

VCE Music Performance 2017–2021

Performance examination – October

Examination specifications

Overall conditions

The examination will be undertaken at a time, date and location to be set annually by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). VCAA examination rules will apply. Details of these rules are published annually in the *VCE and VCAL Administrative Handbook*.

The examination time, date and location for each student, and related examination documentation will be made available by the VCAA directly to education and training providers with students enrolled in VCE Music Performance for the year in question in Term 3 as a VASS download.

Students presenting for assessment must arrive at the examination centre 30 minutes before their scheduled examination time.

- Solo performers will have a maximum of 30 minutes prior to the examination to complete any required warm-up activities in a warm-up room. There will be a maximum of 5 minutes in the examination room, immediately prior to the examination, for students playing Contemporary Double Bass, Electric Bass or Guitar – Contemporary Popular, and a maximum of 30 minutes for students playing percussion or drum kit, to set up and/or complete any required sound checks.
- Group performers will have a maximum of 30 minutes immediately prior to the examination to set up and/or complete any required warm-up activities and/or sound checks in the examination room.

Performances must not exceed the following maximum lengths of time:

- 25 minutes for a solo performance or a single student presenting for assessment in a group
- 30 minutes for two or three students presenting for assessment in a group
- 35 minutes for four students presenting for assessment in a group
- 40 minutes for five or six students presenting for assessment in a group

If the performance is still in progress when the maximum length of time has been reached, the assessors will stop the performance.

There is no minimum length of performance for this examination.

Students presenting for assessment may not leave the examination room during the examination.

The examination will be marked by a panel appointed by the VCAA using criteria published annually by the VCAA.

The performance examination will contribute 50 per cent to the study score.

Content

The *VCE Music Study Design 2017–2021* ('Unit 3: Music Performance' and 'Unit 4: Music Performance') is the document for the development of the examination.

All of the key knowledge and skills that underpin Outcome 1 in Units 3 and 4, and the definitions in the 'Cross-study specifications' (pages 12–14) are examinable.

Format

The examination will take the form of a live performance of a program of music works. Students will also submit related examination documentation.

Each student presenting for assessment is required to present a live performance of contrasting works that represent a range of styles and diversity of character.

Students presenting for assessment, in consultation with their enrolling education and training provider, select the works in the program and the instrument(s) they will use in their performance in accordance with the requirements for the examination.

Group performance program

For students presenting for assessment as a member of a group, the program of works:

- must include at least two works selected from the current Prescribed List of Group Works, as published annually on the VCAA website, or be an approved alternative work
- must include at least two other works (no approval is required for these works)
- may include original works, for example, composed by the student/group
- must **not** include works presented by the student for assessment in Units 3 and 4 of VCE Music Investigation and/or the scored component of VCE VET Music Industry: Performance
- should allow students to demonstrate a range of complex technical and expressive skills, and use relevant performance conventions and artistic knowledge
- should represent a diversity of character and include works from a range of music styles and/or from different cultures, eras and geographical locations.

Solo performance program

For students presenting for assessment as a soloist, the program must comply with requirements for the selected instrument in the current Prescribed List of Notated Solo Works, as published annually on the VCAA website, or be an approved alternative work.

Alternative works (group and solo)

Students may apply for permission to perform alternative works that are not listed on a current prescribed list. Details of this process and the application form are published annually on the VCAA website.

Instruments

Any instrument(s) selected for study in solo or group performances must meet the requirements detailed in the 'Selection of instrument or voice' section of the study design (page 15).

For group performances, students presenting for assessment and non-assessed group performers may change instruments during the examination. Students presenting for assessment will be assessed on all instruments on which they perform during the examination. There should be only

one performer per musical part to ensure that the work of each student presenting for assessment is clearly discernible.

For solo performances, students presenting for assessment may change instruments during the examination in accordance with requirements for selected instruments identified in the Prescribed List of Notated Solo Works (published annually). Extra marks will **not** be awarded for the use of secondary instruments in self-accompaniment.

Alternative instruments (solo only)

The process for receiving approval for solo performances requiring alternative instruments is detailed in the 'Alternative instruments: for students enrolling in Music Performance and Music Investigation as soloists' section of the study design (page 16). The application form and further advice is available on the VCAA website.

Performance requirements

Students presenting for assessment must be enrolled in VCE Music Performance for the year in question. Students will be assessed as a solo performer **or** as a group performer according to their VASS enrolment.

Students may present for assessment only **once**; however, they may perform as a non-assessed accompanist/group performer in other VCE Music Performance examinations **after** they have completed the examination in which they are to be assessed.

Group performance conditions

A student presenting for assessment in a group performance must:

- be part of a group containing between two and eight concurrent performers, where the minimum number of students presenting for assessment is one and the maximum is six
- be identified to assessors
- perform an obviously discernible role that allows them to clearly demonstrate their performance skills in accordance with the published assessment criteria, with each student presenting for assessment able to take a leading role during the examination.

Groups comprising two members may have a non-assessed student performer but not a non-assessed non-student performer.

Groups comprising three or more members may have multiple non-assessed student performers but only **one** non-assessed non-student performer.

Solo performance conditions

Students presenting for assessment in a solo performance must perform either completely solo and/or accompanying themselves, and/or with a pre-recorded accompaniment, and/or with **one** non-assessed accompanist. Teachers are strongly advised to read the information about accompaniment requirements that is specified in the Prescribed List of Notated Solo Works (published annually). Self-accompaniment should only be viewed as a matter of convenience rather than an effort to gain extra marks.

Non-assessed performers (in group examinations) and accompanists (in solo examinations)

During the examination, non-assessed group performers and accompanists must contribute only in a supporting role, for example, as supporting instrumentalists/vocalists, to the student(s) presenting for assessment. The program of music must be designed and performed in such a way that non-assessed group performers and accompanists do not assume anything other than a supporting role.

