

Moderators' Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2014

Pearson Edexcel GCE in Music
6MU01 Performing Music

Edexcel and BTEC Qualifications

Edexcel and BTEC qualifications are awarded by Pearson, the UK's largest awarding body. We provide a wide range of qualifications including academic, vocational, occupational and specific programmes for employers. For further information visit our qualifications websites at www.edexcel.com or www.btec.co.uk. Alternatively, you can get in touch with us using the details on our contact us page at www.edexcel.com/contactus.

Pearson: helping people progress, everywhere

Pearson aspires to be the world's leading learning company. Our aim is to help everyone progress in their lives through education. We believe in every kind of learning, for all kinds of people, wherever they are in the world. We've been involved in education for over 150 years, and by working across 70 countries, in 100 languages, we have built an international reputation for our commitment to high standards and raising achievement through innovation in education. Find out more about how we can help you and your students at: www.pearson.com/uk

Summer 2014

Publications Code US039564

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2014

General Introduction

The overall standard of submissions for this unit in 2014 was generally slightly higher than in recent years. There were, as ever, a number of outstanding performances. Very few performances were inadequate but some submissions were penalised for being 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. There were, however, some excellent examples of improvisation and ensemble performances this year.

There were a few performances this year that were neither from score or an improvisation: for example, a piece learnt aurally which did not match a printed score. These were often submitted as improvisations, which they are not. They should be assessed against the accuracy of the printed score.

Scores

There were a significant number of inadequate scores this year. A detailed score must always be provided for assessment and moderation of performance from a score. 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.

Instruments

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

A few candidates indicated on the MAS1 form that they wished to be assessed on two instruments simultaneously (ie. voice and piano, when they are accompanying themselves). There is no means of doing this on this specification and they must choose which instrument is to be assessed (ie. voice or piano).

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.

Difficulty Levels for Improvisations should take into account the whole performance, not just the difficulty of the stimulus.

Assessment criteria

The application of the assessment criteria by teacher examiners was generally sound. Whilst the vast majority of teacher examiner marks were fair, a number over rewarded their candidates' work, and a few under rewarded candidates.

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.

A number of candidates performing music in a contemporary popular style used a very limited dynamic range, denying access to the highest marks in criterion five.

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 CD should be properly formatted to play on audio equipment, not just a computer
- 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.

Grade Boundaries

Grade boundaries for this, and all other papers, can be found on the website on this link:

<http://www.edexcel.com/iwantto/Pages/grade-boundaries.aspx>

