

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2013

GCE Music 6MU01
Performing Music

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The overall standard of submissions for this unit in 2013 was consistent with that heard in recent years, and, once again, included a number of outstanding performances at this level. Very few performances were inadequate but some submissions were under-length. Centres are reminded that five to six minutes of music is required for this unit, not including tuning and gaps between pieces. Centres are also reminded that the performance must be continuous and unedited.

Performance from score / Improvisation

Even more performances than in previous years were from score, with the number of improvisations and, to a greater extent, ensembles, declining once again this year. There were, however, some excellent examples of improvisation this year.

Instruments

The most popular instruments this year were, once again, piano, voice, and guitar. Many moderators commented on a significant general improvement in the standard of many electric guitar submissions and also on the weaker standard of many vocal performances (these weaknesses often not reflected in centre marks).

Difficulty Levels

Most performances were above the Standard Level (Grade 5), with More Difficult (Grade 6) being the most common difficulty level. Performances below Standard Level were uncommon. Centres are reminded that the Edexcel Difficulty Level Booklet is available on the website.

Assessment criteria

The application of the assessment criteria by teacher examiners was generally sound, if occasionally a little generous, particularly in placing performances in the top two holistic bands that did not merit such high marks. Whilst the vast majority of teacher examiner marks were fair, a number over-rewarded their candidates' work. This was most often the case with assessment criteria 1, 4, and/or 5. The number of centres over-rewarding candidates' submissions once again appeared to be slightly fewer this year.

It is wise for centres to remember that moderation is based on the recording alone, not a live performance. Bearing this in mind it is advisable that centres assess the recording of each candidate, rather than the live performance.

Presentation

Most centres took great care over the presentation of candidates' work. Most recordings were of very good quality, well balanced, and usually submitted on CD. The following points, however, should be addressed by some centres:

- The work of each candidate should be made available on a separate CD
- The MAS1 form should be photocopied as a 4 page A3 booklet, and not stapled or loose A4 sheets.

This will make the process of moderation considerably smoother.

Accompaniments

A small number of performances were compromised, as in previous years, by poor accompaniments that did not support the work of the candidate. Where a backing track is used as an accompaniment, centres should endeavour, where possible, to ensure that there are no audible metronome clicks once the performance has begun.

Contact with centres

When moderators had to contact centres because of a problem, such as a missing score, for example, the response was almost always swift and helpful, which greatly aided the moderation process.

Scores

Centres are reminded that scores submitted must have sufficient detail for a fair assessment to be made, particularly regarding accuracy of pitch and rhythm. When inadequate scores were submitted, centres were contacted to provide a suitable replacement. Reference recordings cannot be submitted in lieu of a score for this unit.

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