

Moderator's Report/
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2019

**Pearson Edexcel
Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1)
Music (1MUO)**

Component 2 (Composing)

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 2019

Publications Code xxxxxxxx*

All the material in this publication is copyright

© Pearson Education Ltd 2018

Introduction

This is the second year of the 1MU0 specification and it is pleasing to note that many more centres have successfully embraced the new requirements to produce a wider range of compositions based on their students' own musical interests and experiences. The overall standard of submitted work continues to remain high. It is noticeable this year that centres are paying greater attention to the presentation of their submissions and this approach is to be applauded.

Once again, students are expected to respond to a brief set by Pearson as well as submit a free composition where the total time requirement for both pieces of work must be a minimum of 3 minutes. The briefs were related to each of the areas of study and released on the 1st September in the academic year of certification. Whilst the majority of students were encouraged to explore a variety of musical starting points based on their own interests and musical experiences, moderators reported that many centres still submitted portfolios where each student selected the same brief and their free compositions were all based on the same brief or musical genre. Where students failed to meet the minimum time requirement, they were referred to Pearson and a penalty was applied based on a sliding scale.

Performance of Candidates

Once again, the full range of marks were achieved by students. Moderators reported that they marked a wide variety of innovative and challenging compositions of a similar standard to previous years and specifications.

Fewer students this year submitted individual compositions lasting over 5 minutes. It is pleasing to note that very few students submitted a portfolio of less than the required 3 minutes.

Responses to the Set Brief.

For the 2019 series, moderators reported that the most popular brief by far was Brief 1 (Instrumental Music 1700-1800). Students were expected to develop and extend a melodic theme to create a piece of music in ternary form inspired by a painting. Although there was no requirement for students to submit a picture or a stimulus for this brief, it was helpful when they gave an indication of the mood the music was conveying. Some students gave their piece a title such as 'String Quartet No.1' with no further information. In these cases they only met the brief 'in some respects'. The most successful submissions carefully considered the occasion and wrote challenging parts for the soloist whilst developing and extending theme A on its' return. Some students composed only for solo instruments (e.g. piano) or wrote an ensemble piece where it was difficult to detect the soloist's role.

As expected, there was also an impressive response to Brief 3 (Music for Stage and Screen). Students composed music for a spy theme featuring at least one leitmotif. The highest scoring compositions fully considered the musical elements and imaginatively developed and extended the leitmotif to create tension within the music. It was clear that many students were inspired by the James Bond and Mission Impossible films. The creative ambition of those students who exploited the full potential of a wide range of timbres to produce full scale spy movies is to be applauded. Where the response was less successful, students reflected the chase element of the brief but sometimes failed to include or repeated rather than developed and extended the leitmotifs.

In 2018, Brief 2 (Vocal Music) was the most popular selection but this fell to third place in 2019. Students were asked to compose a song for solo voice and accompaniment for a Year 11 Leavers' Assembly. Many composed beautiful, poignant songs which recalled their school career. As in 2018, some students wrote a song but did not really consider whether the lyrical content was appropriate for a Leavers' Assembly. It was a pleasure to listen to live recordings of the vocal line. In these instances, students were able to ensure that the melody lines correctly fitted the lyrics being set. Once again, where synthesized vocal parts were submitted word setting was often an issue, particularly with melismatic writing.

Brief 4 (Fusions) attracted the fewest responses again this year. Students were asked to combine the features of folk music from the British Isles and Western popular music to create a piece to be performed as a summer music festival. It was noted that there were some lovely submissions where candidates had fully exploited both styles of music. Some students only fully considered the folk style of music and merely added a bass guitar and drum kit. These students only met the brief 'in some respects'.

Responses to the Free Composition.

It was more evident in 2019 that many students had enjoyed the opportunity the new specification offers, to explore and create music based on their own learning and musical experiences. These compositions tended to be more creative and reflected the student's passion for music. It is still a concern that too many students from some centres all submitted free compositions based on the same musical genre using very similar instrumental forces. It is noticeable that many students still submit briefs which do not consider an audience and/or occasion for their free composition. For example, a composition exploiting the key features of the classical style requires a specific occasion or audience in order to meet the 1MU0-02 requirements.

Assessment

Teacher-Assessors.

As the new specification becomes embedded, a pleasing number of teacher assessors made detailed comments on the Composition Authentication Sheet (CAS), highlighting the features of their students' compositions which were being credited. This practise is to be encouraged. The assessment process was less successful when teacher assessors merely repeated the assessment criteria or even failed to make any comments to justify the marks they awarded.

Use of Marking Criteria.

As anticipated, the teacher assessors' application of the assessment criteria has generally become more accurate. It is clear, from moderator feedback and scrutiny of the CAS, that many teacher assessors fully understood the level based assessment criteria and were able to successfully apply the mark scheme to their student's compositions. Unfortunately, quite a significant number of teacher assessors are still lenient and in some cases extremely lenient in the application of the assessment grids.

