

# PLAY virtuoso



**DJ**

## Syllabus

Valid for assessments from 2024



Beginner (Level 1)  
Intermediate (Level 2)

July 2024

# Qualification Specification: PLAYvirtuoso DJ from 2024

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## Contents

<b>1. Information and general guidelines</b>	<b>3</b>
Introduction	3
About this qualification specification	3
About the DJing qualifications	4
<b>2. DJing Qualifications</b>	<b>6</b>
At a Glance	6
<b>3. DJ Beginner and Intermediate Syllabus</b>	<b>8</b>
Performance guidelines	8
Summary of subject content	9
<b>4. Assessment requirements</b>	<b>10</b>
Beginner	10
Intermediate	10
Assessment Content	13
<b>5. Assessment and Marking</b>	<b>15</b>
Assessment objectives	15
Assessment domains	16
Mark allocation - Beginner	17
Mark allocation - Intermediate	17
Synoptic assessment	17
Marking	18
Marking Criteria	19
Awards of Pass, Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction	25
<b>6. After the assessment</b>	<b>26</b>
Results	26
Enquiries, complaints and appeals	26

# 1. Information and general guidelines

## Introduction

### About ABRSM

ABRSM is The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music and a global music education charity. At the heart of everything we do is our belief that music enriches lives. Building on our heritage, we offer face-to-face and digital assessments, sheet music, recordings, apps and courses for students and teachers across the world. Our music qualifications provide clear goals, reliable and consistent marking, and guidance for future learning.

As a charity, we use all of the surpluses we generate to make significant donations towards music education initiatives and to develop our support for learners and teachers around the world. We advocate for music and its many forms, playing our part to ensure the future of music education and its place in society.

Together with our partners, our teachers and others around the world, we've been nurturing the future of music since 1889 – to help people start or continue their journey.

#### Who we are

We are the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), a company registered in England and Wales (company registration number 1926395) and a registered charity (charity registration number 292182). Our registered office is at 4 London Wall Place, London EC2Y 5AU.

Find out more at [www.abrsm.org](http://www.abrsm.org).

### About PLAYvirtuoso

PLAYvirtuoso delivers a study programme of DJing, music production, songwriting and the music industry, to students online around the world. All PLAYvirtuoso courses are taught by music industry artists and experts. These DJ qualifications have been developed collaboratively with PLAYvirtuoso and their artists working in the music industry to provide real-world relevancy and experience to candidates.

## About this qualification specification

### What it covers

This specification provides the requirements and information teachers, candidates, parents and organisations need in order to prepare for the following qualifications:

- ABRSM Level 1 Beginner Award in DJing
- ABRSM Level 2 Intermediate Certificate in DJing

For ease of reading, 'Beginner DJing' and 'Intermediate DJing' is used in place of the full qualification titles throughout the remainder of this document.

### Validity of this specification

This specification is valid from July 2024 until further notice.

We may update this specification from time to time, but will not make changes to the syllabus (Section 3) other than in exceptional circumstances. The latest version of this specification will be available from [www.abrsm.org/exams](http://www.abrsm.org/exams).

## About the DJing qualifications

The Beginner and Intermediate DJing qualifications are currently offered as digital assessments on the PLAYvirtuoso platform. Candidates will be required to complete a series of objective questions (such as multiple choice) and upload videos performing the prepared mix and technical work components. The candidate is responsible for organising a suitable venue and any equipment needed to run the assessment (e.g. DJ equipment, speakers, recording equipment etc.)

The prepared mix and each element of the technical work must be performed and recorded in one continuous take and in separate videos. The marker will start assessing candidates from the point at which they start to perform their mix, and may stop assessing if the evidence exceeds the maximum time allowed.

Where candidates are under 18, the recording process must be overseen by a Responsible Adult who is aged 18 or over.

## What makes ABRSM PLAYvirtuoso DJing assessments distinctive

These exciting assessments formulate a distinctive contribution to learning music and the industry, because of the emphasis placed upon:

- Performance and creativity.
- Real-world outcomes through the involvement of successful artists and individuals within the music industry, contributing to both the course and assessment development process.
- Robust assessment methods that use digital platforms to enhance the assessment experience, providing a sophisticated evaluation of a candidate's performance.
- An embracing of modern music styles by offering candidates a broad range of contemporary tasks directly related to current day-to-day roles in music, ensuring relevance to the ever-evolving music landscape.
- The provision of flexible and innovative assessment formats and arrangements.

