

ISO15919 within the Sikh Sacred Music Exams

Who we are

MANGALPREET SINGH



Pharmacist and Academic

Subject specialisms: Public Health, Pharmacy Law and Prescribing

Learning to play Dillruba

Serving on the core SSM Curriculum Review Panel

ANMOL PATRAI



Taus student of Dr. Harjinder Singh Lallie OBE

BSc. Mathematics and Philosophy Graduate from Warwick University

Trainee Paraplanner at an IFA

Leading the vision

DR. HARJINDER SINGH LALLIE OBE



University Reader – Cyber Security

Transformed a decade-long vision into a fully accredited and internationally recognised Sikh music syllabus

Spearheaded the entire SSM examination framework

Integrated pedagogical principles to support structured progression

Led international collaboration with a diverse panel of world-class musicians and experts

Awarded an OBE in recognition of this work

Context: Sikh Sacred Music Exams

The Challenge

- Traditional Sikh instruments at risk of decline
- Western instruments favoured - recognised grading systems already exists

The Response

- Accredited exams for Sikh Sacred Music
- Recognised qualifications that preserve Sikh musical heritage

The SSM Examination



Tanti Saaj

Indian classical stringed instruments



OFQUAL

Internationally accredited and recognised qualification



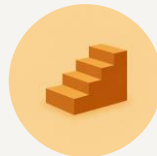
Exam Submission

Sit and submit exams from anywhere
No need to visit a test centre



MTB Awarding Body

Established provider of Western music exams, internationally



8 Graded Levels

Progressive structure plus pre-grade entry



UCAS Tariff Points

Grades 6, 7, and 8 contribute to UCAS tariff points

SSM Exam Components

25%

Technical

- Vocal melodic patterns (palta's)
- Instrumental demonstration
- Knowledge of taal (rhythmic cycles) – 10 / 12 / 14 / 16 beats

75%

Recital

- Two repertoire lists - A and B
- 3 compositions per list

Pedagogy: Standard Setting

The Process

- **Expert panel** of internationally renowned musicians convened
- Defined “**competency**” - the minimum a student must be able to demonstrate at each grade
- Technical and Recital elements benchmarked against pre-defined criteria – **rigour, consistency** and **defensible** assessment standards.
- Multiple review rounds to **calibrate** and agree syllabus
- **Assessment design** underpinned by established Western music exams – ensuring coherence with standards

Applied to SSM

- Panel assessed which compositions and technical elements belong at each grade
- Grading criteria: **composition length, tempo, and taal** complexity
- **Consistent** standards across Lists A and B to ensure parity
- Marking schemes **piloted** with student learners and designed to facilitate incremental mastery through **scaffolded progression** across all 8 grades
- Creation of **exemplar performances** to ensure examiners mark fairly and consistently in line with defined assessment criteria

Accessibility without compromise

USING ISO15919 TRANSLITERATION TO MAKE SIKH SACRED MUSIC
READABLE FOR ALL - WITHOUT LOSING AUTHENTIC GURMUKHI
PRONUNCIATION

ISO15919 – An Introduction

International Standard for romanisation of Indic Scripts

Uses diacritics to show vowel elongations and differentiate between hard and soft consonants

Relies on intermediary vowels

M	-	-	<u>n</u>	P	N	Ṣ	-	-	ṢN	ṢN	Ṣ
Si	ma	-	ra	-	t	nā	-	-	mu-	--	-

ੳ	ਅ	ੲ	ਸ	ਹ
u	a	e	s	h
ਕ	ਖ	ਗ	ਘ	ਙ
k	kh	g	gh	ṅ
ਚ	ਛ	ਜ	ਝ	ਞ
ch	čh	j	jh	ṇ
ਟ	ਠ	ਡ	ਢ	ਣ
ṭ	ṭh	ḍ	ḍh	ṇ
ਤ	ਥ	ਦ	ਧ	ਨ
t	th	d	dh	n
ਪ	ਫ	ਬ	ਭ	ਮ
p	ph	b	bh	m
ਯ	ਰ	ਲ	ਵ	ੜ
y	r	l	v	ṛ
ਆ	ਇ	ਈ	ਉ	ਊ
ā	i	ī	o	ū
ਏ	ਏ	ਸੋ	ਸੌ	ਅੰ
ē	ai	ō	au	ṁ ṁ *
ਅੰ	ਗੰ			
â	î			

* ṁ is used with words such as ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ and ਅੰਬਰੀਕ

Pronunciation

- Different schools and teachers may have slightly different pronunciation
- Specifically regarding words ending with a vowel

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ
Satiguru

ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ
Satiguri

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ
Satigur

Considerations made when Romanising

- What is most familiar and is the ISO really the standard?
- Discretionary changes for clarity
- Capitalisations
- The importance of getting it right for marking purposes

Collaborations and Moving Forward

- Khalis Foundation – helped with our initial transliterations and many will be familiar with Sikhi to the Max
- Kirtan Notation Project, Baljeet Singh, India – in collaboration to use ISO when developing his app
- Gurbani Kirtan App, Ranjeet Singh, California – App already exists to add compositions on but also wanting to incorporate ISO
- The ISO standard is already adopted elsewhere, e.g. the Bhaktivedanta Trust's publishing of the Bhagavad Gita – the most widely printed version

Questions