

Circular S/IF/06/21

April 2021

To: The Head of Music

For circulation to: All teachers of CCEA GCE and GCSE Music

GCE and GCSE Music

Singing, Wind and Brass Performance - Summer 2021

Following the recent letter issued to schools from the Minister of Education regarding the removal of singing, wind and brass performances from inside school buildings, we understand that this has caused some concern for centres wishing to conduct performance assessments for GCSE, AS and A-Level Music. Where possible, we would still encourage centres to include performance recordings as evidence for AO1 when arriving at a holistic centre determined grade. Therefore, we are issuing the following guidance in addition to the previously issued subject guidance available on the CCEA website.

Adapting Performances

When conducting performance recordings, it is important that centres adhere to all current public health guidelines. Therefore, centres may choose to follow one of these suggested adaptations:

- **Student-recorded performances at home** - where this is the case, we would recommend a video recording is used, where possible, to aid teachers in authenticating the performance work. Where only an audio recording is possible, it is recommended that teachers ask the student questions about the performance and regularly check in on their progress, in order to confidently authenticate the final audio recording.
- **Virtual performance assessment** - teachers may conduct a virtual performance assessment using an online platform to record the performance live (for example, Zoom or Teams), with the student performing at home.
- **Record in a suitable outside location** - continue with the recording of performances at school but in an outside location, weather permitting, ensuring all social distancing guidelines are being met. Please remember that there is no requirement this year to record all performance exams on the same date, allowing centres the flexibility to record performances as and when there are suitable weather conditions.

Ensuring Fairness to All

Please remember that students should not be penalised for any deviations from the original specification requirements or adaptations made to the performance as a result of Covid, for example:

- **Length of performance** - where the performance is shorter than the requirements set out in the specification.
- **Accompaniment** - where a student requires an accompanist for their performance, either an online recording of the accompaniment may be used, or the student may choose to perform unaccompanied.
- **Levels of control** - while the controls may differ from those originally intended, these will remain valid assessments.
- **Quality of the recording** - where the quality of the video or audio recording is affected for example, due to the equipment being used or recording in an outside location, this should not affect the mark awarded by the teacher.

Using Existing Evidence

Where centres are unable to conduct performance recordings with the suggested adaptations, they may instead choose to use existing sources of evidence to represent AO1 in the final centre determined grade. Where these alternative sources of evidence are used, centres are reminded that they should still be assessed using the AO1 key features for the relevant qualification level, whether GCSE, AS or A2. These can be found in the appendix of the GCSE and GCE Music subject guidance:

- Class recordings of performances
- Homework recordings of performances
- Recordings of performances for graded music examinations, assessed against the relevant GCSE, AS or A2 AO1 key features. Marks for graded music exams alone should not be used as evidence.
- Recordings from other in-school performances, for example musicals or school concerts. Where these are used as evidence, the student should play a significant role in the performance.
- Recordings of performances from the previous year of study (only applicable to GCSE students using Year 11 performance work and A2 students using performance work recorded for AS). Where an A2 student is using a performance recorded for AS, centres are reminded that this should be re-marked against the performance criteria for A2 (please see GCE Music Subject Guidance Appendix 2).

For further guidance around assessing performance work, please see the [GCSE Music Subject Guidance](#), [GCE Music Subject Guidance](#) and the accompanying [webinar](#) available on the CCEA website.

If you have any queries regarding the content of this circular please contact:

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