## Syllabus objectives

A course of study based on this syllabus is intended to provide:

- **Skillful Progression:** Navigate through a structured approach that allows you to advance as a skilled performer at an advanced level or gain the confidence to teach instrumental or vocal music in a studio setting.
- **Appreciation of the Arts:** Develop a lasting love and understanding of the performing arts, whether you find yourself on stage or in the audience.
- **Practical Skill Development:** Acquire practical skills and concepts that extend beyond the boundaries of musical performance.
- **Life Skills Refinement:** Hone organisational, planning, problem-solving, and communication skills, fostering a well-rounded skill set applicable in various contexts.
- **Commitment to Lifelong Learning:** Cultivate personal disciplines and motivation essential for a commitment to continuous learning throughout life.
- **Engaging Learning Opportunities:** Encounter learning and assessment experiences that are both comprehensive and creatively stimulating.
- **Unified Assessment Approach:** Experience a progressive and unified assessment system, empowering you to strategically plan and achieve effective outcomes.

## Qualification size

The table below describes the size of the DJing qualifications by showing the amount of time that a candidate would typically need to spend preparing for them:

- Under guidance (Guided Learning Hours);
- The total time spent preparing both under guidance, and without any supervision (Total Qualification Time);

	<b>Guided Learning Hours* (GLH)</b>	<b>Total Qualification Time* (TQT)</b>
Beginner level	15	70
Intermediate level	18	100

\* The Guided Learning Hours and Total Qualification Time are estimates of the average amount of time that it might take a candidate to prepare for these qualifications, and should be used as guidance only; it is recognised that there will be variance dependent on each individual's level of experience and ability.

## 2. DJing Qualifications

### At a Glance

The following is an overview of the DJing qualifications:

	Beginner	Intermediate
Prepared mix	✓	✓
DJ knowledge and theory	✓	✓
Aural tests	✓	✓
Technical work		✓
Assessment	E-Assessment	E-Assessment
Grading		Distinction: 85-100% Merit: 75-84% Pass: 65-74%

### Qualification Specification

This specification is valid for assessments from Summer 2024 until further notice.

### Malpractice and maladministration

We take any form of malpractice or maladministration very seriously.

- **Malpractice** is defined as any act that compromises or is an attempt to compromise the assessment process, the integrity of any qualification or the validity of a result or certificate. This also includes any act that damages ABRSM's or PLAYvirtuoso's reputation or credibility.
- **Maladministration** is defined as any act that results in a mismanagement of administrative processes, particularly where such a breach could compromise the integrity of a qualification or assessment.

Candidates must follow the requirements set out in this specification. In cases where applicants or candidates have committed malpractice, a sanction or penalty may be given. Further information about our Malpractice and Maladministration Policy can be found at [www.abrsm.org/policies](http://www.abrsm.org/policies).

### Assessment dates, locations and fees

These assessments will only be conducted on the PLAYvirtuoso platform. Details of fees and how to book an assessment are available on their website: [www.playvirtuoso.com](http://www.playvirtuoso.com).

### Age groups and requirements for prior learning

ABRSM PLAYvirtuoso DJing qualifications are open to all and there are no minimum age restrictions. There are no prerequisite qualifications required for entering either qualification, provided they have the required knowledge, skills, and understanding.

## **Reasonable adjustments and special considerations**

Information on assessment and entry requirements for candidates with specific needs is published in the Equality of Opportunity, Reasonable Adjustment, and Special Consideration policy available on our website.

## **Diversity**

ABRSM is committed to creating greater diversity, equality and inclusion in the field of music and we are actively working to achieve this across our portfolio of assessments, and wider organisation. Our Diversity Statement, and regular updates on progress, can be accessed at [www.abrsm.org/diversity-statement](http://www.abrsm.org/diversity-statement).

