2022 VCE Music Investigation external assessment report

This was the final year of delivery for Music Investigation. This study will not be offered in 2023.

All information and observations contained in this report are not relevant to VCE Music in 2023 and beyond. Teachers and students are advised to refer only to the current study design when planning and delivering VCE music courses from 2023 onwards.

Information contained in this report should only be used as a reflection on the old study.

General information

VCE Music Investigation was a performance-focused study offered by the VCAA until 2022. Students selected an investigation topic to guide their performance research leading towards a final Unit 4 performance examination.

Assessment was based solely on the published VCAA criteria and not on the overall quality of the concert experience. Assessors reported instances in which students failed to effectively address the examination criteria despite presenting highly competent performances.

The Music Investigation study primarily focused on performance and required students to select an investigation topic that framed their year's performance research. Successful topics identified a range of performance techniques within a stylistic context. High-scoring students worked with knowledgeable individuals and demonstrated their acquired knowledge through the act of performance, showing sophistication and nuance through the effective use of tone, idiomatic performance techniques and subtle control of articulation and phrasing.

Students who did not score well typically performed programs with few errors but were less successful in conveying a practical knowledge of their topic's inherent sophistication and nuance.

Performer’s statement

The performer's statement was an important part of the external assessment for students, as it helped assessors understand the performance research that the student had undertaken throughout the year. However, compliance with the conditions and advice regarding the performer's statement was varied in 2022.

Many students failed to utilise the potential of the statement to guide assessors to the highlights of their skills, and some arrived at the examination venue without being aware of the requirement to submit the statement. The most effective statements were concise and referred only to the relevant commentary on performance, taking into account the examination criteria. Statements that overly referenced historical information had no value for assessors nor students.

Administration

It was the responsibility of schools to register/enrol their students for the performance examination as either a soloist or as a member of a group/ensemble. The classroom teacher needed to ensure every student was entered in VASS with the correct instrument code for solo candidates or be registered as GR (Group) for all group candidates (regardless of the instrument(s) to be performed on the day of the examination).

Criteria

This report highlights the importance of understanding the criteria-based assessment of the Unit 4 Music Investigation performance examination. The examinations were assessed by two assessors using the published assessment criteria. Assessors noted that some students appeared to lack an understanding of the criteria, and performance programs were presented without consideration of the criteria.

Teachers were advised to review the VCAA examination criteria and have discussions with instrumental staff early in the year (when selecting repertoire). Paying attention to the phrase ‘skill in…’ in the criteria descriptions helped ensure that the performance programs met the requirements of the examination.

The Music Investigation study was evaluated on the following 11 criteria.

Criterion 1: Compliance with the requirements of the task

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 97 | 9.9 |

Criterion 2: Skill in performing accurately and with clarity

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 6.19 | 10 | 13 | 15 | 23 | 29 | 8.2 |

Criterion 3: Skill in performing a range of techniques with control and fluency

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 11 | 11 | 16 | 19 | 31 | 8 |

Criterion 4: Skill in producing a range of expressive tonal qualities relevant to the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.3 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 16 | 15 | 9 | 15 | 35 | 8 |

Criterion 5: Skill in the interpretive control of articulation and phrasing within the context of the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 13 | 11 | 17 | 35 | 8.1 |

Criterion 6: Skill in differentiating the musical lines in the selected works as appropriate to the investigation topic and as appropriate to the instrument and/or instrumental context

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 11 | 15 | 16 | 37 | 8.2 |

Criterion 7: Skill in differentiating the structures and textures within each work as appropriate to the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 8 | 10 | 10 | 12 | 16 | 39 | 8.2 |

Criterion 8: Skill in presenting an interpretation of the works that is informed by historical and/or contemporary practices and conventions relevant to the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 12 | 11 | 10 | 17 | 39 | 8.2 |

Criterion 9: Skill in performing with musicality through creativity and individuality

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 16 | 38 | 8.1 |

Criterion 10: Skill in demonstrating how the musical works in the program are representative of the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 10 | 18 | 39 | 8.2 |

Criterion 11: Skill in the presentation of a cohesive program relevant to the investigation topic

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Marks | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Average |
| % | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.5 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 10 | 13 | 14 | 47 | 8.6 |

The highest-scoring students demonstrated precision in technical aspects such as pitch, rhythm, dynamics, articulation, clarity and tone production, as well as sophisticated interpretation skills and creativity. Students who did not score well often performed poorly due to poor repertoire selection, limited developed techniques and a lack of sophistication in performance.