



AWVT Audio Grade Framework

Short committee briefing document

1 Purpose

This document summarises the proposed AWVT Grade 1-8 framework for Audio Technician development. It is intended for trainers, church sound practitioners, educators and potential Grade Committee members who need a concise overview before reviewing the full working templates.

The framework assumes that the basic audio system is installed, connected, safe and working. The learner may operate or add items to the system, but is not being assessed on rigging, suspended loads, electrical installation or stage-crew tasks.

2 The AWVT principle

AWVT exists to create a commonly understood measure of competence for volunteer technicians. It does not replace existing training providers. Instead, it defines the standard that training can be mapped against.

Each grade should define the Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours required at that grade, how those requirements will be assessed, and what prior learning must already have been achieved.

3 Why eight grades?

Traditional Level 1-3 occupational structures are too broad for volunteer technical ministry and amateur venue contexts. The Grade 1-8 model allows smaller, more realistic steps from safe assisted participation through to pre-professional competence.

| Grade | Competence layer | Indicative audio scope |
|-------|---|--|
| 1 | Safe assisted participation | Recognise basic system elements; follow instructions; handle cables and microphones safely; mute/unmute only when instructed; report problems. |
| 2 | Routine operation of a known system | Follow a checklist; understand simple signal flow; operate fader, mute, gain and basic metering; manage speech or playback under guidance. |
| 3 | Independent operation of a simple service/event | Run a small predictable service; set basic gain; manage speech, playback and simple music; perform simple no-sound fault checks. |
| 4 | Controlled mixing and first-level problem solving | Use high-pass filters and simple EQ; reduce obvious feedback risks; understand microphone directionality; create simple monitor/foldback mixes. |
| 5 | Confident service/event technician | Manage a fuller live service; support multiple speakers, singers and musicians; use groups/scenes where available; provide a useful livestream/broadcast feed. |
| 6 | Advanced volunteer / small-system lead | Diagnose recurring faults; manage wireless and IEM basics; apply deeper EQ/dynamics awareness; train junior volunteers; improve local procedures. |



| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 7 | Senior technician / system optimisation | Understand delay, phase, coverage, zones and routing; support complex events; advise on practical system improvements; lead teams. |
| 8 | Pre-professional / apprenticeship bridge | Evaluate systems against requirements; interpret specifications; document recommendations; integrate audio with video/broadcast/networked systems; mentor others. |

4 How each grade document should be used

- Agree the boundary between this grade and the grades immediately below and above it.
- Capture Knowledge as what the learner must understand or know before acting responsibly.
- Capture Skills as what the learner must be able to do repeatedly in a real or realistic audio context.
- Capture Behaviours as the manner in which the learner serves, communicates, takes responsibility and responds under pressure.
- Define assessment methods that test actual competence, not merely attendance at training or recall of facts.
- Identify prerequisites so advanced topics do not appear before the necessary foundation has been taught and assessed.
- Include an educational professional on the Grade Committee to help convert expert knowledge into clear outcomes and valid assessment criteria.

5 Assessment thinking and source material

The ABRSM comparison is that grades provide a shared reference point. A grade should indicate a broad level of competence that others can understand, while still allowing tutors and assessors to judge suitability for a particular local context.

Assessment should support Pass, Merit and Distinction style judgement: Pass means the learner is safe and competent at the stated level; Merit indicates more consistent control and understanding; Distinction indicates confident, assured and adaptable performance within the grade scope.

Source material such as the Yamaha Sound Reinforcement Handbook, Yamaha Audioversity, manufacturer training, church sound training and practical experience should be used as topic evidence. The AWVT standard should remain independent and express topics in non-proprietary language. Where advanced material assumes prior knowledge, that prior knowledge should be captured at a lower grade.

Recommended download set and call to action

| Document | Audience | Purpose |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|
| One-page summary | Public/event handout | Introduces AWVT and invites participation. |
| Audio Grade Framework | Short briefing | Explains grade layers and committee use. |
| Full Grade Committee Pack | Working documents | Contains the guide and eight grade-specific documents for detailed review and population. |

AWVT is seeking contributors to help review, test and populate the Audio Grade 1-8 framework. Contributors may support one grade, one topic area, assessment design, pilot delivery, or the wider quality-assurance process.

Contact: info@awvt.org | Website: www.awvt.org | Proposed document page: www.awvt.org/standards