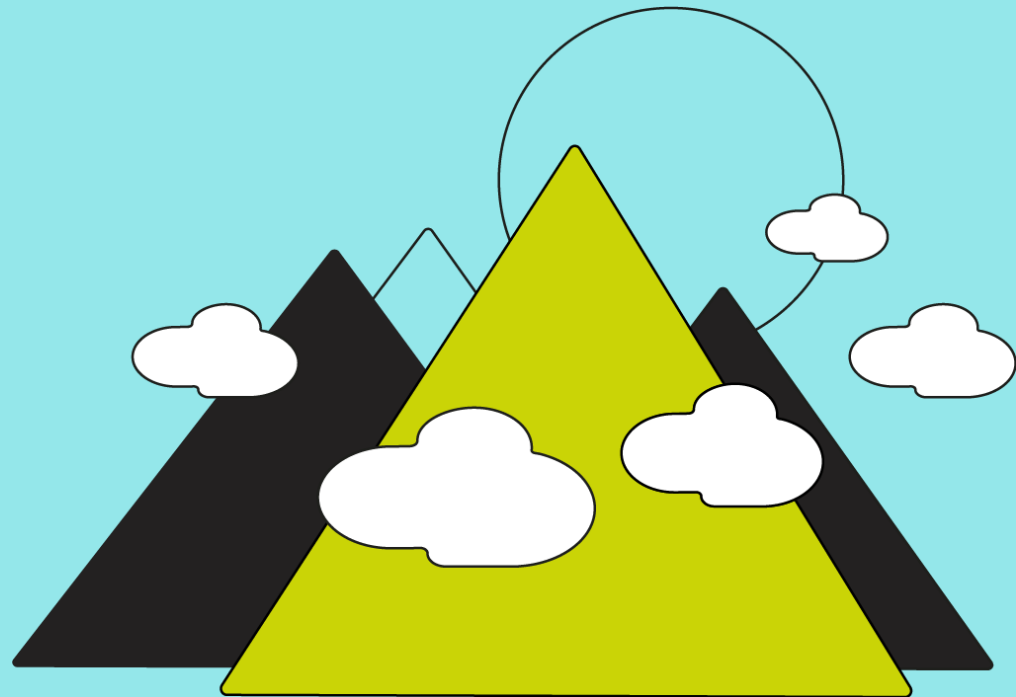


# Pearson Edexcel A level Music: Understanding the Performance Assessment Criteria

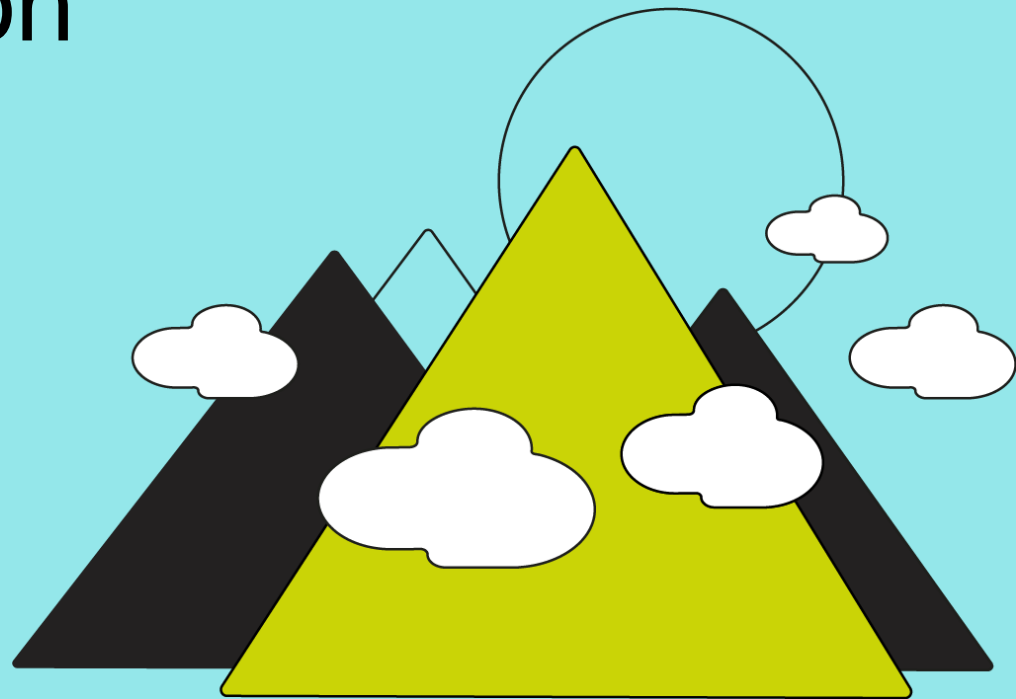




# Agenda

- Introduction
- The Specification
- The Assessment Criteria
- Understanding the Assessment Criteria
- Applying the Assessment Criteria
- Questions

