

All techniques are cumulative but it is not expected that songs will contain everything in the list; this is intended to be a general guide to the type of techniques appropriate at each grade.

A useful indication is to compare an own choice song with the songs in the equivalent grade Trinity Rock & Pop book.

Please note that if the length of your song is towards the maximum end of the time limit then examiners may indicate to you to stop the performance once they have heard enough to form a balanced assessment. Own choice songs may be shortened from the original if necessary e.g. by cutting instrumental intros and outros, or by limiting the number of verses etc.

Grade	Minimum no. of bars	Total duration (minutes)	Examples of techniques for each grade
Initial	16	½-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Simple rhythms and melodies ▶ Mainly open position chords ▶ Downward picking ▶ Basic dynamic contrasts
1	16	1-3½	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Simple syncopation ▶ Wider melodic leaps and more rhythmic variety ▶ Alternate picking ▶ Staccato playing
2	24	1-3½	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Syncopation and swung quavers ▶ Simple damping techniques ▶ Legato and staccato playing ▶ Power chords ▶ A wider dynamic range
3	32	1½-3½	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ More varied melodic and rhythmic movement ▶ Tempo changes within the song ▶ Hammer-ons and pull-offs ▶ Slides, palm muting, fretting hand vibrato, simple bends ▶ Standard guitar effects e.g. distortion

Grade	Minimum no. of bars	Total duration (minutes)	Examples of techniques for each grade
4	48	2-3½	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Irregular metres, changes of time signature within the song ▶ Tremolando picking, dual-picked melodic lines ▶ LH and RH damping techniques ▶ Controlled bends (including whole chords) ▶ Short instrumental solos and ad lib bars
5	48	2-3½	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Several passages of moderate rhythmic complexity ▶ A wide variety of dynamics, articulation, phrasing and tone colour ▶ Harmonics ▶ A range of guitar effects ▶ More extended solo sections and ad lib bars
6	64	2½-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ An upfront guitar solo of at least 8 bars ▶ Varied articulation e.g. staccato; legato; tenuto; accents ▶ Double and triple stopping ▶ String skipping, position shifts, rhythmic trills, tremolo picking ▶ A range of bends which may include full bends, ½ tone bends, grace note bends, pre-bends and rhythmic bends
7	64	2½-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Wide leaps, moving between chords and single notes; fast tempi, passages with extended double stops 3rds/5ths/6ths/octaves ▶ Complex techniques e.g. chord bends; fretting hand legato; various picking approaches ▶ Playing independent lines ▶ Longer guitar solos e.g. 12-16 bars in length ▶ Frequent opportunities for extemporisation in ad libs and breaks
8	80	2½-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ A wide range of physical and expressive techniques ▶ Guitar parts which require agility and advanced RH/LH co-ordination ▶ Advanced damping techniques in both hands ▶ Tapping techniques including single strings and double stops ▶ Natural, artificial, and pinched harmonics ▶ A variety of guitar effects