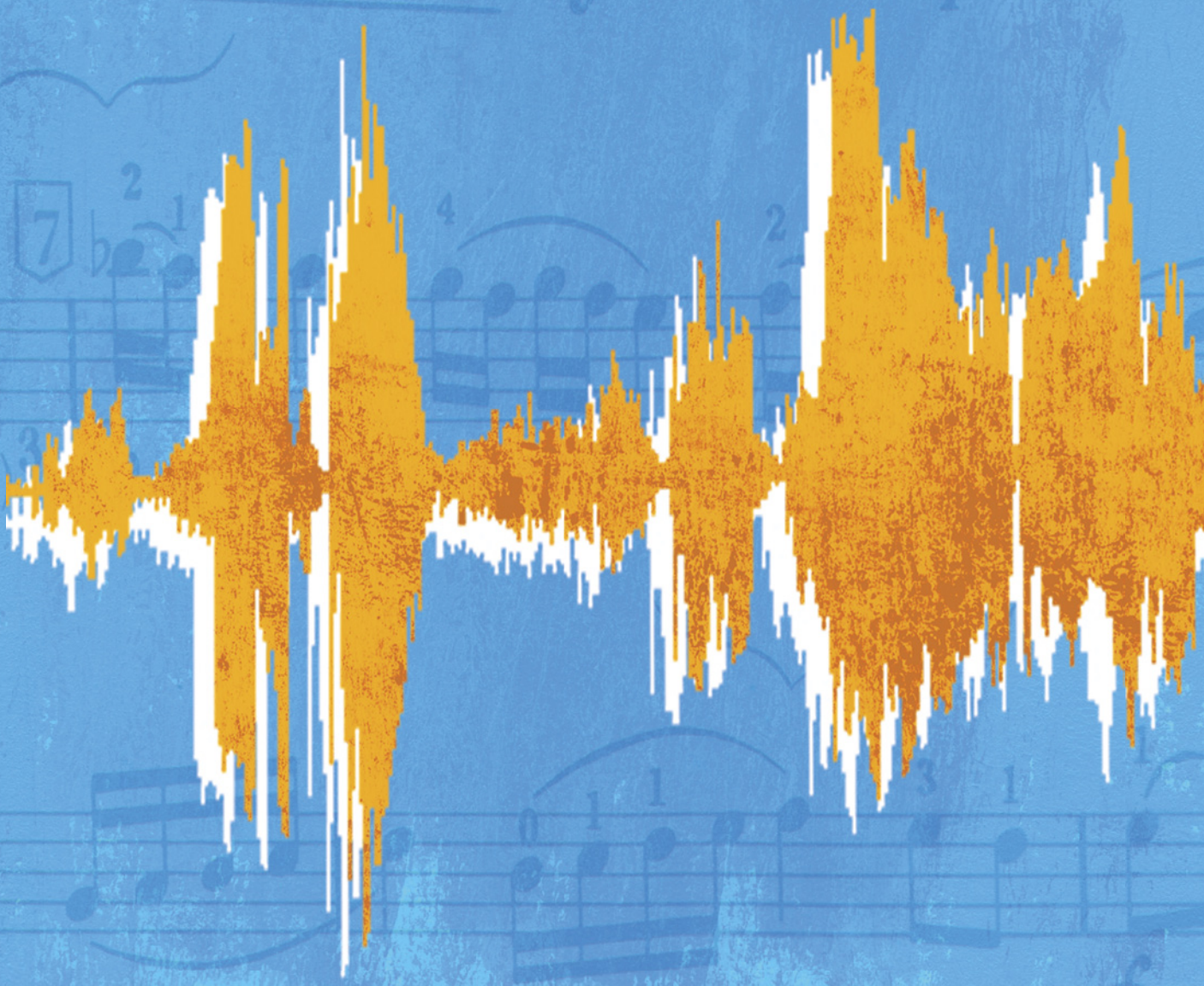
edexcel

Edexcel GCSE

Music

Controlled Assessment

Teacher Support Book 2012



ALWAYS LEARNING

PEARSON

Edexcel GCSE

Music

Controlled Assessment

Teacher Support Book

Music: Performing Music

Music: Composing Music

Welcome to the GCSE Music 2012 Controlled Assessment Teacher Support Book

This CA Teacher Support Book has been designed to provide you with the answers to key questions that you may have during the teaching and assessment of Unit 5MU01: Performing Music and Unit 5MU02: Composing Music.

The book is divided into three sections. It contains content which is applicable to your teaching of the controlled assessment units. Inside you will find some supportive content, including:

- Guidance on teaching the course
- Suggested resources to support your teaching.

Sample materials and examples of work can be accessed on the OSCA (Online Support for Centre Assessors) website via Edexcel Online.

Expert advice from the people who know

We hope you find this document useful and look forward to working with you on our new GCSE specifications. We are on hand to answer your questions so please feel free to get in touch.

Jonny Martin
Chair of Examiners

Lloyd James
Qualification Delivery and Awarding Manager

To contact our GCSE Music subject team, please call 0844 576 0027 or email: TeachingMusic@pearson.com

We look forward to working with you.

Contents

Introduction to controlled assessment 1

A brief overview of controlled assessment and the controlled assessment units.