## 3. DJ Beginner and Intermediate Syllabus

### Performance guidelines

#### Equipment

Candidates are permitted to use any DJ decks and DJ software. They should use either DJ controllers or standalone units (e.g. Pioneer XDJ-RX, CDJ 2000, DJM 900, Xone:23). The candidates should use a suitable pair of headphones for their performance.

#### Sync

The Sync function is not permitted to be used in the exam at either Beginner or Intermediate level.

#### Quantise

Candidates are permitted to use the Quantise function in the assessment.

#### Master tempo

Candidates may choose to have the Master Tempo setting engaged or disengaged in the assessment.

#### Vinyl / Normal Mode

Candidates may choose between the Vinyl and Normal mode setting of the jog wheel.

#### DJ Software

Candidates will not be tested directly on knowledge and application of their chosen DJ Software.

#### Music

Candidates should provide all the music for the Prepared Mix and Technical Work components of assessments.

#### Explicit language

It is recognised that a number of contemporary songs contain expletives. ABRSM does not prohibit their use in assessments; however, candidates are asked to adopt a sensitive approach so as to avoid causing offence.



## Summary of subject content

Full information about each assessment component is provided in Section 4: Assessment requirements.

### Assessment components

- Component 1: DJ Knowledge and Theory
- Component 2: Aural Tests
- Component 3: Prepared Mix
- Component 4: Technical Work (Intermediate Level only)

### Component weightings

#### Beginner level

DJ Knowledge and Theory	Aural tests	Prepared Mix
10%	10%	80%

#### Intermediate level

DJ Knowledge and Theory	Aural tests	Prepared Mix	Technical work
10%	10%	60%	20%

### Assessment durations

Beginner	Intermediate
20 mins	25 mins

## 4. Assessment requirements

### Beginner

#### Component 1: DJ Knowledge & Theory

10 marks

Candidates are required to answer ten objective test questions (such as multiple choice). These questions will be based on some of the topics outlined in the learning materials such as music formats, music management, signal flow and equipment functions.

#### Component 2: Aural tests

10 marks

Candidates will listen to ten audio extracts across the following three tests and answer the corresponding question. Different extracts will be played for each question. Questions will be randomly selected by PLAYvirtuoso.

##### Test 1 (Instrument)

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the instrument used. At this level, two instruments or elements of the drum-kit will be played in each extract. The options are limited to the Kick Drum, Clap, Hi-Hat, Bass, Vocals and Snare.

##### Test 2 (Genre)

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the genre. They should select the answer that corresponds to the genre in the extract. The options are limited to House, Hip-Hop, Drum and Bass, Techno and Garage.

##### Test 3 (EQ & Filter)

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the removed EQ band or filter applied. They should select the answer that corresponds to the EQ frequency band or filter used in the extract. The options are limited to Hi EQ, Mid EQ and Low EQ, Low-pass filter and High-pass filter.

#### Component 3: Prepared Mix

80 marks

Candidates must upload a video of themselves performing a pre-prepared mix lasting six to eight minutes consisting of a minimum of four different tracks. At Beginner level it is expected that the mix will contain one change of genre. The choice of genres is left to the candidate's discretion. The mix may contain blending, cuts, use of EQ, filters, spinbacks, looping and hot cue jumps.

### Intermediate

#### Component 1: DJ Knowledge and Theory

10 marks

Candidates will be required to answer ten objective test questions (such as multiple choice). They may be asked about any aspect of the knowledge section of the curriculum for the level such as DJ setups, signal flow, equipment functions and harmonic mixing.

#### Component 2: Aural test

10 marks

Candidates will listen to ten audio extracts across the following four tests and answer the corresponding question. Different extracts will be played for each question. Questions will be randomly selected by PLAYvirtuoso.

### **Test 1 (Instrument)**

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the instruments used. At this level, three instruments or elements of the drum-kit will be played in each extract. The options are limited to the Kick Drum, Clap, Hi-Hat, Bass, Vocals and Snare.

### **Test 2 (Genre)**

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the genre. They should select the answer that corresponds to the genre in the extract. The options are limited to House, Hip-Hop, Techno, Disco, Rap, Drum and Bass, Garage, Afrobeats, Amapiano and Commercial EDM.

