



BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Music Performance

**Guidance on Evidence Requirements for Unit 3
Ensemble Music Performance (20175K)**

This document provides guidance on arrangements for the practical and performance elements of externally assessed Unit 3 Ensemble Music Performance and should be read in conjunction with the Set Task Paper and Administrative Support Guide (ASG).

1. **Recording Procedures**
2. **Recording Requirements and Guidance by Activity**
3. **Use of Non-Assessed Performers**

1. Recording Procedures

All recordings must comply fully with the conditions stipulated in the Set Task Brief, Administrative Support Guidance (ASG) and specification. If requirements are not met, marking may be delayed as the work may need to be returned to the centre for resolution.

All activities must be conducted under **formal supervision**. Unsupervised activities or recordings made at home are strictly prohibited.

The video recording of each learner (Activities 2 and 4) and of the full ensemble (Activities 1 and 3) must be carried out by the supervising teacher/tutor under formal supervision requirements.

Choose an appropriate location for each recording. The recording area should be quiet, private, and free from disruption. Avoid unsuitable spaces such as store cupboards, corridors, or active classrooms. For Activity 3, where the presence of an audience is required, aim to provide a venue/location that gives learners a 'sense of occasion' and reflects the vocational nature of the qualification.

Centres must ensure that all learners clearly state their legal name and registration number at the beginning of each recorded activity.

All recordings should be a **wide-shot** and undertaken in a **single take** which must not be edited, amended or manipulated.

The camera should remain fixed and secure throughout each recording. Panning, camera movement and close-ups interfere with the ability to observe the candidates (especially the ensemble recordings) and could compromise the assessment evidence).

Recording of the ensemble performance (Activity 3) should comprise all three pieces recorded in a **single continuous take** which must not be paused or stopped.

Any editing, including the insertion of learner details or other identifiers is not permissible.

To ensure a smooth marking process, it is essential that all learner evidence is thoroughly reviewed prior to submission to ensure compliance, and any irregularities or concerns are reported to Pearson immediately through the Contact Us portal.

2. Recording Requirements and Guidance by Activity

Activity 1 – Ensemble Rehearsal

- Record no more than **two learners** per submission from the same rehearsal
- Staff should not appear or be audible during the recording.

Activities 2 and 4 – Individual Responses (Rehearsal Debrief and Stylistic Presentation)

- Use **wide-shot** and avoid close-ups of the candidate
- Ensure the space is free from obstructions in front of the candidate
- The recordings should be **continuous** and unedited – any false starts should be described in a covering note to the examiner
- Staff must not prompt the learner or ask questions during the recording
- In **Activity 4**, learners **must not use notes or digital devices**.

Activity 3 – Ensemble Performance

Camera Placement and Framing

- **Use a wide, central shot:** Position the camera so that all learners and their instruments are clearly visible in the frame. Avoid close-ups, panning, or moving the camera during the performance
- **Keep the camera fixed and secure:** The camera **must remain stationary** throughout the recording. Do not adjust, zoom, or move the camera once the performance begins
- **Check for obstructions:** Ensure that no objects (e.g. desks, music stands, equipment) block the view of any learner or instrument. Each learner should be unobstructed within the frame.

Lighting

- **Balance lighting conditions:** The performance area should be well-lit but avoid extremes. Dim lighting can make it difficult to see learners, while overly bright lighting can cause overexposure and loss of detail
- **Test visibility:** Before recording, check that all learners are clearly visible on camera. Adjust lighting as needed to avoid shadows or glare.

Audio Quality

- **Ensure balanced audio:** Position microphones (if available) to capture all musical parts equally. Avoid placing the microphone too close to one instrument or learner
- **Minimise background noise:** Choose a quiet environment and ask the audience present not to obstruct or interfere with sound quality
- **Test sound levels:** Do a short test recording to check for distortion, imbalance, or muffled audio. Adjust microphone placement or settings as needed.

3. Use of Non-Assessed Performers

The ensemble performance must comprise a minimum of **three** and a maximum of **eight** learners.

In cases where the cohort size does not meet the minimum requirement, centres **must seek authorisation** to include non-assessed performers up to the minimum number

required for the music ensemble performance assessment, i.e. three live musicians in total.

This request must be submitted **before** activities take place and via the 'Contact Us' section of the Pearson Qualifications website.

Where cohort sizes meet or exceed the minimum threshold of three registered learners, ensembles must be formed exclusively from registered learners within the cohort. In these cases, the inclusion of non-assessed participants is not permitted and therefore authorisation cannot be granted.

Centres are reminded that the inclusion of teaching staff as performers should only occur **under exceptional circumstances**. Such arrangements present challenges in demonstrating learner independence during rehearsal and performance, which may limit access to the full range of available marks.

All documentation relating to any authorisation granted for the inclusion of a non-assessed learner, must be submitted alongside the relevant learner work and uploaded with the assessed candidates' submission to the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) system.