Assessment information 2

In this section we provide you with answers to your key questions. We also provide information for candidates, which you may choose to copy for them.

Supporting you with controlled assessment 23

In this section we provide you with information and resources to help you plan and deliver controlled assessment with confidence.

Units 5MU01 and 5MU02: Content guide

What's new?

QCDA has required a change from coursework to controlled assessment. The main changes are:

- No requirement to link one of the performances to the composition.
- Candidates no longer have to write about their compositions and are assessed on compositions skills only.

What will candidates actually do?

In Unit 1: Performing Music (5MU01):

- Candidates will submit one solo and one ensemble performance, which can be recorded at any time during the course.
- Candidates will be assessed on both performances, which should be of a sufficient length but neither performance should exceed five minutes.
- The performance will take place under controlled conditions.
- The performance will be recorded and assessed by the teacher.
- Candidates will have a maximum of 10 hours to complete each recording, under teacher supervision.

In Unit 2: Composing Music (5MU02):

- Candidates will submit two compositions or two arrangements or one composition and one arrangement. Each piece must be based on a different Area of Study.
- The overall length of the submission (both pieces) should total between two and four minutes.
- While composition research may be carried out by the candidate in or out of the centre, the final recording and score or commentary must be completed in the centre under teacher supervision.
- Candidates will have a maximum of 10 hours for each of the two compositions, under teacher supervision.

Overview of assessment

There are three units in the GCSE Music specification. The grid below gives you an overview of the assessment. Please note that the controlled assessment units are 5MU01 and 5MU02 and the cash-in code is 2MU01.

Unit	Percentage	Marks	Assessment	Availability	Description
5MU01 Performing	30%	60 AO1	One solo and one ensemble performance Internally assessed under controlled conditions/externally moderated	June	One solo performance One ensemble performance
5MU02 Composing	30%	60 AO2	Two compositions and/or arrangements or one of each Internally assessed under controlled conditions/externally moderated	June	Two compositions/two arrangements or one arrangement and one composition Combined length of the two pieces 2–4 minutes Each composition must be accompanied by a score in a suitable format or written commentary NB: Each composition or arrangement must be based on a different Area of Study
5MU03 Listening and Appraising	40%	80 AO3	Written paper 1 hour 30 minutes Externally set and assessed	June	1 hour 30 minute examination externally set and marked by Edexcel

Teacher support and guidance

When writing the new series of GCSE specifications, all awarding bodies have taken a close look at coursework requirements for every subject. For GCSE Music, practical work plays a very important and necessary role. Performing and composing have long been central to all music teaching and learning, as reflected in the new subject criteria for GCSE Music, in which Assessment Objectives 1 and 2 are performing and composing skills respectively. In the Edexcel specification, these two assessment objectives carry 60% of the marks for the qualification.

In order to assess these practical skills, candidates have in the past been assigned coursework tasks in which they prepare performances and compose pieces of music, to be assessed by a teacher/examiner and moderated by the awarding body. Controlled assessment replaces coursework as a means to assess candidates' practical skills.

In essence, the most important difference between controlled assessment and coursework is the level of supervision required while candidates carry out their practical tasks. Controlled assessment requires teachers to supervise the completion of the practical tasks so that they can be certain that the work produced for assessment is the candidate's own, authentic work. You will be required to sign an Authentication Statement to accompany the work presented for moderation to this effect.

This document has been structured by looking at each of the three areas of controlled assessment (task setting, task taking and task marking) as they apply to Unit 1 (performing) and Unit 2 (composing) in turn. Unit 1 has many different optional routes, so the sections on performing have been further subdivided to show how the requirements of each of the areas of controlled assessment should be met in each option.

Task setting

Low level of control

Unit 1: Performing Music

Traditional performance – solo and ensemble

The teacher will set the task for the candidate performance by choosing the piece for each performance in consultation with the candidate and any peripatetic staff involved in the candidate's individual instrumental/vocal tuition. In practice, this will mean that the teacher will check the candidate's suggested choices for performance – perhaps in conjunction with the candidate's peripatetic teacher – ensuring that the choice is suitable for the candidate's skill level and available resources. It is strongly advised that the teacher checks the selection against the appropriate level of difficulty grids for the instrument, to ensure that the candidate is selecting a piece that will best serve them when the mark scheme is applied.

Special care should be taken when choosing a piece for ensemble performance. It should be remembered that the ensemble constitutes half the available marks for Unit 1. Extra thought needs to go into checking that the piece allows the candidate to demonstrate their abilities without undue restrictions imposed by the other members of the ensemble with regards to the difficulty level of the piece. The choice of ensemble piece may be based on what the centre's ensembles are currently performing, or a new ensemble may be created to accommodate the candidate's requirements.

It is important to select a piece for which a suitable stimulus can be submitted and against which the accuracy of the performance (both pitch and rhythm) can be assessed. This may be a score (suitably annotated if any alterations have been made in preparation of the performance), or a professional recording, as appropriate to the style of the performance.

