Changes to Recorded Exam mark distributions

Frequently asked questions | Effective 1 September 2026

These answers explain what is changing from 1 September 2026, what is staying the same, and what you need to do.

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What is changing?

From 00:00 (midnight) UK time on 1 September 2026, several Digital Recorded Exams submitted from this point, will be marked using an updated mark distribution. The mark distribution is the way the total of 100 marks is shared across the different parts of the exam.

What is staying the same?

There are no changes to the content, assessment components, technical requirements or structure of these exams. What you prepare and perform stays the same. The only change is how the marks are distributed across the parts of the exam.

Which subjects are affected?

Recorded Exams (graded): Brass, Classical Guitar, Percussion, Piano, Classical Singing, Strings & Harp, Woodwind, Ukulele, Electric Guitar and Pop Vocals.

Recorded Recital Exams: Brass, Classical Guitar, Percussion, Piano, Classical Singing, Pop Vocals, Strings & Harp and Woodwind.

When does the change take effect?

The new schemes apply to any Digital Recorded Exam submitted from 00:00 (midnight) UK time on 1 September 2026. The cut-off is based on UK time, so if you are outside the UK, please check the equivalent local time when planning your entry.

Can you be clear about what you mean when you say ‘submitted’?

There are three stages to processing a Digital Recorded Exam.

1. **Entry**: The point when you book and pay your entry fee for a Digital Recorded Exam.
2. **Submission**: When you upload your video recording and any required supporting documents to our digital exams platform.
3. **Marking**: When an LCME examiner assesses your submission.

When we say ‘submitted’, this refers to the submission stage above (stage 2).

For example, if you enter an exam and pay your fee on 31 August 2026 and then submit your exam on the same day, you will be marked under the current mark distribution scheme as your submission was received before midnight (00:00) UK time on 1 September 2026.

Alternatively, if you enter an exam and pay your fee on 31 August but submit your exam after midnight (00:00) UK time on 1 September 2026, you will be marked using the updated mark distributions scheme.

Will exams I submit before 1 September 2026 be affected?

No. There is no overlap between the schemes. Exams submitted before midnight UK time on 1 September 2026 will be marked using the current schemes. Exams submitted from that point onwards will be marked using the new schemes.

Do I need to change how I prepare?

The requirements themselves are not changing, only how marks are allocated across the exam. The updated requirements will be published on the LCME website (on this page) on 1 September 2026, and we recommend reviewing them before entering exams from that date. You can also review updated mark distributions in the tables below.

Why is LCME making this change?

- To give more weight to performance, which is the main focus of these exams, while keeping the supporting parts in proportion.
- To help ensure our qualifications and assessments remain reliable and valid, from both a practical and a regulatory standpoint.

How do I read the new mark schemes?

Each exam is divided into parts, and each part is worth a number of marks. The figures show how the marks are shared across those parts.

For example, 15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10 means Technical Work is worth 15 marks, Piece 1 is worth 25 marks, Piece 2 is worth 25 marks, Piece 3 is worth 25 marks and the Discussion is worth 10 marks — giving a total of 100 marks. The parts vary between subjects, so some exams show four figures rather than five; the order always follows the structure of that subject's exam.

What are the new mark schemes for each subject?

The first table covers the standard graded Recorded Exams; the second table (on the next page) covers Recorded Recital Exams. Each figure is the marks for one part of the exam, shown in the order it appears in that subject's exam, for both the current and the new scheme.

Recorded Exams (graded)

Subject	Current mark scheme	New mark scheme
Brass	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Classical Guitar	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Percussion	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Piano	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Classical Singing	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Strings & Harp	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Woodwind	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10
Ukulele (Grades 1–5)	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	25 / 25 / 25 / 15 / 10
Ukulele (Grades 6–8)	40 / 20 / 20 / 20	50 / 25 / 15 / 10
Electric Guitar (Grades Step–5)	20 / 30 / 30 / 20	20 / 35 / 35 / 10
Electric Guitar (Grades 6–8)	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 10 / 25
Pop Vocals (Grades 1–2)	20 / 30 / 30 / 20	20 / 35 / 35 / 10
Pop Vocals (Grades 3–8)	20 / 30 / 30 / 20	15 / 25 / 25 / 25 / 10

Recorded Recital Exams

New recital scheme applies when discussion is selected.

Subject	Current mark scheme	New mark scheme
Brass	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Classical Guitar	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Percussion	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Piano	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Classical Singing	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Pop Vocals (Grades 1-3)	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Strings & Harp	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12
Woodwind	20 / 20 / 20 / 20 / 20	22 / 22 / 22 / 22 / 12

Where can I find the new requirements?

The updated requirements will be published on our Recorded Exams page on 1 September 2026.

Who do I contact if I have a question?

Please contact us here and our team will be happy to help.