# The specification



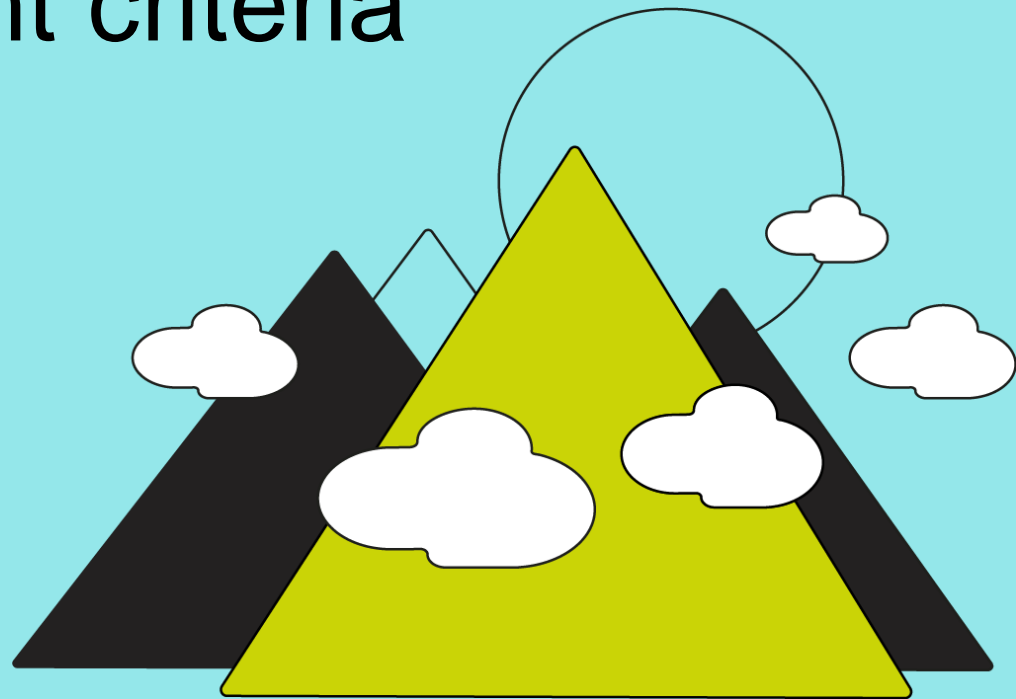


# The specification

**AO1 – To interpret musical ideas through performing, with technical and expressive control and an understanding of style and context.**

- 30% of GCE A Level Music
- Minimum length of recital 8 minutes
- Recording – Score – Performance Authentication Sheet
- All submitted by 15 May each year

# The assessment criteria



# The Assessment Criteria: Assessment Grid One

## **Assessment Grid One: Technical control – technique**

Technical control as heard in coordination, breath control, diction and/or pedalling

- Meeting the demands of the music
- Handling of sonority
- Intonation

# The Assessment Criteria: Assessment Grid Two

## **Assessment Grid Two: Technical control (Accuracy) and Expressive control (Fluency)**

- Accuracy of pitch
- Accuracy of rhythm
- Fluency – hesitations
- Fluency – omissions

# The Assessment Criteria: Assessment Grid Three

## **Assessment Grid Three: Expressive control, style and context**

- Consistency of tempo
- Use of dynamics, phrasing and articulation to shape the performance
- Communication