Improvisation – solo and ensemble

Improvisation should not be seen as an easy option to accommodate those candidates who have left their performance work until the last minute. It is a skill that needs to be developed throughout the duration of the course. The teacher should select appropriate stimulus material for the candidate to use in their improvisation – again, perhaps in conjunction with the peripatetic teacher. The original stimulus material should be a melodic idea, rhythmic motif or chord progression and should be supplied to the moderator along with the completed recording. In the case of a visual stimulus, additional material should be supplied outlining the candidate's initial melodic, rhythmic or chordal ideas in response to the stimulus, allowing the extent of development of the initial ideas to be assessed. The level of difficulty of the performance will be judged mainly on the outcome, rather than the stimulus itself. However, the choice of stimulus will have a significant impact on the outcome, so it is important that the stimulus is chosen wisely, rather than leaving the choice entirely to the candidate.

Pieces may be submitted as improvisations only if they contain a significant amount of improvisation. If the piece is on the cusp of being submitted as an improvisation or as a traditional performance (with suitably annotated score) then both mark schemes should be applied to see which is the most suitable. For improvisation, there needs to be a significant element of development of the original stimulus material. If the candidate has performed an 8-bar solo based on a pentatonic scale as part of a performance, it is unlikely that it will contain enough development of the stimulus to access the higher descriptors in the mark scheme for improvisation. It may be better to submit it as a solo performance with a suitably annotated section for the improvised passage. This highlights the importance of teacher involvement in the choice of piece in the first instance. Care taken at the beginning of the process will avoid any uncomfortable moments when it comes to the assessment of the performance.

Similarly, ensemble improvisations are likely to have some notated elements to be performed directly from the score, in addition to an elongated improvised section in which the candidate takes a lead role, improvising a solo over an accompaniment provided by the rest of the ensemble. Please note that the accompaniment needs to consist of more than a pianist, if this is to qualify as an ensemble. In practice, it is likely that any candidates taking this optional route will be experienced performers in a school jazz band (or other ensemble requiring an element of improvisation). The choice of piece will depend on selecting something from the ensemble's repertoire that highlights the candidate to be assessed, allowing them fully to demonstrate their ability within their technical capability.

Sequenced performance

As with the traditional performance, the choice of stimulus is probably the most important factor influencing the success of the performance. Again, the choice should be based on the candidate's ability, the available resources, and making reference to the levels of difficulty grid. It is acceptable for the stimulus material to be a piece of music that has been especially arranged by the teacher for the sole purpose of sequencing in order to maximise the potential of the resources, such as available sound sources, etc.

The stimulus chosen for sequenced performances should contain at least three independent parts. There is no maximum number of parts stated in the specification, but it should be noted that the *More Difficult* level requires only five parts to be present, so any more than this would increase the difficulty of the task for no additional benefit.

Realisation – sequenced compositions

The choice of material has inherently been scrutinised by the teacher already because the process of composition has become inseparable from the process of performance. The teacher will need to make a decision towards the end of the process as to whether the piece is going to do justice to the candidate's abilities or whether they would be better served choosing a separate piece for their performance. The concept of **technical demands** is the factor that will determine the suitability of the piece – judge the piece as if it is a standard sequenced performance – what *level of difficulty* would it fall under? If there are insufficient technical demands to merit a *standard* difficulty level then it is unlikely that the candidate would be able to access the higher mark bands.

Realisation – performance of own compositions

The same points are true of any submission consisting of a performance of a candidate's own composition. If it has been inappropriate (or impossible) to provide a score for the assessment of accuracy in the normal way, then it is possible to submit the performance as a realisation. In this case, there must be sufficient technical demands for the candidate to achieve the full range of marks. If this is not the case, the candidate would be better advised to choose a different route to fulfil the performance requirements of the specification.

Realisation – DJ performances

It is extremely important to ensure that any DJ performances contain sufficient technical demands so as to access the full mark range. The candidate's intentions should be discussed before preparation begins for the performance. The candidate should outline the techniques intended for use in the performance, qualifying the difficulty of these techniques in the context of the performance. For example, a candidate who intends to splice two songs together using an audio editing package by chopping each piece in half and putting the two halves of the different pieces together to form a new piece is not going to demonstrate sufficient technical skill to access anything but the lowest mark bands. However, the candidate who intends to take five different songs, choosing appropriately from his/her song selection, considering tempi and keys, ensuring there is a sense of tension and repose, giving the final mix a sense of direction and structure and adding some scratching techniques or MCing over the top of the mix, is on a completely different level and is clearly capable of accessing the full range of marks.

Realisation – live electro-acoustic sound diffusions

Appropriate resourcing is the key feature of this option – the centre must provide sufficient speakers and a mixing desk capable of sending the sound sources to each of the speakers independently. Appropriate source material is also a key factor – the material is likely to be a candidate's own composition in which the diffusion of the piece constitutes the performance element. Obviously a stereo recording will be unable to do justice to this type of submission, so the teacher must submit a very detailed commentary on the performance, working with the candidate to produce a description of the technical demands of the performance. A detailed score (probably a graphic score) including directions for how the piece is to be mixed (i.e. which sounds are to be sent to which speakers and their relative levels) is essential for this option.

Realisation – music from the oral tradition

It is often stylistically inappropriate to submit a stimulus along with performances of this type in order to assess accuracy, so they should be submitted as realisations. Some performances will work best as improvisations, depending on how much of the piece is improvised by the candidate and how much is copied from their teacher. The decision on how the piece is to be assessed will have some bearing on the choice of material to perform. As with traditional solo performances, the choice of piece will be determined by the candidate's abilities and the available resources.

Realisations – general points

All realisations must be accompanied by a written commentary, outlining the technical demands of the performance. This should be submitted in lieu of a score.

The realisation option is intended for performances in which it is inappropriate or impossible to submit a score to assess the accuracy of the performance. All pieces to be performed should be compared with traditional performances insofar as is possible, in order to ensure that the demands are similar to that of the other options. If a piece that a candidate intends to play clearly falls short of the standard expected for a traditional performance on that instrument, it should not be submitted for this option either.

Rehearsing and directing

The specification requires that a DVD be submitted containing a recording of 2–5 minutes of a rehearsal directed by the candidate and the final performance of the piece by the ensemble. The candidate does not need to perform in an ensemble in addition to directing it; it is sufficient for the candidate to direct/conduct the ensemble. In fact, it is inappropriate for a candidate to perform in the ensemble if they are also directing it – in this case, they would probably be best to submit the performance as a traditional ensemble performance. It is best for the candidate to present the ensemble with material they have not performed before, in order to make their own mark on how the ensemble approaches the music. The material chosen for the candidate to direct should be appropriate to the ability of the ensemble. The piece should contain enough scope for the candidate to demonstrate his/her directing skills and his/her ability to prepare for and to lead rehearsals.

It is expected that the candidate will spend several sessions rehearsing with the ensemble, of which the recorded 2–5 minutes is only a short sample. This will enable the candidate to:

- build a rapport with the members of the ensemble
- have enough time to draw out some of the details of the score
- rehearse the ensemble to a satisfactory level.

Multi-track recording – where the candidate has performed one or more of the live tracks

Forty per cent of the marks for this type of performance are allocated to the accuracy of one of the live tracks – the best track should be chosen to assess. It is important to select a piece for performance in which it is possible to assess the accuracy from a suitable stimulus (for example, a professional recording or a score) as is the case with a traditional performance. If the piece is a candidate's own composition then a suitable score must be prepared, from which it is possible to assess the accuracy of pitch and rhythm. It is only necessary to have a score for the part to be assessed – any additional notation for unassessed parts is not required.

The complexity of the task will be greatly increased if a candidate tries to capture too many tracks in their recording. A minimum of three tracks is required by the specification, although four or five might be appropriate to allow enough scope for panning and other production techniques. More than this may cause unnecessary difficulties. The *level of difficulty* is determined in the first instance by the difficulty of the live part, although it will also be affected by the number of tracks in the recording – if there are eight or more audio tracks to be captured, the task will be judged as being *more difficult* regardless of the difficulty of the live part.

Multi-track recording – where the candidate has not performed any of the live tracks

This option has many similarities to the rehearsing and directing option in that the candidate is not playing any of the live parts. Instead, the candidate acts as the producer and engineer, so the piece selection follows similar lines. In addition to this, the piece should present enough possibilities to access the full range of marks in the *recording skills* section of the mark scheme, by allowing for suitable panning and effects on the instruments. It is also important to select a piece in a style appropriate for the option – most submissions will probably be in a pop/rock music style.

Multi-track recording – a mix of sequencing and recording

The piece selection for this option is much the same as for the solo sequencing option, with the additional factor of ensuring that there are enough live parts to ensure that the full range of marks can be accessed under the *recording skills* heading.

Unit 2: Composing Music

In previous specifications, candidates have had to compose to a brief set in conjunction with the teacher. They also included an element of writing in their submissions – discussing the brief and how they felt they had met this in their compositions.

For the new specification, there is no stated requirement for candidates to compose to a brief. It is still considered best practice to set a brief at the beginning of the task, which may later be amended as the composition develops.

Any composing brief may be open-ended or tightly structured, as befits the needs and skills of the candidate. It should take into account the resources available and any particular areas of expertise the candidate has, such as writing for their own instrument or composing in a style with which they are familiar. The brief may be set by the teacher or negotiated with the candidate. It will not be assessed in itself and there is no requirement to write about the brief or describe how it has been fulfilled in the composition. The brief should be written into the appropriate space on the MUS form (the form containing the teacher/examiner's marks and comments on the candidate's work), but if no brief has been set, there is no penalty for leaving this section blank.

It is important that the brief leads the candidate to link the composition with one of the Areas of Study, so that the piece meets the specification requirements. The two compositions submitted for Unit 2 must be linked to different Areas of Study.

Candidates should not feel limited to compose music that they are capable of performing. This should be taken into account when setting the composition task. Candidates may make use of technology to realise their composition or they may write for specific performers other than themselves. Teacher/examiners will know what their candidates are capable of achieving and which approach will suit them best.

Arrangements

If a candidate intends to submit an arrangement it will be necessary to ensure that the original stimulus material is suitable for the available resources and the candidate's ability. Candidates must choose the stimulus material in conjunction with the teacher, so that they are able to access the full range of marks available for stimulus choice. Stimuli must have potential for development in order to be a suitable choice. An arrangement in which a candidate has simply transcribed an existing piece of music for new instrumentation will not be capable of achieving the full range of marks available.

