



Pearson

GCSE Music: An explanation of the assessment grids and new administrative features for Performance

Examiners will use the three new assessment criteria when assessing work submitted for Component 1: three grids replacing the two on the current Edexcel specification. These grids are published in the specifications.

Students are still expected to perform a solo and ensemble performance. Both performances are weighted the same (15% each).

The standard and length of performances are new to this specification.

The standard level of difficulty at GCSE is Grade 4, so the difficulty levels are:

- up to Grade 3 – less difficult
- Grade 4 – standard
- Grade 5 and above – more difficult.

The total performance time across both pieces must be a minimum of four minutes of music.

Each grid is marked out of 8, to create a raw mark out of 24. If the piece is 'less difficult' and has achieved full marks, it will remain at 24. For 'standard' and 'more difficult' pieces the raw mark would be scaled up, as indicated in the specification (page 20), to provide the final mark.

Grid one: Technical Control – Technique

This is new to this specification and focuses solely on the candidate's technical control of their instrument. It overtly assess the extent to which the piece(s) performed is/are within the ability of the performer. Features to consider will differ depending on the nature of the instrument. Examples of the technical elements considered are given in the introduction to this grid in the specification. This grid takes into account the difficulty of the music performed.

Grid two: Expression and interpretation

This grid is similar to the 'interpretation' criteria on the current Edexcel specification and focuses on the expressive elements (dynamics, tempo, etc) of the performance.

Grid three: Technical control (Accuracy) and Expressive control (Fluency)

This grid is similar to the 'accuracy' criteria on the current Edexcel specification and focuses on accuracy (of pitch and rhythm) and fluency (hesitations, omissions, breakdowns, etc.)

Each of the three assessment grids has four levels, and the descriptors for these use language that shows clear progression so that examiners can find the level most appropriate for each performance submitted.

All performances are still expected to be recorded live and unedited but the new specification contains some administrative differences that centres need to be aware of:

- Performances can only be recorded in the year of certification (year 11) and must reach the examiner by 15th May.
- The performance must be introduced with an announcement by the candidate themselves stating their name, candidate number, instrument and their role in the music performed.
- If students wish to accompany themselves, then the role to be assessed should be agreed between the teacher and student.
- The teacher must be present during the recordings.
- Recordings of performances must not be edited afterwards.
- Performances that are under-length will receive no marks (the stated performance length must be the length of the music performed, not including pauses between piece, tuning, announcements, etc.)
- If students wish to re-record a performance, they must re-record the whole performance (either solo or ensemble), not just part of it.

Full details of the requirements for Performance at GCSE can be found in the relevant Specification (page 8 – 21).