### **Test 3 (EQ & Filter)**

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify the removed EQ band or filter applied. They should select the answer that corresponds to the EQ frequency band or filter used in the extract. The options are limited to Hi EQ, Mid EQ and Low EQ, Low-pass filter and High-pass filter.

### **Test 4 (Effects/FX)**

Candidates will listen to audio extracts and identify which effects have been applied. They should select the answer that corresponds to the effect used in the extract. Only one effect will be present in the extract. The options are limited to Delay/Echo, Reverb, Noise and Vinyl Break.

### **Component 3: Prepared Mix**

*60 marks*

Candidates must upload a video of themselves performing a pre-prepared mix lasting eight to ten minutes consisting of a minimum of four different tracks and one A Capella. At Intermediate level it is expected that the mix will contain at least one change in genre or one significant change in tempo (+/- 20bpm). The choice of genres is left to the candidate's discretion. The mix may contain any techniques from the previous level and must include two of the following: effects (including filters), hot cue drumming or loops. At this level, candidates are permitted to use external hardware in addition to their DJ setup, however no extra marks will be awarded.

### **Component 4: Technical Work**

*20 marks*

Candidates must perform two of the following:

#### ***Creative use of an A Capella***

Candidates are required to upload a video of themselves mixing an A Capella with a track. They are able to use an A Capella and track of their choice. The video should be between one and two minutes long. Candidates should consider the balancing, harmonic mix, loops and any creative effects they can use in the mix. Candidates are permitted to use an instrumental for track 1.

- Start track 1 from a suitable point
- Mix in track 2 (the A Capella)
- Candidates may use any suitable EQ, loops or effects to creatively blend the two tracks

#### ***Creating a Build Up with Loops***

Candidates are required to upload video of themselves mixing two tracks and utilising the loop function to create a build up. The video should be between one and two minutes long, including suitable points from their chosen tracks. During this time, they will be expected to use a 1-bar loop on one of the tracks and utilise the ½x function to build tension in the other track to create a build up. The looped track should either be removed from the track or utilised within the second tracks drop creatively. Candidates may also use any suitable and stylistically appropriate effects.

- Start the video with either track 1 or both tracks playing in tandem.
- Apply a 1 bar loop to the track 1 at a suitable point (e.g. before or during the build up to the chorus (or drop) of track 2)
- Use the ½x function to intermittently shorten the loop and apply filters and/or effects to create a build up.
- Track 1 (looped) can be utilised in the drop of track 2 creatively or removed using volume control, filters or a spinback.

### ***Hot Cue Drumming***

Candidates are required to upload a video of themselves performing hot cue drumming on a track. They are able to use tracks of their choice. The video should be between forty five and ninety seconds long. Candidates should set up to eight hot cues at different points of the track and use these cue points to perform the hot cue drumming. They should consider the timing, rhythm and musicality of their performance.

- Start the video with no sound playing
- Perform the hot cue drumming routine for forty five to ninety seconds

## Assessment Content

The following table shows the introduction of elements (skills and terminology) at both levels. These requirements are presented cumulatively, i.e. once introduced, they apply to all subsequent levels.

Topic	Level	
	Beginner	Intermediate
DJ Knowledge & Theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balancing</li> <li>BPM (tempo)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key</li> </ul>
Music formats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Download</li> <li>Streaming</li> <li>Audio files (MP3, WAV, AIFF)</li> <li>CD</li> <li>Vinyl records</li> </ul>	
Music Managements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Playlist folders</li> <li>Playlists</li> <li>Track order (alphabetical, performance order, BPM)</li> </ul>	
DJ Setups		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Turntables and a mixer</li> <li>Media players and a mixer</li> <li>Standalone DJ controller</li> <li>Controller and software</li> </ul>
Signal Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trim/gain control</li> <li>EQs</li> <li>Filter</li> <li>Channel faders</li> <li>Channel level meter</li> <li>Crossfader</li> <li>Master output</li> <li>Master level (and meter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Input selector</li> <li>Effects</li> <li>Record out</li> <li>Headphones</li> </ul>
Equipment functions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Filter (high-pass/low-pass)</li> <li>Loop buttons (in/out/reloop/exit)</li> <li>Memory cue</li> <li>Hot Cue</li> <li>EQ (Low/Mid/High)</li> <li>Quantise</li> <li>Master Tempo/key lock</li> <li>Menu navigator/selector</li> <li>Sync</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effects</li> <li>Delay</li> <li>Echo</li> <li>Reverb</li> <li>Vinyl break</li> <li>Noise</li> <li>Wet/dry control</li> <li>Effect channel selector</li> <li>Crossfader settings (THRU, X, table)</li> <li>Slip mode</li> </ul>