Task taking

High level of control

All tasks must be completed under a high level of control, meaning that they must be completed under supervision, allowing teacher/examiners to be 100% sure that the work is the candidate's own. However, music performance and composition cannot be entirely limited to the classroom. It is recognised that candidates may hum a tune to themselves, inadvertently developing their composition ideas outside of direct supervision. Similarly, a singer cannot be stopped from singing the song they are preparing for a GCSE performance whilst at home. As such, the controlled assessment for performing and composing tasks has been split into two sections – preparation/research and writing time.

Writing time

Any work that contributes to the final submission that will eventually be presented to the moderator is considered to fall under 'writing time'. For performing, this will generally be a recording of the final performance, and for composing, this will be the completion of the final score and an audio recording of the composition.

Controlled assessment demands that all tasks are given a specified time limit. For GCSE Music, each task is allocated 10 hours of writing time (10 hours for each performance and 10 hours for each composition). Any work that is completed in writing time needs to be done under the teacher/examiner's direct supervision, so that the work can be authenticated as being the candidate's own.

Controlled assessment is not the same as examination conditions. It is expected that teachers will continue to teach during supervised time (writing time) and candidates are still permitted to talk both to the teacher and each other, as long as they do not compromise the authenticity of their work by doing so.

Preparation time

Any work that does not fall under writing time is considered to be preparation and research for the task. This might include:

- practising and rehearsing for a performance
- trying out different ideas for a composition, developing some and discarding others.

Preparation and research does not have a time limit and does not need to be completed under direct supervision. It is sufficient that there are regular checks on a candidate's progress on a task, ensuring that all the work is their own. A full description of what is considered writing time and what is preparation and research for each of the performing and composing/arranging options follows in this document.

Unit 1: Performing Music

Traditional performance – solo and ensemble

Only the actual recording of the final performance falls under writing time. All practice and rehearsal is considered to be preparation and research, not counting towards the total of 10 hours.

It is likely that the recording of the final performance will take significantly less than the full 10 hours. 10 hours is a **maximum** time limit. It is not necessary for candidates to use all of the time available to them, if they feel they have managed to capture a performance with which they are satisfied.

A 'high level of control' means that the person who signs the Authentication Form is present at the recording of the performance. Normally, that will mean that the teacher/examiner needs to be present in order to authenticate the performance as the candidate's own. Performances should be recorded in the centre if at all possible. If logistics dictate that a performance must take place outside of the centre itself (for example, if the candidate is an organist who needs to perform at a certain venue in order to access a preferred instrument), then the teacher/examiner or another member of the centre's music department **must** be present at the performance. It is not acceptable for an external instrumental teacher to sign an Authentication Form. Only instrumental teachers employed directly by the centre will be permitted to sign Authentication Forms and must be held responsible for the authentication of the work against which they have put their signature.

The time limit of 10 hours is for **each** piece that is recorded as a potential GCSE submission. It is not an overall limit for recording all the possible solo performances over the duration of the course, neither is it an overall limit for all the possible ensemble performances recorded throughout the course. For example, if a candidate records a solo performance (taking 1 hour to do so) and later decides they want to attempt another solo performance, they still have 10 hours in which to complete the recording of their new attempt.

Improvisation – solo and ensemble

Only the actual recording of the final improvised performance falls under writing time. All practice, rehearsal and any other preparatory work for the improvisation is considered to be preparation and research, not counting towards the total of 10 hours.

The same conditions for authentication of candidate work apply to improvised performances as for traditional performances, regarding the presence of a teacher.

Sequenced performance

Unlike a traditional or improvised performance, in which only the final performance is captured and sent to the moderator, for sequenced performances every note that is entered and edited on the sequencer has the potential to form part of the final recording. This means that the whole inputting and editing process must be completed within the limit of 10 hours and under teacher supervision.

The following fall under preparation time and do not count towards the limit of 10 hours:

- The process of learning how to use the sequencing package.
- Experimentation with suitable timbres.
- Practising parts for later input into the sequencer.
- Learning how to use various editing tools.
- Researching the stimulus material.

As with all controlled time, it is acceptable to continue the process of teaching whilst the candidates are completing their work.

The 10 hours of writing time do not have to be used consecutively. It is possible for the candidate to spend 1 or 2 hours inputting and editing work on their sequencing file and then go home and practise some other parts for later input into their file.

It is not acceptable for candidates to be able to access their file outside of supervised conditions. They must complete any inputting or editing of their work under supervision at all times. They must not:

- email their files home to work on them there
- take them out of the centre on memory sticks, etc.
- complete part of their work at home and then copy and paste it into their sequencing file at school.

It is acceptable to:

- bring in written notes that will guide them in their next stage of inputting or editing while supervised
- take their work out of controlled conditions if it is in a form that does not allow any additional work to be done to the file outside of controlled conditions – for example, they may take out an audio mix of their sequencing file, because it would be impossible to edit the MIDI information in this format.

Teacher/examiners should ensure that the work remains secure and is appropriately backed up within the centre.

Realisation – sequenced compositions

All the points listed for sequenced performances also apply to sequenced compositions. However, if the sequenced composition is going to be submitted as both a performance and as a composition, then it is logical to assume that a candidate may spend a total of 20 hours on their work – 10 hours for the composing and 10 hours for the performing. Care must be taken in this circumstance – if the candidate spends 20 hours on the work then it must be submitted as both a composition and as a performance. As such, it would be wise to leave such a decision until it is clear that this piece of work will definitely be submitted for both Unit 1 and Unit 2.

One possible approach would be to spend 10 hours on the composition side of the task and then, when it became clear that this would be used as a performing task as well, to save the file under a different name. The original composition file should be preserved in the state it was in after the first 10 hours of composition time had been spent. Any additional time (up to a total of an additional 10 hours) can be used to edit the sequence to maximise its potential as a sequenced performance. Refer to the section on Unit 2 – Composition, for more details of the distinction between writing and preparation time regarding compositions.

Realisation – performance of own composition

The points made about combining the time for composing and performing also apply to this option. In practice, capturing a live performance of a composition is likely to take an hour or less, so it is highly unlikely that candidates will need to use all of the available writing time. The distinction between preparation and writing time for the actual performance of the piece will be the same as for traditional performances: only the capture of the final performance will count towards the writing time and so this needs to be completed under supervision. Any practising and rehearsal is considered to be preparation.

Realisation – DJ performances

If the DJ performance is live, with the candidate mixing their tracks in real time, then the same points apply for this type of performance as for any other live performance: only the capture of the final performance counts as writing time. If there is an element of pre-recorded or pre-edited audio to be used in the performance, such as a mix that involves the use of an audio editor to cross-fade songs and change tempi, etc., then the same points that relate to sequences would apply.

It is understood that DJ performances may last a little longer than the 5-minute time limit for performances that normally applies, but it is expected that candidates will not use several complete tracks in their mixes thereby creating performances that last for 15 minutes and more. Instead, candidates should select sections of songs to use in their mixes in such a way that the complete mix:

- still sounds like a complete and satisfying performance
- has clear direction
- has a sense of structure.

It is assumed that candidates taking this option will know their music collections well enough to select a number of tracks that will work well together, carefully matching the beats as appropriate and taking account of keys, styles, important riffs, etc. so that the combination of tracks works well.

Realisation – live electro-acoustic sound diffusions

Only the final performance will count towards writing time. It is assumed that most candidates taking this option will be diffusing their own compositions, so the same points apply as were made for the other options that combine performing and composing. A full and detailed commentary will be required to inform the moderator of the spatial elements of the performance that cannot be reproduced on a stereo CD.

Realisation – music from the oral tradition

Only the actual recording of the final performance falls under writing time. Any practising, rehearsal and any other preparatory work for the realisation is considered to be preparation and research, not counting towards the total of 10 hours. The same conditions for authentication of candidate work apply to realisations of music from the oral tradition as for traditional performances, regarding the presence of a teacher.

Rehearsing and directing

In this option, the time spent rehearsing the piece forms part of the 10 hours of writing time. The work is marked according to how well the candidate has prepared the ensemble (even though it is technically a rehearsal). All work that counts towards writing time must be supervised. It is very important to supervise the rehearsal stages of this option so that the teacher/examiner can comment on:

- the candidate's interaction with the other musicians
- how successfully ideas have been conveyed for the interpretation of the score.

All these points will count towards their final mark.

Preparation for this option will include preparation and research of the score, listening to other performances of the piece and rehearsing other pieces with the ensemble. Members of the ensemble should practise their individual parts in their own time so as not to waste time in rehearsals.

Multi-track recording – where the candidate has performed one or more of the live tracks *and* where the candidate has not performed any of the live tracks

As with the sequencing option, anything that will eventually form part of the final audio recording must count towards the 10 hours of writing time. Therefore, the following will all count towards the time limit of 10 hours:

- recording and editing tracks
- mixing
- adding effects
- processing
- final mixdown to a stereo .wav file.

Preparation time for this option will include:

- choosing and researching appropriate programme material
- practising individual parts for later recording
- rehearsing other musicians
- learning how to use the equipment and software
- experimenting with recording techniques
- experimenting with the effects, etc. available in the centre
- setting up microphones
- any level setting required.

Although microphone set-up and placement is part of the preparation time, this must be supervised to ensure that it is the work of the candidate. The quality of sound capture will form part of the final assessment.

It is essential that the candidate is in sole charge of every stage of the recording process for this option, including:

- microphone placement
- level setting
- arming the tracks
- capturing the tracks
- editing
- processing and mixing the tracks
- final mixdown to a stereo .wav file.

It is not necessary for the candidate to burn the final .wav file to a CD, but if they are mixing directly to CD (rather than bouncing to a stereo .wav file) then they should also be in charge of this stage of the process.

Multi-track recording – a mix of sequencing and recording

All the points listed under sequenced performances and the multi-track options above also apply to this option. It is essential that the candidate sequences all the tracks and is in sole charge of every stage of the recording process for this option.

Unit 2: Composing Music

All compositions must be submitted as an audio recording (on CD) accompanied by some form of notation (a standard score, graphic score or commentary). Any work that goes into the final recording of the composition and the preparation of the final version of the score must be supervised and completed within a time limit of 10 hours.

However, if a candidate abandons a composition 5 hours into their supervised time in order to begin a new composition, the time restarts from 0 hours again for the new composition. Similarly, because a candidate is only going to submit two compositions, they may legitimately have spent 4 x 10 hours on four different compositions, but only select two at the end of the course. The limit of 10 hours is for any one composition.

Preparation time

This includes the following and there is no time limit:

- time spent researching
- working out ideas
- improvising motifs
- preparing rough drafts
- practising and rehearsing.

Preparation work may be done either in the centre or at home, but care must be taken to check any preparation work before allowing candidates to continue with their writing time to ensure that it is all their own, unaided work.

In general, candidates adopt one of two approaches to composition:

1 Composing on their own instrument, involving gradual development and refinement of improvised ideas until they arrive at a completed piece of music.

2 Composing on a computer package, either gradually developing and refining ideas as above or following a brief and composing within a set structure, but without the confines of having to be able physically to perform their composition.

Approach 1: Everything is considered to be preparation, up to the time when the teacher decides to record the composition. The actual recording of the piece and the preparation of the final score 'in neat' needs to be completed within the supervised 10 hours of writing time. This is because only the final recording of the piece and the score will be submitted for assessment – everything up to this point was essentially working out ideas, drafting and redrafting. It is expected that the teacher will teach composition skills whilst the candidate is composing. Candidates are not expected to have innate and fully developed composition skills when they start GCSE! However, suggestions must not be so specific that teacher/examiners are actually doing the composition work for the candidate.

Approach 2: This has similar issues to that of sequenced performances. Everything that is entered into the computer file (either as a sequence or as a recorded audio track) can potentially become part of the final recording that will be submitted for assessment, and therefore must all be done within the supervised 10 hours of writing time.

Candidates may:

- print their ideas at the end of a supervised session
- take them home to work on developing their ideas
- bring in their notes to the next supervised session and input them into the computer package after the teacher/examiner has checked their work to ensure authenticity.

However, they must **not:**

- be able to access their files from their home computers
- bring in files they have completed on their software at home to import into their composition file in school, as this work has not been completed during supervised time.

There are two ways to deal with Approach 2.

1. Set 10 non-consecutive hours of curriculum time in which a composition must be completed.
2. Allow a candidate to work 'organically' on his/her composition for an indeterminate period, ensuring at regular intervals that the work is progressing appropriately for the candidate's ability level and that all the work is the candidate's own. When the piece is completed, the score is printed as a draft, the teacher suggests that certain aspects can be improved (within the guidelines of acceptable advice), and the candidate re-inputs the composition, making any necessary changes, within 10 hours of supervised time.

The first option is recommended. Candidates may be given directed tasks to complete at home in preparation for their supervised time in school, such as preparing melodic, harmonic and rhythmic ideas for input into the computer package. They may bring their ideas in written form into the centre for the teacher/examiner to check before they begin inputting the ideas to their composition files. They may print out the files at the end of the sessions for further annotation at home, or they may burn an audio CD to bring home for further improvisation and development of their ideas. They must **not** be permitted to take files out of the centre in any format that will allow them to make additions to those outside of supervised time.

It has been observed that candidates often perform well under these circumstances because time wasting is discouraged within the controlled time and a set of conditions exists similar to what they might face if they were composing to a brief and a deadline in the professional world. However, this is not true for all candidates, so the second option is permitted, as long as the teacher/examiner is sure that all the work is the candidate's own when they bring draft material into controlled time.

For this option, it is **not** permitted for candidates to copy and paste their work directly from the first file to the final file – it is essential that they re-input everything under supervision.

For either option, the 10 hours of supervised time must include the final recording of the composition (or bouncing to a .wav file) and printing of the final score.

Arrangements are treated in exactly the same way as compositions.

Task marking

Medium level of control

All performances and compositions will be marked by the teacher/examiner.

Each submission for Unit 1 must contain one solo and one ensemble performance, made up from any combination of the possible solo and ensemble options. It is acceptable for candidates to submit any combination of instruments or performing disciplines. There is no additional credit for performing on different instruments for the two performances or a penalty for any particular combination.

Each submission for Unit 2 must contain two compositions (or two arrangements or one composition and one arrangement). Each composition must relate to an Area of Study, and the two compositions submitted for Unit 2 must relate to **different** Areas of Study. It is acceptable for both compositions to belong to a similar style, as long as they clearly relate to two different Areas of Study. For example, it would be possible to present two songs, where one relates to AoS 3 (*Popular Music in Context*) and the other is in a pop style, but is also in the context of a musical, thus relating to AoS 2 (*Music in the 20th Century*) because it uses a form strongly associated with this era.

The marks for each piece of practical work will be recorded on the appropriate form and accompanied by teacher/examiner comments justifying the mark awarded. A sample of candidate work from the centre will be requested by Edexcel in the summer term of the year of examination and must be sent to the moderator by the date specified by Edexcel. Samples will be sent to two different moderators – one moderator for Unit 1 (Performing) and a different moderator for Unit 2 (Composing). The work is internally assessed and externally moderated.

