

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback Summer 2010

GCE

GCE Music (6MU04) Paper 01
Extended Performance

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6MU04 01 Extended Performance

The moderators wish to thank candidates and teachers for their efforts in preparing the performances, recordings and paperwork associated with this unit. The moderators also acknowledge the vital role played by instrumental and vocal teachers in preparing candidates for this examination. A significant number of outstanding performances was presented, showing an excellent technical command of the instrument/voice and a convincing sense of style. Only a small number of candidates achieved very low marks.

Marking

This paper was assessed by each centre and moderated by Edexcel. The assessment criteria were the same as those used for 6MU01 with the addition of a new criterion, Criterion 6; designed to assess the performance as a whole.

An extremely wide range of musical instruments and styles/genres was offered for assessment. In addition to work played on traditional instruments, moderators reported a large number of performances submitted in rock and pop idioms. A relatively small number of ensemble performances was submitted - these were usually in a rock/jazz idiom.

In general teacher-examiners utilised the new mark scheme very successfully. However, many centres experienced problems with the arithmetic required for this paper, with marks incorrectly added up or wrongly scaled. When mistakes were discovered in the moderation process, centres were informed and asked to alter their marks. Centres are urged to check their arithmetic and scaling thoroughly, to ensure that their candidates receive the marks they deserve.

From time to time substantial adjustments had to be made in the course of moderation. A wide range of marks was awarded in the moderation of the extended performance. Whilst there were many truly outstanding and impressive performances which fully justified the high marks awarded by centres, a certain number of centres awarded unjustifiably high marks to candidates whose work did not merit them.

Based on the evidence of the recording/programme submitted, moderators reported that marks awarded by teacher-examiners for Criterion 6 tended to be slightly higher than merited. If the teacher-examiner mark for Criterion 6 was one mark away from the recommended moderator mark, the teacher-examiner's mark was allowed to stand. However, if there was a significant discrepancy between the teacher-examiner's mark and the recommended moderator mark, an adjustment of one, two or at the most three marks was made.

Only a few candidates submitted work at 'standard'(S) level. The majority of candidates submitted work at the 'more difficult' (MD) or 'higher' (H) level. Pieces of Grade 7 standard qualified for the MD scaling, and pieces of Grade 8 standard qualified for the H scaling. The work of the few candidates who offered pieces at Grade 5 was assessed according to the mark scheme, but the top band of marks was not available. Some candidates overstretched themselves by playing pieces

that were too demanding technically or musically, and this resulted in lower marks than might otherwise have been the case.

Whilst most candidates were able to fulfil the 12-15 minute **playing time** requirement, a significant number of candidates presented **short submissions**. Centres are reminded that candidates must perform for 12-15 minutes. Please note, this is **playing time, not running time** as clearly indicated in the online Instructions document which is required reading ([*Instructions for the Conduct of Examinations -ICE-*](#))¹, two marks were deducted for each full half minute that a candidate fell short of this requirement. Pauses between pieces, announcements, and tuning were not included in the playing time, but where candidates offered two or more related movements from a larger work, moderators were instructed to allow the pauses between these movements. A significant number of centres had not calculated the playing time correctly. When mis-timings were discovered in the moderation process, centres were informed and asked to alter their marks.

Most of the accompanying was very good this year - moderators reported a decrease in the number of performances that were hindered by insensitive and unreliable accompanying. Moderators noted that, as in previous years, significant numbers of performances were compromised by poor intonation. This adversely affected the mark awarded for Criterion 4: Tone and technique. Centres are reminded that pieces designed to be accompanied must be accompanied in the recording, otherwise the quality of outcome (Criterion 1) will be significantly compromised.

A score was required for all performances. Usually this was in full notation, but lead sheets, chord charts and tab were accepted, provided they gave enough details of pitch, rhythm and expression for a proper assessment to be made. A notated stimulus was also required for improvised performances. Deviations from the score in jazz/rock and musical theatre numbers were generally accepted where deemed to be stylistically convincing. Some scores were annotated with helpful information regarding divergences between the printed music and the candidate's performance. However, some unacceptable scores were submitted - these were often handwritten, incomplete or downloaded from the net as an afterthought. In such cases moderators asked for replacement scores which most centres were able to provide.

Recordings

The recording quality of most submissions was good or excellent. Most centres provided recordings in CD format. Sometimes it was difficult to locate work as it had been recorded in a different order from that listed on the MA4, or track marks or announcements were missing. However, many centres made the moderator's task easy by labelling work clearly and announcing centre, candidate and paper names and numbers for each submission, as well as sometimes providing a detailed track list.

As for 6MU01, the specification requires that candidates' performances are recorded on one occasion without gaps. (This single occasion can occur several times during the course, if required, but only one recording of the whole programme is submitted). It was evident from recordings submitted that some

¹ <http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/gce08/music/music/Pages/default.aspx> (under ICE)

centres had edited recordings taken on different occasions. This is unacceptable, and centres are advised to ensure that only unedited recordings are submitted in future, in the interest of fairness to all candidates.

Statistics

Unit 4 Extended Performance

Grade	Max. Mark	A*	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	50	45	41	36	32	28	24
Uniform boundary mark	90	81	72	63	54	45	36

A* is only used in conversion from raw to uniform marks. It is not a published unit grade.

Notes

Maximum Mark (Raw): the mark corresponding to the sum total of the marks shown on the mark scheme.

Boundary mark:

The minimum mark required by a candidate to qualify for a given grade.

Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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