Topic	Level	
	Beginner	Intermediate
Harmonic mixing		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The circle of fifths</li><li>• The camelot wheel</li><li>• The traffic light system</li><li>• Mixed in key</li></ul>
Instrument Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bass</li><li>• Clap</li><li>• Hi-Hat</li><li>• Kick drum</li><li>• Snare</li><li>• Vocals</li></ul>	
Genre Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Techno</li><li>• Drum and Bass</li><li>• Garage</li><li>• House</li><li>• Hip-Hop</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rap</li><li>• Disco</li><li>• Amapiano</li><li>• Commerical EDM</li><li>• Afrobeats</li></ul>
EQ & Effects (FX) Identification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EQ (Low/Mid/Hi)</li><li>• Filter</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delay/Echo</li><li>• Reverb</li><li>• Vinyl break</li><li>• Noise</li></ul>
DJ (Performance) Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beat matching</li><li>• EQing</li><li>• Blending</li><li>• Filtering</li><li>• Cutting</li><li>• Spinbacks</li><li>• Looping</li><li>• Hot cue jumps</li><li>• Fading in/out</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Looping using the ½x function</li><li>• Using A Capellas</li><li>• Harmonic mixing</li><li>• Hot cue drumming</li></ul>

## 5. Assessment and Marking

### Assessment objectives

The following tables describe the level of knowledge and skills required of candidates taking a Beginner or Intermediate DJ Qualification. They also show the assessment objectives and corresponding marking criteria that markers use to assess the performances at each level. The full marking criteria used by markers are available on pages 19–24.

### Beginner Level

Assessment objectives	Marking criteria
<b>Learners will:</b>  Demonstrate technical control of DJ equipment through the live performance of a pre-prepared mix of elementary musical and technical demand across two different genres.	<b>Learners can:</b>  Perform a basic prepared mix with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective use of DJ equipment</li><li>• Sensitive and musical performance decisions</li><li>• Synthesised theoretical, technological and contextual knowledge</li><li>• Communication of character and style</li></ul>
 Demonstrate DJ knowledge and theory by identifying formats, music management, signal flow and equipment functions at elementary demand levels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify and operate DJ equipment accurately and efficiently including turntables, mixers and software.</li></ul>
 Demonstrate listening skills and understanding at elementary demand levels through responding to previously unheard aural extracts.	 Respond to simple aural extracts identifying different: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instruments</li><li>• Genres</li><li>• EQ bands or filters</li></ul>

## Intermediate Level

Assessment objectives	Marking criteria
<p><b>Learners will:</b></p> <p>Demonstrate technical control of DJ equipment through the live performance of a pre-prepared mix of intermediate musical and technical demand across two different genres and with significant changes in time.</p>	<p><b>Learners can:</b></p> <p>Perform a basic prepared mix with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective use of DJ equipment</li> <li>• Sensitive and musical performance decisions</li> <li>• Synthesised theoretical, technological and contextual knowledge</li> <li>• Communication of character and style</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstrate variety in DJing skills through two different performances of timed bespoke technical demonstrations, at an intermediate level.</p>	<p>Perform different types of DJing skills through a choice of creative demonstration using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An A Capella</li> <li>• A Build up with Loops</li> <li>• Hot Cue Drumming</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstrate DJ knowledge and theory by identifying aspects such as DJ formats, signal flow, equipment functions and harmonic mixing at intermediate demand levels.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With stability, identify and operate DJ equipment accurately and reliably including turntables, mixers and software.</li> </ul>
<p>Demonstrate notational and listening skills and understanding at intermediate demand levels through responding to previously unheard aural extracts.</p>	<p>Respond to simple aural extracts identifying different:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruments</li> <li>• Genres</li> <li>• EQ bands or filters</li> <li>• Effects/FX</li> </ul>

