

Amplification and further support in applying the criteria.

This information does not replace the criteria in Appendix A of the published specification. It is intended to help teachers when applying the criteria before submitting marks. You can also look at:

- guidance in the Appendix A of the specification which follows the criteria.
- the moderator’s report to each centre every year – see your exams officer.
- the principals’ report, which can be found on the Eduqas website.
- exemplar work which is published as part of the CPD materials.

Extra guidance

Quality of recordings – it must be possible to hear the candidate clearly to assess them effectively. Centres are advised to check the levels before recording and check the recordings before submission.

Performance submissions which are under 4 minutes in total will face a penalty. Please see the table on Appendix A of the specifications.

Scores or leadsheets must be provided for every candidate in order to establish the evidence for the award of marks under Accuracy. Guide recordings are not acceptable as an alternative to a score.

There is guidance relating to levels of difficulty in Appendix A of the specification. Any piece which is listed on an accredited Graded examination syllabus will be accepted at that grade, as long as the same edition is used.

If a piece is altered in any way this should be marked on the score. Removing the most complicated parts may lower the level of difficulty.

Using the bands.

In each column of the assessment criteria there are 4 bands of marks. Overall, the consideration when deciding which band to place a mark in can be simplified to this:

Band 4 (10-12 marks)	Convincing all the time.
Band 3 (7-9 marks)	There are some unconvincing moments.
Band 2 (4-6 marks)	The performance is not convincing, but there are some successful moments.
Band 1 (1-3 marks)	Everything is limited, e.g., inaccuracies throughout, poor technique, little to no understanding of the style.
0	Nothing is submitted.

Overall, when you assess a performance, it may be helpful to consider the overall impression before looking at the criteria. Note that the criteria are the same for solo and ensemble performances. At all times marks should be awarded positively for the evidence presented.

Accuracy – this should be judged in comparison to the score or leadsheet provided, including any annotations which should be made in advance of the performance.

- Does the candidate perform the correct pitches and rhythms?
- Is the speed appropriate to the piece, taking into consideration any given tempo markings?
- Is the tempo maintained throughout? Does the candidate slow down to manage difficult passages?
- Are there any hesitations or breakdowns in the performance?
- Are the marked dynamics followed throughout the performance?

- Does the candidate demonstrate appropriate phrasing?
- Are the articulation marks followed accurately?
- Are all other performance directions followed? E.g., rit/rall, change of vocal sound in a rap, harmonics, strum patterns, etc.
- In a sequenced performance have the performance directions been followed through the use of velocity changes, effects etc.
- In an improvisation does the material performed fit with any accompaniment and the chosen stimulus? Is the pulse maintained?

Technical Control

- Is the performance in tune throughout? Note that occasional out of tune notes could be classed as errors in accuracy (column 1) but more constant intonation issues are technical control (column 2.) Do not “penalise” a candidate twice for the same error.
- Is the technique convincing and appropriate to this level? The standard level of difficulty is equivalent to Grade 3. A very simple piece would not provide an opportunity for candidates to demonstrate evidence to support marks in a higher band. For example, normal piano technique involves using two hands independently.
- Is the tone control convincing and appropriate at this level and to the piece? This could include diaphragm control for singers, woodwind and brass players, touch for pianists, stick control for percussionists, bow control for string players, or in a sequenced performance the use of velocity and attack.
- How well is the performance projected?

Expression and Interpretation

- Is the performance expressive?
- Is the style demonstrated appropriate to the piece?
- Does this performance feel complete and satisfying?
- Is there evidence of effective rapport, empathy, and interaction between performers in an ensemble, or where appropriate between a soloist and accompanist?
- Is there an effective balance between the live performer and a backing track, if used?
- Is there effective balance between live performers?
- Can the candidate be clearly heard over the accompaniment?

Programme Note

Band 4 (10-12 marks)	Showing in-depth and detailed understanding.
Band 3 (7-9 marks)	Showing general understanding.
Band 2 (4-6 marks)	Showing some understanding only.
Band 1 (1-3 marks)	Showing limited understanding.
0	Nothing is submitted.

Again, refer to the assessment criteria and the advice in the table above.

This should be a substantial piece of written work - between 500 and 1000 words - based on a piece which has been performed and submitted for assessment.

A top band programme note will contain:

- Full coverage of all 4 bullet points in the assessment criteria band.
- An explanation of how at least 3 musical elements are used in the piece. (It is not necessary to refer to all elements.)
- A link to an area of study.
- A short explanation of the style and the context of the piece – it is not necessary to give a full biography of the composer or details of their other works.
- An evaluation of the technical demands of the piece as opposed to an evaluation of the candidate's own performance. For example, candidates could refer to sections or bars which contain fast notes, difficult position changes or co-ordination issues, breath control issues, large leaps in pitch, extreme dynamics etc.
- Accurate use of subject specific terminology.
- Accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar.