



Pearson  
Edexcel

Moderator's Report  
Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2022

Pearson Edexcel Level 1/Level 2  
GCSE (9-1) in Music (1MU0)

Component 1 (Performing)

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## **Introduction**

External moderation resumed in 2022, and reduced requirements were in place.

Moderators noted the following uptake:

- 98.2% - A solo comprising of one or pieces, at least 1:30 in length
- 1.6% - An ensemble comprising of one or pieces, at least 2:00 in length
- 0.2% - A combination of solo and ensemble pieces, at least 2:00 in length.

This year saw the successful introduction of digital submission. Centres had clearly spent considerable time preparing their materials, and presentation of work continues to improve.

## **Performance of Candidates**

Despite issues arising from the pandemic, a wide range of marks were awarded. Many performances gained high marks, although there were some under-prepared performances. As in previous years, it was rare for a performance achieve top marks across all assessment grids.

Moderators continue to see many outstanding expressive and accurate performances. There were plenty of inspiring performances, for example one of Britten's *Metamorphoses after Ovid* on oboe, *Hypnosis* on Flute arr. Ian Clarke, and a vocal performance of 'You'll Be Back' from *Hamilton*. Alongside were interesting and engaging performances on marimba, bagpipes, organ, harp, mridangam, tuba, voice (raga), hang drum, and an occasional excellent rap.

This year saw sizable swings in the popularity of some instruments. Piano performances increased to make up over 31% of all submissions sampled by moderators. Violin has risen to 6%. The slow decline in guitar performances continues. However, moderators found a marked reduction, over 4%, in vocal performances. Pleasingly, there were small increases in players of less popular instruments such as Oboe, Viola and Double Bass.

The majority of performances were difficulty level 4 and above. Moderators reported less submissions at less difficult level compared to 2019. Most students achieve potential by preparing pieces within technical ability. Where this is the case, performances usually demonstrate accuracy and secure interpretation. Moderators see pieces ranging from Pre-Difficulty Level 1 to Diploma standard.

Some students attempt pieces beyond technical ability. To varying degrees, technical control, interpretation and accuracy are less successful. It was felt, students who stretched to perform a difficulty level 7 or 8 piece would have achieved a higher mark by performing a difficulty level 5 piece.

## **Assessment**

Moderators felt teacher assessor marking continued to improve. Whilst generally accurate, marking was slightly optimistic in many cases. Almost all centres provided detailed, perceptive and realistic comments, although some continued to simply paste statements from the assessment grids into the comment boxes. Sometimes irrelevantly, such as breath control and intonation for drum kit. Occasionally, comments were vague, did not relate to the assessment grids or were non-existent.

Those teacher assessors who referred to the assessment grid statements and matched these to specific examples in the performance submitted exemplary assessments. Where comments did not always cover all assessment statements within the grid, or one or two points were made to justify marking by omitting others, marking was felt to be less accurate.

Teacher assessors remain reluctant to award full marks where performances meet all assessment statements within an assessment grid.

### **Assessment grid 1: Technical control – Technique**

It was rare to see full marks awarded in this grid. Moderators continued to note the following misapplication:

- intonation statements informed the mark for assessment grid 3
- errors in pitch and/or rhythm were used to justify penalisation in technical control.

### **Assessment grid 2: Expression and interpretation**

Teacher assessors should note the following:

- lack of detail in dynamic shaping, phrasing and articulation was sometimes overlooked
- a slower than marked tempo was often not acknowledged.

### **Assessment grid 3: Technical Control (accuracy) and expression and interpretation (fluency)**

The first statement, errors, or omissions in pitch and/or rhythm, was sometimes marked with leniency. Where this occurred, there were noticeable mistakes, but teacher comments tended to optimistically state the performance was accurate.

## **Difficulty Levels**

With over 98% opting for solo submission, the vast majority of difficulty levels were found to be listed in the updated [Difficulty Levels booklet](#). The percentage of difficulty levels amended by moderators was less than 2019. However, many teacher assessors referred to a graded exam syllabus first, and this led to occasional errors.

Where a piece is not listed in the Difficulty Levels booklet, [Additional Pieces Difficulty Levels list](#) or a graded exam syllabus, teacher assessors are encouraged to use the [Difficulty levels: Further Guidance for Ensemble Performances](#) document to support justification for both solo and ensemble. Criteria provide guidance and indicate the likely difficulty level. Other performance elements may be considered in addition.

Moderators reported that amended difficulty levels were raised and lowered in equal proportion.

## **Administration**

Digital PAS forms were successfully filled in by centres. On a few occasions PDFs were either amended by the centre or had protection added. This slowed the moderation process.

Regrettably, too many teacher assessors measure performance length incorrectly. It is measured from the start of the first note to the end of the last. Too often, announcements (which are no longer required) were included or the whole track was considered performance time. Unfortunately, despite teacher assessors stating time requirements were met, too many students were disadvantaged because their performance was short.

It is a requirement to submit a score or lead sheet, where one exists. Moderators indicate moderation was straightforward when scores were:

- Submitted as a single PDF file for each sampled student
- Readable, not rotated and had all pages present
- Annotated with deviations agreed with the teacher assessor
- Annotated where sections were omitted
- Augmented with a professional reference recording, when learnt aurally.

The quality of recordings improved but there was still variance between centres. Very few video recordings were seen. Best practice was as follows:

- Ambient rather than close-mic and/or multi-tracked
- If performance contained more than one piece, these were recorded together
- Recording level was not set too high (created distortion), or too low
- Balance was equal between the student and other part(s)
- Drummers were captured with care, all parts of the kit were audible and balanced
- Automatic gain/microphone control was disabled
- Announcements were omitted (these are no longer required)
- Submitted as .wav, .aif/.aiff, .m4a/.mp4 or .mp3 file formats (in stereo).

It is a requirement that centres do not edit recordings. Therefore, centres should not add reverb, any other effects processing, volume automation, fades or cuts.

### **Moving forward centres should:**

- Prepare students for both solo and ensemble performance for 2023
- Refer to the 2023 Administrative Support Guide
- Submit 2023 PAS forms
- Submit a score where one exists. Where a piece is learnt aurally, a professional reference recording may be submitted in addition
- Label files with centre and candidate numbers (not student names)

- Award difficulty levels in this order:
  - [2020 Difficulty Levels booklet](#) (indicate row number)
  - [Additional Pieces Difficulty Levels list](#) (indicate row number)
  - Graded exams (ABRSM, Trinity, LCM, Rockschoool, MTB) (indicate board and year)
  - [Difficulty levels: Further Guidance for Ensemble Performances](#) for both solo and ensemble pieces (justify level by referring to criteria)
- Ensure recordings are ambient, balanced, at a good level and are unedited
- Ensure length for each performance and total length are accurately recorded on the PAS (announcements, tuning up, pauses between pieces, lead-in and lead-out time do **not** count towards performance length)
- Check the work of the **highest** and **lowest** scoring candidate is included within the requested sample. If they are not, add these to the submission

### **Grade Boundaries**

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<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/support/support-topics/results-certification/grade-boundaries.html>