## Assessment domains

Candidates will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate competency in the following:

- Technical accomplishment (the extent to which the DJ equipment is effectively controlled, assessed via the candidate's performance)
- Musicality (the ability to make sensitive and musical performance decisions)
- Musical knowledge (the synthesis of theoretical, technological and contextual knowledge)
- Communication (the degree to which the candidate communicates and engages with the listener through their recorded performance)

Candidates should be aware that the assessment domain **Technical Accomplishment** is more important at Beginner level, whereas the other three domains – **Musicality**, **Musical Knowledge** and **Communication** – are more significant at Intermediate level.



## Coverage of the assessment domains

The following table shows the assessment domains which apply within each assessment component:

	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
DJ knowledge and theory		✓	✓	
Aural Tests		✓	✓	
Prepared Mix	✓	✓	✓	✓
Technical work	✓	✓	✓	✓

## Mark allocation – Beginner

Marks are allocated for each component as shown in the table below:

Exam component	Maximum marks	% of total mark
DJ Knowledge & Theory	10	10%
Aural Tests	10	10%
Prepared Mix	80	80%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Mark allocation – Intermediate

Marks are allocated for each component as shown in the table below:

Exam component	Maximum marks	% of total mark
DJ Knowledge & Theory	10	10%
Aural Tests	10	10%
Prepared Mix	60	60%
Technical Work	20	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Synoptic assessment

Synoptic assessment is a form of assessment that requires candidates to demonstrate that they can identify and effectively use a selection of skills, techniques, concepts and knowledge to carry out a key task. The DJing qualifications allow candidates to demonstrate their ability to draw together different skills, knowledge and understanding across the four assessment domains and apply these across the individual components of the assessment.

## Marking

Qualifications are awarded by ABRSM. Digital assessments are marked by trained specialist markers and held on the PLAYvirtuoso platform. In awarding marks, markers will take into account the extent to which each of the assessment domains is demonstrated within the individual assessment components; the assessment criteria used by the markers can be found on pages 19–25. A Pass in each individual assessment component is not required to pass overall.

The tables on pages 19–24 show the marking criteria used by assessors for the DJing qualifications. Markers mark each component by balancing the extent to which the assessment domains are demonstrated and contribute towards the overall outcome.

## Marking Criteria

### How marks are awarded

The following tables show the assessment domains within each component of the assessment and the guidelines which the markers use to award marks. The guidelines are not intended to be mutually exclusive, but should function interrelatedly. Thus for any particular attainment band, one or more criteria might exceed those specified, while one or more others might fail to meet the requirements.

### Technical Work

The marker will consider the performance and presentation of the requested technical skills and will award a mark, taking into account the following:

Assessment Domain	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
<b>Distinction</b> 18-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High level of technical accomplishment, demonstrating accuracy and fluency</li> <li>• Precise and highly effective use of loops, effects, hot cues and A Capella</li> <li>• Accurate and consistent timing and rhythmic control</li> <li>• Well-developed and secure control of sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear sense of tempo and rhythmic alignment</li> <li>• Clear consideration given to harmony</li> <li>• Highly inventive and stylistic use of materials</li> <li>• A mature sense of musical style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure knowledge of phrasing and track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confident and assured performance</li> <li>• Sense of musical personality</li> <li>• A clear ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>

Assessment Domain	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
<b>Merit</b> 15-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly accurate with occasional lapses</li> <li>• Moderately effective use of loops, effects, hot cues and A Capella</li> <li>• Mostly accurate and consistent timing and rhythmic control</li> <li>• Developed and secure control of sound</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good sense of tempo</li> <li>• Good attention to harmony</li> <li>• Inventive and stylistic use of chosen materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly secure knowledge of phrasing and track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A largely confident performance</li> <li>• Some sense of musical personality</li> <li>• Some ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>
<b>Pass</b> 13-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable level of accuracy</li> <li>• Some inconsistency of continuity produced by errors</li> <li>• Some evidence of effective use of loops, effects, hot cues and A Capella</li> <li>• Some timing accuracy and rhythmic control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some sense of tempo</li> <li>• Some evidence of attention to harmony</li> <li>• Some inventive and stylistic use of chosen materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of knowledge of phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonably confident performance</li> <li>• Some musical personality communicated</li> <li>• Basic ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>

