of electric drum kits may have the option to connect a playback device to the instrument module. This can then be used to balance the instrument and track through the same speaker.

SOUND OPTION 1

1. Camera

1



2

SOUND OPTION 2

1. Camera
2. Speaker

1



2

DRUM KIT TECHNICAL WORK

Exercises: Notation may be used for your exercises.

Percussion

Position your camera so that your face, hands and all of your instrument are in shot. You can change the camera angle between pieces if you are moving between instruments, but filming should be continuous. Position your music stand so that the view is not obscured.

PERCUSSION TECHNICAL WORK

Scales & arpeggios: before you begin your technical work, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand. You may use a list of the scales and arpeggios you are performing but no information other than their titles and hand parameters should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the piano music stand.

Exercises/orchestral figures/studies/orchestral extracts: Music may be used for these items.

Piano, Electronic Keyboard, and Rock & Pop Keyboards

You should film your performance from the side so that the keys, your face and both hands (and all of the notes on the keyboard) are visible.

CLASSICAL PIANO TECHNICAL WORK

Scales/triads/broken chords/arpeggios: Before you begin this part of the technical work, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand. You may use a list of the scales/triads/broken chords/arpeggios you are performing but no information other than their titles, hand specification, range, dynamics and articulations should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Exercises: Music may be used for your exercises.

ELECTRONIC KEYBOARD TECHNICAL WORK

Keyboard exercise: Initial-Grade 5: Music may be used. Grades 6-8: Before you perform your keyboard exercise, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand.

Scales & chord knowledge: before you begin this part of the technical work, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand. You may have a list of the scales and chords you are performing but no information other than their titles, hand specification and articulations should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Exercises: Music may be used for your exercises.

Singing and Rock & Pop Vocals

You should film your performance from the front. You are not required to sing directly to the camera but do make sure that you remain visible with your hands, face, and most of your body in shot. Position your music stand so that the view is not obscured.

CLASSICAL SINGING TECHNICAL WORK

Vocal exercises/Vaccai exercise/unaccompanied folk song: Before you begin your technical work, you must close your music and set the music stand aside.

Strings

Violin and Viola: You should film your performance from the right-hand side to give a clear view of your bowing arm, and with your face, hands and all of your instrument in shot. Position your music stand so that the view is not obscured.

Cello and Double Bass: Position your camera so that your face, hands and all of your instrument are in shot while ensuring that your music stand does not obscure the view.

STRINGS TECHNICAL WORK

Bowing exercise: Before you perform your bowing exercise, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand.

Scales, arpeggios & technical exercise(s): When you perform this part of the technical work, your book must remain closed and set aside. You may use a list of the scales, arpeggios and technical exercises you are performing but no information other than their titles and bowing articulations should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Studies/orchestral extracts: Music may be used for these items.

Classical, Plectrum and Acoustic Guitar, and Rock & Pop Guitar and Bass

Position the camera slightly to your right side so that your face, both of your hands and all of the instrument are visible. If you are using foot pedals, these should also be visible. Position your music stand so that the view is not obscured.

CLASSICAL GUITAR TECHNICAL WORK

Technical exercise: Music may be used for your technical exercise.

Scales & arpeggios: Before you begin this part of the technical work, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand. You may use a list of the scales and arpeggios you are performing but no information other than their titles and the required finger-strokes should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Studies/concerto extracts: Music may be used for these items.

PLECTRUM/ACOUSTIC GUITAR

Scales/arpeggios/exercises/chord sequences/cadences/chord progressions: Before you begin your technical work, you must close your book and remove it from your music stand. You may use a list of the scales/arpeggios/exercises/chord sequences/cadences/chord progressions you are performing but no information other than their titles and dynamics should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Woodwind/Jazz Woodwind

Position your camera so that your face, hands, and all of your instrument are in shot while ensuring that your music stand does not obscure the view.

WOODWIND/JAZZ WOODWIND TECHNICAL WORK

Scales/arpeggios/triads: before you begin the technical work, you must close your music and remove it from your music stand. You may use a list of the scales/arpeggios/triads you are performing but no information other than their titles, articulation and dynamics should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Exercises/orchestral extracts/studies: Music may be used for these items.

Brass

Position your camera so that your face, hands and all of your instrument are in shot while ensuring that your music stand does not obscure the view. For some instruments (trumpet/cornet/flugelhorn/trombone) this may be best achieved by filming from the right-hand side.

BRASS TECHNICAL WORK

Lip flexibility exercise/chromatic scale: When you perform your lip flexibility exercise (and chromatic scale at higher grades), you must close your music and remove it from your music stand.

Scales & arpeggios: When you perform this part of the technical work, your book must remain closed and set aside. You may use a list of the scales and arpeggios you are performing but no information other than their titles, articulation and dynamics should be written here.

You must hold this list up to the camera before placing it on the music stand.

Exercises/orchestral extracts/brass band extracts: Music may be used for these items.

Technical exercise (Initial): Music may be used.