Non-assessed group performers may include students enrolled in the VCE or VCAL for the year in question (i.e. non-assessed student performers) and a maximum of one teacher/trainer **or** one individual not associated with the VCE or VCAL (i.e. non-assessed non-student performer). Non-assessed group performers may change during the examination and must leave the examination room when not required.

Non-assessed non-student performers in groups must **not**:

- play the same instrumental part concurrently with a student presenting for assessment
- play the same unison/melodic line concurrently with a student presenting for assessment
- take a prominent role in a group's presentation or group interaction
- announce songs, count in, conduct, direct or lead the group
- visually or audibly obscure the performance of students presenting for assessment
- improvise or take solos that significantly reduce the time for the students presenting for assessment.

In solo examinations, accompanists may include students enrolled in the VCE or VCAL for the year in question, professional musicians, teachers/trainers and/or other individuals. Accompanists must leave the examination room when not required for performance of a work. Accompanists may omit repeats and/or extended sections of the work where the student presenting for assessment is not performing. Accompanists should not play the same unison/melodic line with a student presenting for assessment for a significant amount of the work, in particular when accompanying singers. Accompanists may change instruments during the examination.

Examination documentation

Upon arrival at the examination centre, each student presenting for assessment must provide a copy of their Student Advice Slip to verify their enrolment in VCE Music Performance and personal identification showing their full name with a clear colour photograph.

Upon entering the examination room, each student presenting for assessment must submit to the assessors a completed Performance Program Sheet.

The examination documentation will be made available by the VCAA directly to education and training providers with students enrolled in VCE Music Performance for the year in question in Term 3 as a VASS download only.

Approved resources, materials and equipment

Examination centre

Examinations will be conducted in an acoustically suitable space to be determined by the VCAA. Suitable spaces will be chosen for examinations on large fixed instruments, such as a pipe organ.

Piano

An acoustic piano will be provided. Students presenting for assessment as solo performers who require a piano (Contemporary Piano and/or Pianoforte) will have the choice of playing a grand piano or an upright piano.

Education and training providers with students presenting for assessment as group performers where more than one piano is required must contact the VCAA to ensure prior arrangements are made to access additional pianos.

Percussion equipment

Some percussion equipment, including a drum kit, will be provided for students presenting for assessment as solo performers where needed. Education and training providers with students enrolled in Units 3 and 4 of VCE Music Performance will be notified of provided equipment via a VASS download in Term 3.

Microphones

Students presenting for assessment as soloists may not use microphones. This includes students who select their performance program from the Voice – Contemporary Popular list and students who select their performance program from the Voice – Classical list.

In group performances students may use microphones as required.

Other instruments and equipment

Students presenting for assessment, non-assessed group performers and accompanists will bring their own instrument(s) – other than pianos – required for the live performance, including playback equipment for pre-recorded accompaniment, PA systems, amplifiers, leads and music stands.

Students presenting for assessment should determine the best position for themselves and their instrument(s)/equipment, and tune their own instrument(s) as appropriate.

All electronic instruments and equipment should be preset and tested prior to the examination. Batteries should be adequately charged. Provisions should be made for any instrument or equipment failure, including easy access to spare reeds, strings, cables, batteries, etc.

It should be noted that lighting, props or other elaborate staging will not be assessed and will not contribute to the marking of the performance.

Teachers, trainers and other personnel may provide assistance with unloading, setting up and packing up instruments and/or equipment before and/or after the examination.

Sheet music

Students presenting for assessment as a member of a group, non-assessed group performers and accompanists may use sheet music and/or other musical notation.

Students who present their performance as a soloist and enrol for Voice – Contemporary must perform their complete program of works from memory.

Students who present their performance as a soloist and enrol for Voice – Classical must also perform their program from memory, except when performing works from the Oratorio and Medieval Chant categories, where the use of sheet music is required.

Students are not required to provide copies of music for the assessors except for works selected from Section B of the Prescribed List of Group Works and other notated works for groups, such as piano trios and vocal ensembles.

Overall sound

Electronic mixing or adjusting of the overall sound, including tone, volume and balance, by any person other than the student(s) presenting for assessment is **not** permitted. Non-assessed accompanists/group performers may adjust the sound of their own instrument(s) so long as the adjustment does not adjust the sound of the instrument(s) of the student(s) presenting for assessment.

The sound volume during the performance must be within the limits prescribed by work health and safety (WHS) regulations as 'safe'. The examination may be stopped if the assessors deem the volume of the performance to be at dangerous levels.

Audiences

Audiences will not be permitted in the examination room during the examination.

Relevant references

The following publications should be referred to in relation to the VCE Music Performance examination:

- *VCE Music Study Design 2017–2021* (Unit 3: Music Performance and Unit 4: Music Performance)
- *VCAA Bulletin*

The following publications are published annually:

- VCE Units 3 and 4 Music Performance and Music Investigation – Prescribed List of Group Works
- VCE Units 3 and 4 Music Performance and Music Investigation – Prescribed List of Notated Solo Works
- VCE Music Performance – Alternative Works Application Form
- VCE Music Performance – Alternative Works Guidelines and Criteria
- VCE Music Performance – Alternative Instruments Application Form
- VCE Music Performance – Alternative Instruments Guidelines and Criteria
- VCE Music Performance and VCE Music Investigation – Alternative Instrument Resource
- VCE Music Performance – Performance examination description and criteria

Advice

Students wishing to apply for an alternative work and/or alternative instrument must follow the guidelines published annually on the VCAA website.

Students presenting for assessment should focus particularly on demonstrating a depth of sophistication and expression and/or nuance in the live performance.