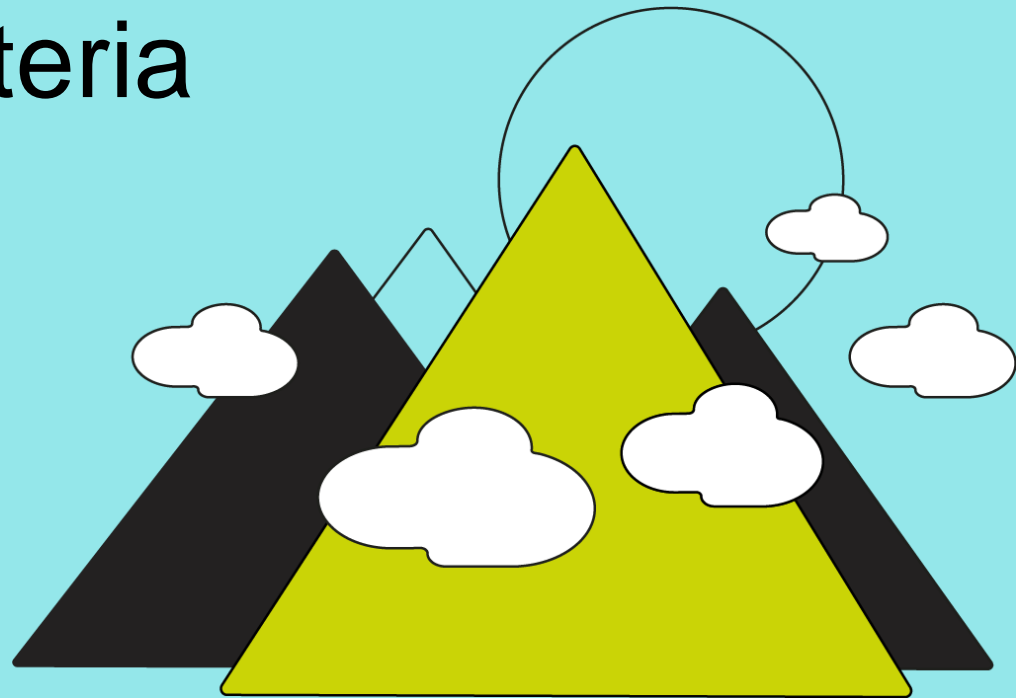




# Difficulty levels

- Less Difficult – grade 6 or lower
- Standard – grade 7
- More Difficult – grade 8 or higher

# Understanding the assessment criteria



# Understanding the assessment criteria

**Please note:** All examples used in this training were from the Summer 2022 examination series, where changes were made to NEA requirements to address the impact of COVID-19. These submissions may therefore not satisfy current requirements as outlined in the specification, whereby '*The total performance time across all pieces must be a minimum of eight minutes*'.

## Candidate 1

- Violin
- Mozart, Concerto No. 3 in G major, Movement I
- More Difficult (Grade 9)

# Understanding the assessment criteria

## Candidate 1 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- The performance demonstrates complete control of the instrument but, though the handling of sonority is mostly outstanding, there are moments where a tiny bit of harshness of tone creeps in.
- Standard of intonation is very high, with one or two momentary lapses
- Level 6, mark = **15**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- Entirely accurate pitch and rhythm
- Fluent and entirely free from hesitation or omission
- Level 6, mark = **16**

### Assessment Grid 3:

- Excellent level of consistency of the well-judged tempo and a very full response to all the demands of the second descriptor
- Some slight misjudgement of the style of the music
- Level 6, mark = **15**

Total Mark = **46/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **60/60**

# Understanding the assessment criteria

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## Candidate 2

- Piano
- Michael Nyman, The Heart Asks Pleasure First
- More Difficult (Grade 9)

# Understanding the assessment criteria

## Candidate 2 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- 'Several places where the demands of the music are beyond the current ability of the performer'
- 'Limited technical control', particularly as regards touch and pedalling
- Handling of sonority is limited, tone is less than acceptable – rather heavy and uneven
- Level 2, mark = **5**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- More than 'several noticeable and obtrusive errors'
- Fluency was often 'compromised', 'coherence often lost'
- Level 2, mark = **4**

### Assessment Grid 3:

- Inconsistency of tempo over most of the piece, again taking the Level down to 2, 'Limited'.
- Limited use of dynamics, phrasing and articulation, with little shaping  
Candidate struggles to communicate and where there is a degree of fluency the playing verges on the mechanical.
- Level 2, mark = **4**

Total Mark = **13/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **20/60**

# Understanding the assessment criteria

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## Candidate 3

- Cornet
- Wilkinson, Taurus – The Bull
- Standard (Grade 7)