An Authentication Statement signed by both the candidate and the teacher must accompany all work submitted for moderation. **Submissions not accompanied by a signed Authentication Statement will not be moderated.** It will not normally be necessary to provide written evidence of the time spent on each item of work – the signed Authentication Statement will be sufficient.

FAQs: Preparing to teach controlled assessment

Before you can plan your teaching, you will need to have an idea of how the controlled assessment is to be assessed and what candidates have to do. Here are some important answers to frequently asked questions about controlled assessment.

What is the level of control?

“

For the Research element the level of control is low. However, the recording of the performances/compositions must be completed under supervised conditions with a high level of control.

”

Will there be any choice?

“

Tasks are set by the centre. Tasks must cover all the assessment objectives and allow for the full range of outcomes. Edexcel will not approve any tasks or materials in advance of the assessment. The choice of tasks is entirely the centre’s responsibility.

”

When can I offer the controlled assessment unit?

“

GCSE Music is only offered in the June examination series. Units 1 and 2 can be completed at any time, but can only be submitted once at the end of the course.

”

What happens with resits?

“

Any candidates wanting to retake the controlled assessment units must complete the recordings under controlled conditions. Resit candidates cannot resubmit work from previous sessions. If candidates are taking the same tasks, they must start from the beginning and do everything again.

”

What sort of research can candidates do?

“

For GCSE Music, research is defined as work candidates do as individuals outside of the 10 hour period. There is no time limit for the research and this may occur outside of the centre.

”

Administering the controlled assessment

How do I conduct the controlled assessment?

- Arrangements can be decided by the centre.
- Controlled assessment can take place in normal lesson time, supervised by teachers.
- When there is more than one teaching group, groups can complete the controlled assessment at different times, and indeed, stages in the course.
- Candidates can have plans and notes. The pages will be strictly limited to aid teacher checking.
- Candidates can complete the controlled assessment at different times and stages in the course.
- Teachers should check that the materials contain only plans and notes and not a draft answer, before they are taken into the controlled environment. These plans and notes should be checked and retained with the candidates' responses in a secure place.
- Candidates who are absent may complete the assignment another time. There are no restrictions on communication between candidates who have and who haven't completed the assessment, as there would be in a live examination. All candidates will know the task in advance.

How long is the write-up session?

Whilst there is no time limit for the research, once candidates have begun the 10 hours in which to complete their final "write up and recording" submission, the work must remain with the supervising teacher.

Can candidates do the task on their computer?

Yes, the assignment write-up can be word processed, provided the computer is checked prior to use for any saved information and provided it does not connect to the internet or an intranet. Spellcheck may be used by candidates.

When work in a write-up session is completed, this must be saved onto portable media and retained securely by the centre. The controlled assessment response must be printed out for marking and standardisation.

If the task is to be word processed teachers should ensure that candidates use a clear and legible font, font size and page layout, e.g. Times New Roman, font size 12, 1½ line spacing and margins to allow for teacher comments.

What about candidates who qualify for extra time in examinations?

Some candidates qualify for extra time in examinations due to special circumstances. In such cases, the extra time can also be applied to the write-up time for controlled assessment.

So, in summary...what are the main controls?

Teachers must ensure that all the notes candidates bring into the classroom are the candidates' own work. The final writing up and recording for Unit 1 and Unit 2 must be done under controlled conditions with the supervising teacher. Teachers may give limited support during the controlled session/s. Candidates are not permitted to discuss their work with others during the controlled session/s. Assessment will take place during a 10-hour session for each unit in which to complete each recording and composition.

Submitting the controlled assessment

When does controlled assessment need to be submitted?

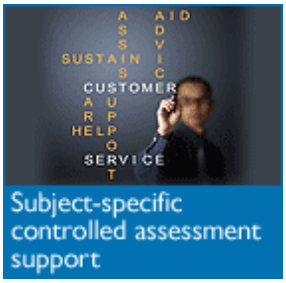
> Controlled assessment can only be submitted in the summer series (May deadline). However, you can offer the unit earlier in the year, retain the controlled assessment securely, and submit it in the summer series. For example, you could teach the controlled assessment in the autumn term, retain the work securely and submit this in summer.

How do I ensure that I meet the terminal assessment rule?

> You need to ensure that candidates are assessed for 40% of their GCSE in the terminal (last) examination series. In practice this means that two units in the GCSE should be taken/submitted in the final summer series. Controlled assessment written earlier in the year can be submitted as terminal assessment. Candidates will also be required to take another examined unit in the final summer series.

Supporting you with controlled assessment

Need help with controlled assessment? Our experts are on hand to support you...



Subject-specific controlled assessment support

- Email the subject team directly at TeachingMusic@pearson.com
- **Call 0844 463 2935** to speak a member of the Music team
- **Ask the Expert**, our free email service, puts you in direct contact with a senior examiner who will help answer any subject-specific questions concerning the teaching of music. They will email you within two working days of receiving your question.

Controlled assessment documents

You can find all the documents relating to controlled assessment below (as well as on the main **GCSE Music** page).

You should also refer to the **JCQ controlled assessment guidance document**.