



Exam Prep on the Road Guidelines

Seminar Description

- 1-1/2 days of hands-on practice for RPT tuning and technical exams.
- Instruction, demonstration and guidance from certified examiners and expert RPT instructors.
- Includes an overview of exam skills and study tips.
- Take the written exam during the seminar.

Participants receive personal feedback on their readiness for the RPT exams that will help them determine if there are skills that may require more instruction or practice on their part. At the end of the seminar, they will also have a better understanding of the exam process, and be able to identify other resources available to help with exam preparation.

The purpose of the Exam Prep Seminar is to help participants determine how ready they are to take the exams and to hone the final skills they lack. The role of the key staff members is to facilitate learning by leading participants through the skills using explanation, demonstration and guided practice. We strive to ensure that every participant leaves the seminar with improved skills and a plan for what they still need to do to prepare for the exams.

Format

The Exam Prep on the Road format is based on Associate Exam Prep Seminars hosted at the Home Office for several years and adapted from a model developed in Texas. See the attached sample schedule. Participants are divided into small groups that rotate among four 90-minute stations: vertical regulation, grand regulation, repairs and tuning. Each station is led by an examiner (with the exception of two CTEs staffing the tuning station), and local RPT help, if available. Extra helpers are especially beneficial in the tech stations. The technical stations focus on skills like stringing, key rebushing, grand shank rebushing and vertical shank replacement or other skills examiners find potential examinees have more trouble with on exams. On the morning of the second half-day, all four stations are open and participants can go back to any or all of the stations for as long as they like to practice or ask questions. They also have an opportunity at this time to take the written exam.

The tuning station is organized a little differently and it requires two examiners. One demonstrates and discusses some tips for preparing for the exam with the group while the other examiner takes one student at a time into a different room for a "5-minute Tuning Test."

Also included in the schedule are two large group sessions of about 60-90 minutes each. The topics are not set, but one typically focuses on tuning skills and the second on how the exams work. One is held in the evening of the full day and the other ends the seminar on the second day.

Student Requirements

The Exam Prep on the Road Seminar is open to Associate members of the Piano Technicians Guild. Space is available for a maximum of 24 students (six per station.)

Student Assessment and CEUs

Students who attend both days and participate in all the activities for all four stations receive a certificate of completion for 14 clock hours of continuing education credit. The Piano Technicians Guild maintains permanent records of student activity for continuing education events in a master database.

Seminar Location

The ideal location would include space with separate rooms for the four stations with a smaller room for the individual tuning sessions. If necessary, the three technical stations can be arranged in a large space where tables and chairs can be arranged in different areas of the room. Dividers would be ideal to reduce noise and distraction. The tuning station should be in a separate room large enough to hold a grand piano and six-eight people. The second tuning room needs to be large enough to accommodate a grand or vertical piano and two people. If meals are served onsite, arrangements will need to be made to have a serving area and space for participants to eat. There are also two group sessions, so the space will need to be configured so that the group can meet together. Some of the group sessions may also require audio-visual and audio equipment for presentations. Music stores, schools and churches are all good options for this type of event. Every attempt should be made to secure a location that does not require a rental fee or any other cost (i.e. moving or renting pianos, tables and chairs.)

Staffing

Each station is led by a certified examiner. Examiners should be experienced presenters who have good communication skills and previous experience with exam readiness activities.

Volunteers are a welcome addition to the core staff by assisting examiners in providing coaching and feedback for students, and helping with station preparation and clean up. Volunteers should be RPTs who have been oriented to the seminar format and skills for the station(s) where they will be working.

The Onsite Coordinator is a key position and essential to the smooth operation of the seminar. The Onsite Coordinator works directly with the Education Manager at the Home Office to organize the logistics for the event and develop a high quality learning environment for students and staff. The Onsite Coordinator helps identify possible locations for the seminar, lodging, food service and transportation, and manages the logistics of the event, including the volunteer schedule, before, during and after the seminar. The Onsite Coordinator should also help to identify local sources for equipment and supplies, and request any additional items (action models, jigs, etc.) from the Home Office.

Station Details

Repair Station

Staff: One TEC. If available, RPT volunteers who have been oriented to format and skills.

Supplies: One jig set per participant; misc. replacement parts; one set PACE lesson books

Setup: Table and chairs set up in a separate area.

Vertical Station

Staff: One TEC. If available, RPT volunteers who have been oriented to format and skills.

Supplies: One vertical action per participant; misc. replacement parts

Setup: Table and chairs set up in a separate area.

Grand Station

Staff: One TEC. If available, RPT volunteers who have been oriented to format and skills.

Supplies: One grand action per participant; misc. replacement parts

Setup: Table and chairs set up in a separate area.

Tuning Station

Staff: Two CTEs. One will lead a small group session while the other CTE works with participants individually in a separate room on the “5-Minute Tuning Test.”

Supplies: One grand piano, an additional grand or vertical in a separate room

Setup: Two rooms separated from the technical station area.

Lodging

The ideal hotel is within close proximity of the seminar location and is able to accommodate both staff and participants. Lodging with free breakfast, internet and parking are preferred. The Onsite Coordinator works with the Education Manager to identify possible sites. PTG should negotiate discounted room rates, if possible.

Food Service

Lunch is provided on the first full day for all participants and staff. This is included in the registration fee. Because locations differ, snacks, drinks and dinner may also need to be included and budgeted accordingly and expenses taken into account when setting the seminar fee. The Onsite Coordinator will assist in finding restaurants and caterers. Every attempt will be made to accommodate special dietary needs.

