2023 VCE Music Repertoire Performance external assessment report

General comments

VCE Music Repertoire Performance is a performance-based study that allows students to present a live performance examination of a program of contrasting music works that represent a diverse range of techniques and expressive qualities, reflecting an understanding of a range of music styles and performance conventions. Students must include in their performance program at least one work from the Prescribed List of Instruments and Works published annually on the VCAA website, at least one ensemble work, and at least one work created by an Australian composer since 1990. The performance examination contributes 50 per cent to the study score.

On the day of the performance examination, students have a maximum of 30 minutes in the examination room, immediately prior to the examination, to set up and/or complete any required warm-up activities and/or sound checks.

There is no minimum length of performance time for this examination; however, performances must not exceed the following maximum lengths of performance time:

* 20 minutes for one assessed performer
* 25 minutes for two or three assessed performers
* 30 minutes for four assessed performers
* 35 minutes for five or six assessed performers.

Performance program students may be assessed primarily as soloists or as ensemble musicians. Students presenting for assessment are required to nominate, in VASS, a principal instrument (for students primarily presenting as soloists) or their intention to perform primarily as a member of an ensemble. Students may perform their program on more than one instrument; however, they must perform their selected work from the Prescribed List of Instruments and Works on their nominated principal instrument or on a VCAA-approved alternative instrument.

Students are assessed on all instruments on which they perform during the examination. Students presenting for assessment may use sheet music (including music on an iPad in flight mode) and/or other musical notation.

Specific information

Note: The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding, resulting in a total of more or less than 100 per cent.

A set of seven examination criteria is used to score the performance examination. Each criterion is graded independently by two assessors using a marking scale of 1–10. In total, the assessment is graded to a maximum score of 140.

In 2023 the Music Performance Repertoire students who scored highly demonstrated:

* accuracy, fluency and control over a range of music styles
* a diverse range of techniques
* a diverse range of dynamics and nuances
* excellent expression with nuances to highlight the stylistic characteristics
* a diverse tonal range and tone production techniques representative of the styles performed
* excellent ensemble techniques, including balance, empathy and synchronisation, as well as responding to and providing real-time cues
* a well-developed performance program, with a range of music styles and characters.

In 2023 the Music Performance Repertoire students who did not score well often demonstrated:

* a lack of accuracy and control of rhythms, pitch and time
* poor ensemble skills, such as not listening and adjusting the balance as needed, and/or not interacting with or acknowledging the other live performers
* little variety in the program
* a lack of expression or nuance in the performed phrasing
* little understanding of the stylistic characteristics
* a program of works beyond their technical ability.

Criterion 1: Compliance with the requirements of the task

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 0 | 0.9 | 0 | 99 | 10 |

* at least one work from the Prescribed List of Instruments and Works
* at least one work created by an Australian Composer since 1990
* at least one ensemble work

It is evident from the data that there were a few compliance issues. Students are reminded to review the requirements and to visit the VCAA website to see the prescribed list of works and exam specifications.

Criterion 2: Skill in performing a range of music styles and/or characters through a program of work of appropriate complexity

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 15 | 18 | 19 | 16 | 20 | 7.7 |

Accuracy as notated, at referenced tempo, is an important element of this criteria.

Criterion 3: Performs a diverse range of techniques to demonstrate control consistency and variation of duration throughout the program

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 15 | 18 | 18 | 14 | 22 | 7.6 |

The level of control of a diverse range of techniques is an important consideration when developing the performance program.

Criterion 4: Performs a diverse range of tone production techniques, including quality, projection, and variety of sound (tone production) as appropriate to the instrument throughout the program

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 4 | 10 | 15 | 20 | 19 | 11 | 21 | 7.5 |

Students need to be careful in their choice of performance pieces. Not all performance programs allow for a diverse range of tone production techniques and variety of tone production.

Criterion 5: Demonstrate ensemble techniques

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 2 | 8 | 16 | 14 | 17 | 16 | 25 | 7.8 |

It is evident from the data that the balance, empathy and synchronisation between instruments, or between parts, and the responsiveness to providing and responding to real-time cues in ensemble performance needs to be further developed.

Criterion 6: Demonstrate a stylistic and informed interpretation of the chosen repertoire

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0 | 0.3 | 2 | 4 | 8 | 16 | 18 | 18 | 13 | 22 | 7.6 |

The expressive communication beyond the notation, through the use of appropriate nuances, including accent, articulation, ornamentation and embellishments, phrasing and instrument-specific techniques, can assist students to demonstrate their understanding of the stylistic characteristics and the interpretation of the chosen repertoire.

Criterion 7: Demonstrates appropriate performance decisions relating to the context of the performance, the physical space, and any equipment and technologies used

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mark | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.2 | 0 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 4 | 9 | 16 | 19 | 20 | 31 | 8.3 |

Given the 30-minute warm-up and set-up time in the examination room prior to the exam, it is expected that the physical space and the use of any equipment and technologies is managed well to produce a balanced sound in the performance space. Poise and focus throughout is another consideration for this criterion.

Things to consider

* Accompanists need to be chosen wisely. Rehearse often and consider balance.
* Make sure the program is compliant with the conditions published for your instrument (Criterion 1).
* If you are self-accompanied, you will need another live performer to cover the ‘ensemble’ component (Criteria 1 and 5).
* Make sure the examination is a performance, and practise performing the program as a whole.
* Utilise opportunities to demonstrate a diversity of styles, techniques, tonal qualities and structures within the time allowed.
* Try to craft your program so that every work chosen sounds different and enables you to highlight different skills.
* Fill out your program sheet clearly and in the correct order of your performance.
* Choose pieces within your technical difficulty range.
* Ensure that you have the stamina to perform your entire program at the same high standard.
* There is no official minimum length of a compliant program, although a compliant 10- or 15-minute program is less likely to explore as diverse a range of styles, techniques and so on as a 20-minute performance.
* Be prepared for contingencies. Bring extra leads and cables, extension cords, strings, reeds and sticks, as you would for any particularly important performance (Criterion 7).
* Ensure that you understand which instruments are supplied at venues and which you will need to bring to the venue. In most cases, venues only supply an acoustic piano. This information is available in the advice document on the VCAA website
* Amplifiers and drum kits must be used within OHS standards and not exceed safe listening levels.
* Limit the use of drinking bottles to small occasional sips, and, if needed, hydrate well before the performance. Overuse and misuse of the water bottle can detract from the performance (Criterion 7).