Assessment Grid 1 (Developing musical ideas);

As in 2018, students tended to create ideas which were repeated rather than fully developed and extended. Most students selected appropriate stylistic characteristics and conventions but did not always maintain them consistently. It is very important that students consider **all** elements of the task when responding to the Set Brief.

Assessment Grid 2 (Demonstrating technical control);

To access the higher levels when applying this grid, students needed to securely manage the musical elements, exploit all parts idiomatically and consider textural variety. Overall, there was an improvement in accuracy of application of this assessment grid.

Assessment Grid 3(Composing with musical coherence).

Students often considered structure when composing and their music had a sense (and often a good sense) of direction. The most common error was to overlook the contrast in the music e.g. dynamic, textural or melodic contrast. Fluency was sometimes compromised between sections of the music and some students needed to give more consideration to the coda/endings of compositions as it was quite common to hear pieces ending rather abruptly.

Administration

Composition authentication sheet (CAS)

The vast majority were presented as per instruction and with great care. It is noted that sheets printed onto single A4 sheets, scaled up to A3 size, stapled or placed into plastic wallets are difficult to manage. A significant number of centres submitted their students' work on the previous CAS and in some cases the CAS from the specification document. It greatly assists the moderation process if the centres submit the most recent version of the CAS which is available to download from the Pearson website.

CAS were completed in great detail and accuracy but many centres were contacted for missing information, such as missing scores or recordings and occasionally the lowest or highest candidate was omitted. There were some instances where a candidate's scores were incorrectly totalled or transferred onto the gateway. Generally, timings for compositions were correctly measured. Moderators reported that there were fewer missing teacher assessor signatures than in previous years. There are still a significant number of centres failing to include a copy of the EDI sheet with their submission.

Several centres sent their performing submission to their composing moderator. In these instances, the moderator process was slightly delayed ensuring that the correct work reached the moderator.

Scores

Once again, it was pleasing to note that most centres presented excellent scores demonstrating a high level of attention to detail in the music. These scores clearly signified the intentions of the students and this was particularly evident with the responses to the briefs set by Pearson and where score-writing programmes were used.

The presentation of screenshots scores from sequencing packages are improving year on year but many lead sheets are still not fully conveying the intentions of the music 'so that it may be easily replicated by another performer' -*GCSE (9-1) Music specification document p27*. The higher scoring students presenting this type of scores tended to fully annotate the music in order to provide the moderator as much information as possible to judge their compositions.

Recordings

In 2019, nearly half the submissions by centres submitted sent work on a USB stick. This is a significant increase from the 2018 series. In both cases, labelling was much clearer this year and moderators appreciated being able to easily locate the students' compositions. This year, problems arose with encrypted CDs and USB sticks. Please check the most recent version of the ASG for guidance presenting this work.

As in previous years, the general quality of recordings was good and this enabled teacher assessors and moderators to make accurate assessments. It was a joy to hear live recordings centres of the compositions and the innovative use of technology, especially in the Free Composition highlighted

the talents of many students submitting work this year. The attention paid to the recordings also assisted moderators to fully understand the intentions of the students.

Sadly, some centres still submitted work with background noise or poorly balanced parts. In future years, full consideration of the quality of the final mixdown of each composition would certainly assist the moderation process.

Moving forward centres should:

With regard to future submissions, please refer to the 2020 Administrative Support Guide (ASG):

- (1) The most recent version of the CAS should be photocopied as a booklet with the Free Composition on page 2 followed by the Set Brief Composition on page 3. The scores/commentaries for each candidate should be placed inside (A4 folders, poly-pockets, display books are unnecessary).
- (2) Please check that both the candidate and teacher assessor signatures are present on page 1.
- (3) Please ensure that the work of the **highest** and **lowest** candidate is included within the requested sample. If they are not, please add these to the submission.
- (4) Ensure that the time for each composition and the total for the component are accurately recorded on the CAS. Often lead-in and lead-out times were included in this total which did not accurately reflect the true total of the candidate's portfolio, *particularly for those students whose work was very close to the 3 minute minimum requirement.*
- (5) A track list should be included with the CD and the track numbers noted on the relevant CAS (track announcements with centre /candidate numbers are not required).
- (6) The ASG guidance should be used when compiling the centre's CD or USB stick. It should include the compositions in candidate number order (Free Composition followed by the Set Brief Composition) in the correct audio format. **NB Sibelius files are not acceptable audio format.**
- (6) Please ensure that the submission arrives prior to the deadline. (This will allow more time to contact the centre if any further materials or clarification are required).
- (7) Please ensure that the EDI printout for the correct component is included with the submission.

Grade Boundaries

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

Pearson Education Limited. Registered company number 872828
with its registered office at 80 Strand, London, WC2R 0RL, United Kingdom