# Understanding the assessment criteria

## Candidate 3 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- Several split notes and some lapses in intonation. The handling of sonority is somewhat mixed, with some well-tongued passages and some nice legato moments.
- Technique does not always seem to be adequate for producing all notes as promptly as needed. The level of the playing is not maintained sufficiently to be described as 'Assured' but is surely better than Level 3, 'Basic'. There are 'only one or two places where the demands of the music are beyond the current ability of the performer'.
- Level 4, mark = **10**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- There are some convincing moments and no more than one or two mildly obtrusive errors, or perhaps a few errors that have little or no impact on the performance.
- Level 4, mark = **10**

### Assessment Grid 3:

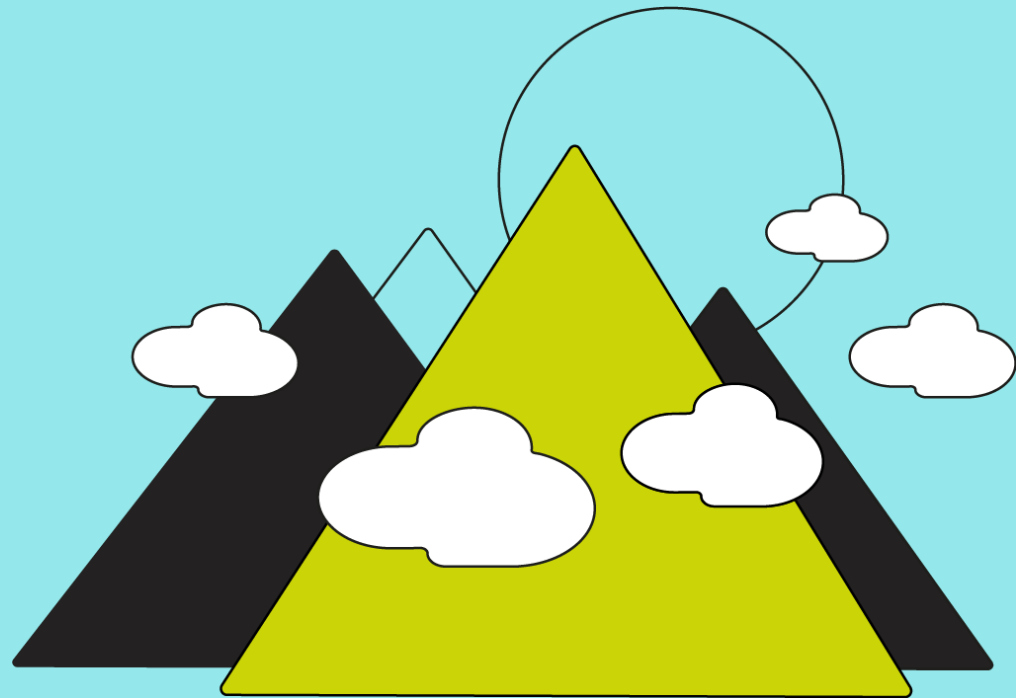
- Confident and engaging playing at times but this is not maintained throughout. Tempi vary a little bit, apart from the indicated tempo changes, though are mostly reasonably consistent.
- Not all dynamic markings are fully observed
- Articulation is varied appropriately for the most part but phrasing needs greater attention to shape the music appropriately.
- Level 4, mark = **10**

Total Mark = **30/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **38/60**



# Applying the assessment criteria



# Applying the assessment criteria

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## Candidate 4

- Acoustic guitar
- Ryan, 'Black is the Colour' and 'Auburn'
- More Difficult (Grade 8 overall)

# Applying the assessment criteria

## Candidate 4 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- There were only one or two places where the demands of the music were beyond the current ability of the performer.
- The technical control was generally convincing, almost worthy of a low mark at Level 5. The left hand finger work and the reasonably clear two-part texture in the second piece were both credit-worthy, though the quaver-two semiquavers figure in the later part of the piece was not always secure.
- On the third descriptor, there was little exploitation of tonal contrast.  
Level 4, mark = **11**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- Fluent 'despite the occasional very slight hesitation'. It could not be higher in view of the uncertain ending to the second piece.
- Level 5, mark = **12**

### Assessment Grid 3:

- Some minor inconsistencies of tempo and the general lack of dynamic interest.
- Level 4, mark = **10**

Total Mark = **33/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **50/60**

# Applying the assessment criteria

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## Candidate 5

- Drum Kit
- Benny Greb, 'Grebfruit'
- More Difficult (Grade 8)