Assessment Domain	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
<b>Below Pass 1</b> 11-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Containing errors</li> <li>• Use of loops, effects, hot cues and A Capella needs work</li> <li>• Rhythm and timing lacking accuracy and control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little sense of tempo</li> <li>• Little attention given to harmony</li> <li>• Little stylistic use of chosen materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little evidence of knowledge of phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Musical personality unlikely to be clearly communicated</li> <li>• Little evidence of an ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 2</b> 6-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many errors</li> <li>• Use of loops, effects, hot cues and A Capella not of a satisfactory standard</li> <li>• Significant lapses in rhythmic security and control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expression, style and structure are not evident in the performance</li> <li>• Harmony needs much more attention</li> <li>• Sense of tempo not evident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little or no evidence of knowledge of phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little communication of the substance of the music</li> <li>• Very limited, or no ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>

## Prepared Mix

The marker will consider the performance of the candidate's prepared mix. Depending on the level of DJing qualification, two different mark ranges are available for all four assessment domains. These are indicated by B (Beginner) and I (Intermediate) in the following tables. In awarding the marks, the marker will take into account the following:

Assessment Domain	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
<b>Distinction</b> B: 68-80 I: 51-60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of technical accomplishment, demonstrating accuracy and fluency</li> <li>Secure beat-syncing and rhythmic control</li> <li>Clarity and balance in all frequency ranges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent track selection, a well-structured composition with clear musical narrative</li> <li>Clear consideration given to harmony</li> <li>Highly inventive and stylistic use of materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear stylistic awareness of chosen materials</li> <li>Highly evident attention to phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confident and assured performance</li> <li>Sense of musical personality</li> <li>A clear ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>
<b>Merit</b> B: 60-67 I: 45-50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good level of technical accomplishment</li> <li>Minor inaccuracies in beat-syncing with controlled corrections</li> <li>Mainly good clarity and balance of frequency ranges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of thoughtful track selection and structured composition with some direction</li> <li>Good attention to harmony</li> <li>Inventive and stylistic use of chosen materials</li> <li>Good sense of tempo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good stylistic awareness of chosen materials</li> <li>Evident attention to phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A largely confident performance</li> <li>Some sense of musical personality</li> <li>Some ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>

Assessment Domain	Technical accomplishment	Musicality	Musical knowledge	Communication
<b>Pass</b> B: 52–59 I: 39–44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fairly accurate, reasonably fluent, but occasionally hesitant</li> <li>Beat-syncing inaccuracies mostly rectified</li> <li>Clarity and balance of mix at an acceptable standard for this level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of planning and structure with some direction</li> <li>Some evidence of attention to harmony</li> <li>Some inventive and stylistic use of chosen materials</li> <li>Sense of tempo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some appropriate stylistic choices</li> <li>Adequate attention to phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonably confident performance</li> <li>Some musical personality communicated</li> <li>Basic ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 1</b> B: 44–51 I: 33–38	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some accuracy and consistency, but compromised by discontinuity in the performance and technical inaccuracies.</li> <li>Beat-syncing poorly controlled</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Structure unclear</li> <li>Little attention given to harmony</li> <li>Little stylistic use of chosen materials</li> <li>Little sense of tempo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little evidence of stylistic awareness or attention to phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Musical personality unlikely to be clearly communicated</li> <li>Little evidence of an ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 2</b> B: 24–43 I: 18–32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inaccuracies proportionally greater than correct playing and a lack of continuity that jeopardises the sense of performance</li> <li>Beat-syncing and balancing need much more work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expression, style and structure are not evident in the performance</li> <li>Harmony needs much more attention</li> <li>Sense of tempo not evident</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very little or no evidence of stylistic awareness or attention to phrasing and/or track structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Little communication of the substance of the music</li> <li>Very limited, or no ability to engage the listener</li> </ul>

## DJ Knowledge & Theory

The candidate's awarded mark will take into account the following:

Assessment Domain	Musical knowledge
<b>Distinction</b> 9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to DJing</li> <li>Accurate responses to questions relating to equipment, musical genres and preparation for a performance</li> </ul>
<b>Merit</b> 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly assured in terms of rudimentary and contextual knowledge</li> <li>Mostly accurate responses to questions relating to equipment, musical genres and preparing for a performance</li> </ul>
<b>Pass</b> 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge</li> <li>Some understanding to questions relating to equipment, musical genres and preparing for a performance</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 1</b> 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Degree of inaccuracy suggesting that areas of the required knowledge and understanding have not been fully covered</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 2</b> 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant degree of inaccuracy, proportionately greater than accurate responses, in terms of rudimentary and contextual knowledge</li> </ul>

## Aural Tests

Assessment Domain	Musicality	Musical knowledge
<b>Distinction</b> 9–10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear evidence of a sense of aural perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Excellent knowledge of track components</li> </ul>
<b>Merit</b> 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some evidence of a sense of aural perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accuracy in most of the tests but with a few incorrect responses</li> <li>Some knowledge of track components</li> </ul>
<b>Pass</b> 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Basic evidence of a sense of aural perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reasonable standard of aural perception demonstrated throughout the tests</li> <li>Basic knowledge of track components</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 1</b> 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient evidence of a sense of aural perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient standard of aural perception demonstrated throughout the tests</li> <li>Knowledge of track components not satisfactory</li> </ul>
<b>Below Pass 2</b> 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate evidence of a sense of aural perception</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate standard of aural perception demonstrated throughout the tests</li> <li>Little or no knowledge of track components</li> </ul>



## **Awards of Pass, Pass with Merit or Pass with Distinction**

### **Distinction (85-100%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass with Distinction will have offered a highly accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated secure technical accomplishment and will have shown evidence of excellent musicality. They will have demonstrated a thorough knowledge and understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed. They will have communicated, through performance, a sense of real engagement with, and an understanding of the repertoire.

### **Merit (75-84%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass with Merit will have offered an accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated a good standard of technical accomplishment and will have shown significant evidence of musicality. They will have demonstrated a largely assured knowledge and understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed. They will have communicated, through performance, some sense of engagement with, and some understanding of the repertoire.

### **Pass (65-74%)**

A candidate who achieves a Pass will have offered a mostly accurate, fluent and musical response in all or most of the components. They will have demonstrated an acceptable standard of technical accomplishment and will have shown some evidence of musicality. They will have demonstrated some knowledge and understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed. They will have communicated, through performance, a basic understanding of the repertoire, and ability to engage the listener.

### **Below Pass 1 (55-64%)**

A candidate who achieves a mark in this band will have demonstrated some inaccuracy, lack of fluency, and lack of musicality in all or most of the components. They will not have demonstrated an acceptable standard of technical accomplishment. Their knowledge and understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed will have been judged to be below the standard required to pass. They will have failed to communicate, through performance, a sufficient degree of understanding of the repertoire, or ability to engage the listener.

### **Below Pass 2 (0-54%)**

A candidate who achieves a mark in this band will have demonstrated significant inaccuracy, lack of fluency, and little or no musicality in all or most of the components. Their standard of technical accomplishment will have been judged as significantly below that required for the level. Their knowledge and understanding of rudimentary and contextual knowledge in relation to the repertoire performed will have been minimal in relation to the requirements of the grade. They will have failed to communicate, through performance, any discernible understanding of the repertoire, and they will not have succeeded in engaging the listener.

## 6. After the assessment

### Results

A written report and video feedback will be compiled for each examination. Results are available online as soon as the marker has completed the marking, unless the evidence is selected for moderation and quality checks. Digital certificates for successful candidates will be available as soon as the candidate receives their results.

### Enquiries, complaints and appeals

Information on how to make an enquiry, complaint, or appeal is published in the Enquiries and Appeals policy and the Complaints procedure documents available on our website at [www.abrsm.org/send-exam-feedback](http://www.abrsm.org/send-exam-feedback).