Transportation

Transportation to and from the seminar location is generally the responsibility of the students, but the Onsite Coordinator may be able to help students carpool between the hotel and the seminar location. A few weeks before the event, students will be contacted to find out what their transportation arrangements are and to see if they need a ride or are willing to provide one. Onsite Coordinators should check with local chapter members to see if there are volunteers willing to help with transportation.

Registration materials will include information about travel options to the seminar city and ground transportation from airports or train stations to the hotel and seminar location.

Registration Fee

Fees are set based on projected expenses for each individual location. Expenses will vary greatly based on the availability of examiners, location, number of students, lodging, food and transportation expenses, etc. Fees for different events should be within a similar range for the sake of fairness and consistency.

Staff Compensation

Reimbursement for travel and lodging are provided for the examiners and the Onsite Coordinator, if required. They also receive a per diem for the two days of the seminar and will be reimbursed for any additional expenses incurred for pre-approved supply, equipment or other seminar-related purchases.

Course Evaluation

Students will have an opportunity at the end of the seminar to evaluate content, instructors, supplies and materials, teaching strategies, logistics and the registration process. A summary of the results is shared with instructors and used to plan future events. Seminar staff are also asked to evaluate their individual stations or activities and the overall event.

Support

All students and staff receive a directory of all who participated in the event, and are encouraged to contact examiners if they have further questions. Students may opt out of being listed in the seminar directory. Each participant is invited to participate in the Exam Prep on the Road discussion group at my.ptg.org. Exam information and study materials will be available at the seminar along with help in finding examiners and exam sites. Seminar staff are also encouraged to provide ongoing support to students by participating in the my.ptg.org discussion group.

After the Seminar

Upon completion of the seminar, any equipment and supplies borrowed for the seminar should be properly packaged and returned. A student check-in list and student evaluations should be returned to the Home Office. The Onsite Coordinator and other staff will also be asked for their feedback on the seminar as an aid for future planning. Thank you notes should also go out to staff, volunteers, contacts at the training site and any others who helped support the event.

Optional Local Features

Because each seminar site will be different, the schedule may be changed to accommodate site availability, layout and other local factors. There may also be opportunities to add optional features that are separate from the Exam Prep on the Road Seminar format. These might include other exam opportunities, individual tutoring, sessions covering additional topics not directly related to exam preparation, etc. These activities should be scheduled so that they do not interfere with the 1-1/2 day format of the Exam Prep on the Road Seminar. Promotional literature must clearly state that these are extra features and any fees associated with participating in them are in addition to the basic seminar fee.

Sample Exam Prep on the Road Schedule

Day One

8:00 - 8:30 a.m.	Opening Session & Orientation			
	<i>Grand Assembly</i>	<i>Vertical Assembly</i>	<i>Repairs</i>	<i>Tuning</i>
8:30 - 10:00 a.m.	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
10:00 - 10:15 a.m.	Break			
10:15 - 11:45 a.m.	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 1
Noon	Lunch – provided			
1:15 - 2:45 p.m.	Group 3	Group 4	Group 1	Group 2
2:45 - 3:00 p.m.	Break			
3:00 - 4:45 p.m.	Group 4	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
4:45 - 6:30 p.m.	Dinner			
6:30- 8:00 p.m.	All - Tuning Lecture			

Day Two

8:00 a.m.	Opening Session			
8:15 -10:15 a.m. Your choice of station(s)	Grand Regulation	Vertical Regulation	Repairs	Tuning
10:15 – 10:30 a.m.	Break			
10:30 - Noon	All - Presentation/Forum			

PTG Seminar Task List

Task	Details	Done
Class Title	RPT Exam Prep Seminar	
Class Description	Course outline & tool list	
Date	1-1/2 days; usually a weekend	
Location	Music store, church, school	
Staff	3 TECs - 2 CTEs - Logistics - Onsite coordinator and Home Office coordinator RPT volunteers - assist in stations; must be oriented to format and skills	
Registration Cost	Based on projected expenses for individual sites	
Registration Method	Phone, fax, mail	
Confirmation packet - contents - students	Flyer with schedule, location airport transportation and hotel info, tool list	
Daily Schedule	Day One <i>8 a.m. - 5 p.m. (with lunch break)</i> Work stations <i>7 - 8:30 p.m. - Evening session</i> Day Two <i>8 a.m. - noon</i> Work stations & written exam	
Prerequisite(s)	Associate member	
Min/Max # students	16/24	
Promotional Plan	Target: all Associate members <input type="checkbox"/> Journal <input type="checkbox"/> Blast email <input type="checkbox"/> LeaderLetter <input type="checkbox"/> RVP news	
AV Equipment Needed	LCD Projector	
Pianos Needed	One grand and additional grand or vertical	

Models/Jigs Needed	One per student, misc. extra parts
Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Test blow device
Equipment/Supplies	<input type="checkbox"/> PACE Lesson Plan Set
Handouts/Student Supplies Needed	Paper, pencils, pens, name tags 5-minute tuning test forms 5 clipboards, office supplies (stapler, paper clips, pencils) RPT exam booklets, written exam score forms, reclassification forms, exam keys
Lodging – Students	
Lodging – Staff	
Transportation – Students	
Transportation – Instructor(s)	
Meals/Snacks	Day One lunch? Day One dinner? (Depends on availability of local options) Break drinks and food?
Communication - Students	<input type="checkbox"/> Mail confirmation packets <input type="checkbox"/> Email requests for travel plans & with additional info for students
Communication – Staff	<input type="checkbox"/> Travel and hotel info <input type="checkbox"/> Reimbursement forms <input type="checkbox"/> Class assignments <input type="checkbox"/> Student info
Signage	PTG table drape
Name Tags & Participant Rosters	Clip on badges, class and instructor contact list
Feedback/ Evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographs <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation form <input type="checkbox"/> Students – certificates