VGDA
Guitar Ensemble Graded Repertoire Criteria

Grade 1:

- Texture: Unison or two or three parts moving together
- Meter: Simple meters (2/4, 3/4 & 4/4)
- Key Signature: No key changes; up to two sharps; no flats
- Rhythm: Whole notes, half notes, quarter notes & eighth notes and rests; ties
- Right Hand: *i, m* free stroke and rest stroke; *p* free stroke and rest stroke
- Left Hand: Emphasis on fingered notes in first position, simple chords (treble strings)
- Note Reading: All strings first position, limited or no accidentals
- Special Techniques: Simple guitar percussion techniques

Grade 2: Same criteria from Grade 1 can be used with these additions:

- Texture: Homophonic; limited use of polyphony
- Meter: Simple meters (2/4, 3/4 & 4/4)
- Key Signature: Relative modulation not requiring new key signature; up to three sharps; up to one flat
- Rhythmic: Dotted half, dotted quarter notes and rests
- Right Hand: Simple arpeggios, e.g. *p, i, m*
- Left Hand: Minimal use of simple slur techniques (ascending and/or descending), first position chords
- Note Reading: All six strings (first position), some accidentals
- Extended Techniques: Natural Harmonics, introduction to Bartok pizzicato, introduction to drop D tuning

Grade 3: Same criteria as Grades 1 and 2 can be used with these additions:

- Texture: Expanded use of polyphony
- Meter: Compound Duple (6/8), Cut time (2/2); up to one change in meter
- Key Signature: Up to one key signature change; up to four sharps; up to two flats
- Rhythm: Sixteenth notes and rests, all dotted rhythms, eighth notes triplets, simple ostinato, syncopation
- Right Hand: More complex arpeggios, e.g. *p, i, m, a*
- Left Hand: Few ascending and/or descending slur techniques, introduction to full barre chords, limited shifts
- Note Reading: Second position with limited playing in upper positions; introduction to barre position playing, full complement of accidentals, reading diads in first position.
- Extended Techniques   Pizzicato, tamboura, limited use of rasgueado technique

Grade 4: Same as criteria as Grades 1, 2 and 3 can be used with these additions:

- Texture: Polyphony
- Meter: Compound Triple (9/8), Compound Quadruple (12/8); limited use of meter change
- Key Signature: Multiple Key Changes possible; up to five sharps; up three flats
- Rhythm: More complex varied syncopations, quarter note triplets
- Right Hand: More complex arpeggio sequences; Arpeggios using two notes together e.g. p/a, m, i, m
- Left Hand: Advancing ascending and descending slur and barre techniques, expanded use of shifting
- Note Reading: Fifth position, reading diads in upper position and triads or more in first position
- Extended Techniques: Expanded use of rasgueado techniques,

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Grade 5: Same as criteria as Grades 1, 2, 3 and 4 can be used with these additions:

- Texture: Polyphony, limited use polyrhythm, e.g. hemiola
- Meter: Consistent odd meter, e.g. 7/8 ; meter changes
- Key Signature: Any number of modulations possible; all keys possible
- Rhythm: Thirty-second notes and rests, more complex varied syncopations; more complex tuplets
- Right Hand: Varied complex arpeggios with repeated finger, e.g. *p, p, i, m, a, m, i, p*
- Left Hand: Advancing barre techniques, multiple slurs in barre position, ornamentation
- Note Reading: Ninth position
- Extended Techniques: Artificial harmonics

Grade 6: Same as criteria as Grades 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 can be used with these additions:

- Texture: Polyphonic, polyrhythmic
- Meter: Odd meters, all possible, multiple meter changes
- Key Signature: Any number of modulations possible; all keys possible
- Rhythm: All criteria listed above and complex syncopation
- Right Hand: All Right Hand techniques
- Left Hand: All barre techniques, all slur techniques, all ornamentation
- Note Reading: All positions
- Extended Techniques: Alternate Tunings

Note: *If the selection has multiple part options with varied level criteria, at least 2 parts must be in the appropriate overall level to satisfy the difficulty level for that grade. The additional parts must be within two grade levels of the overall difficulty level.*