

Exams

Music grade examinations are a method of formally assessing the progress of students learning music. They can give students of all ages something to aim for, a focus for their work, a sense of achievement and the experience of playing or singing in front of someone other than family and friends.

Grades progress from grade 1 basic to grade 8 advanced. There are a number of boards which include exams before Grade 1 (i.e. 'Preliminary') or after Grade 8 ('Senior Certificate')

The student can progress after grade 8 to a performance or diploma exam.

Grade exams can be a useful way of measuring progress and motivating students, but they are not the only way. We leave the decision of whether or not to take exams up to teacher and student/parent.

Togher Music School uses internationally recognised boards to accredit their exams. These boards provide syllabi and examiners for our students to complete their exams.

The different boards, have slightly different marking methods and exam boards generally have exam periods three times a year, one in the autumn, one in spring and one in early summer. Each grade carries a different fee level; the higher the grade the higher the fee.

The boards we use at Togher Music school are

- [Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music](#) (Associated Board or ABRSM for short)
- [Royal Irish Academy of Music](#) (RIAM)
- [London College of Music](#)(LCM)
- [Trinity College London](#)
- [Rockschool](#)
- [RGT Registry of Guitar Tutors.](#)

Students may come to the Togher Music School having already taken one or more grade exams, in which case they can continue with the same exam board, although it is also possible to change exam boards at any time.

Most students progress through grade exams at the rate of one per year, some more quickly and others more slowly. Also, it is not strictly necessary to take every grade level before you move on to the next.

Students can start taking exams at any grade without having taken the grade before or an equivalent exam, although it should be noted that some exams in the higher grades require that you pass an equivalent grade theory exam in advance. Exam boards do assume that if a candidate starts at any level other than Grade 1, then he/she is proficient in the techniques and skills required at the lower grades.

What do I have to bring to a grade exam?

You must bring your original sheet music, published by the exam board. Except for piano/keyboard, guitar and percussion exams, you will need a piano accompanist who will play through the set pieces with you before the exam and accompany you at the exam. The fee due to the accompanist is payable by the student.