# Applying the assessment criteria

## Candidate 5 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- It was agreed that the candidate had complete control of the instruments and that the playing reached Level 6. The lower of the two marks was awarded as the candidate might have found more opportunities to exploit tonal contrast.
- Level 6, mark = **15**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- High degree of accuracy and fluency was apparent but the improvised section, while assured, was somewhat lacking in the imaginative qualities needed to reach Level 6.
- Level 5, mark = **14**

### Assessment Grid 3:

- There was a good sense of ensemble and frequent use of dynamics and articulation to shape the performance. However, the playing fell a little short in the interpretative qualities needed to reach Level 6, so the mark again was at the top of Level 5.
- Level 5, mark = **14**

Total Mark = **43/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **60/60**

# Applying the assessment criteria

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## Candidate 6

- Voice
- 'I can do better than that' by J R Brown, 'Fairy Lullaby' by Amy Beach and 'Business Girls' by Madeleine Dring
- More difficult (Grade 8)

# Applying the assessment criteria

## Candidate 6 Assessment

### Assessment Grid 1:

- Both handling of sonority and intonation fell short of the Level 4 requirements ('good tone quality', 'generally good intonation') by quite a wide margin. The mark of 8 might have been lower had not there been quite a strong basic technique in other respects.
- Level 3, mark = **8**

### Assessment Grid 2:

- More than 'a few errors', particularly in the first song, but these were balanced by a performance that was better than 'mostly fluent'. Deviations from the written text may be appropriate in certain styles of music, particularly music theatre pieces, and this is of course acceptable. However, in this case, there was too great a degree of licence, with some notes omitted entirely, especially at phrase endings.
- Level 4, mark = **11**

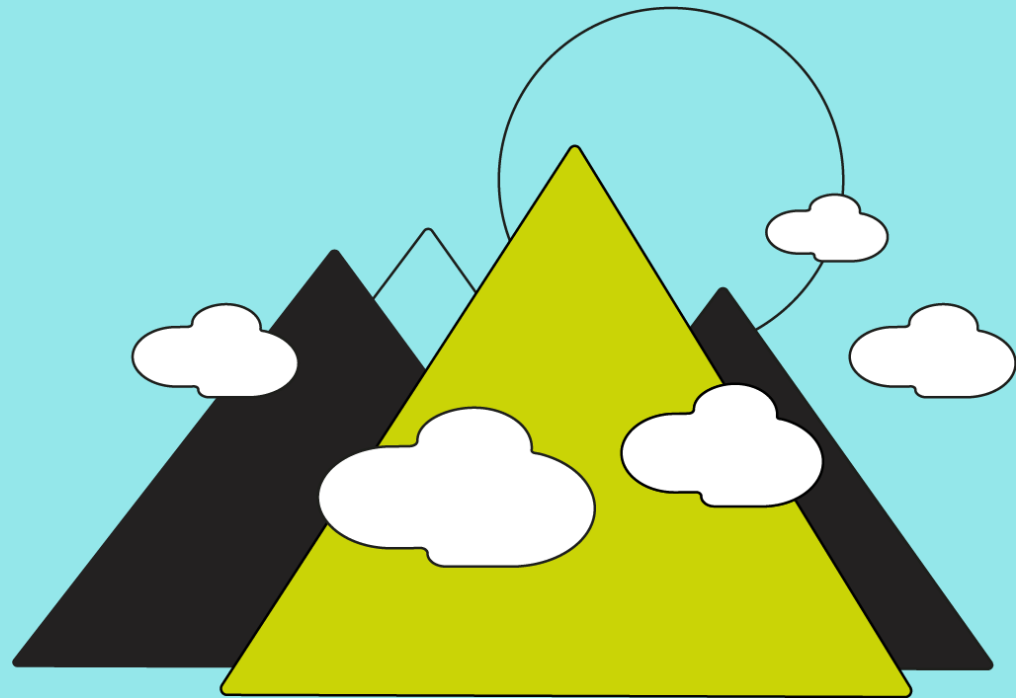
### Assessment Grid 3:

- The dynamic range was effective but the impression was weakened somewhat by a partial lack of tonal variety between the three songs.
- 'Fairly successful communication, with one or two less successful moments lower in the band'.
- Level 4, mark = **10**

Total Mark = **29/48**

Final Scaled Mark = **44/60**

# Questions







# Thank you

Thank you for your attendance at this training session today and for your active participation



Pearson