# 2018 Music Subjects – Subject Assessment Advice

## Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

2018 was the last year of teaching Composing and Arranging, Ensemble Performance, Solo Performance, Music Individual Study, Music Technology, Musical Styles, Musicianship, and Performance Special Study. The subject assessment advice for each of these subjects is included in this document.

From 2019, the following Stage 2 music subjects will be offered: Music Performance – Ensemble, Music Performance – Solo, Music Explorations, and Music Studies.

# Composing and Arranging Subject Assessment Advice

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: Folio of Minor Works

For this assessment type, students create a folio of compositions and/or arrangements with a total duration of 6-7 minutes. The folio should demonstrate a range of musical styles, the ability to write for different instrument combinations, musical flair, originality and creativity, and thorough understanding of musical notation and score presentation.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated knowledge and understanding of the chosen instruments through appropriate and detailed scoring and use of a variety of performance techniques
* wrote pieces with defined structures and inventive development of melodic, harmonic and rhythmic material
* matched highly developed creativity with strong technical skills in scoring and careful editing
* arranged simple melodies in contrasting styles from the original, using basic melody/chord sheet music (not piano score) as the source material
* used a theme or motive (rhythmic or melodic) as the basis for a work.

The less successful responses commonly:

* wrote poorly for the selected instruments
* focused more on the continual creation of new, unrelated ideas rather than the development of existing ideas
* did not carefully edit their scores, resulting in misspelt rhythms, unnecessary or incorrect accidentals, poorly placed performance indications and generally hard to read notation
* voiced chords unevenly, especially when writing for transposing instruments or instruments using different clefs.

## Assessment Type 2: Commentary

This assessment type is a companion to Assessment Type 1: Folio of Minor works. Students present an oral or written commentary in which they discuss the musical elements evident within the folio.

The more successful responses commonly:

* focused upon the musical techniques and skills used in writing the music rather than the feeling they were trying to engender in the listener
* identified the salient points and illustrated these with clearly labelled musical examples which included instruments, bar numbers and clefs
* were replete with correctly applied terminology
* gave the reader a clear indication of the style and form of the work, what the main themes were and what techniques had been applied and where
* analysed rather than described the music.

The less successful responses commonly:

* made general statements about the nature of the work without providing specific examples (eg. ‘changing harmony’)
* contained primarily superficial overviews without demonstrating higher order thinking and analytical language
* used musical examples poorly
* contained significant errors in analysis, including keys and key relationships and the incorrect naming of musical techniques
* focussed on lower level musical elements (eg. dynamics) and the supposed emotional response of the audience.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Major Work

This assessment consists of one major composition or arrangement of 3-5 minutes’ duration, and an accompanying analysis in oral or written form.

The characteristics of successful and less successful responses for this assessment type mirror that of Assessment Types 1 and 2. In addition to these characteristics, the following was observed:

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a thorough grasp of the range of techniques available to composers and arrangers
* wrote highly creative and detailed works and presented the intricacies of notation clearly and effectively
* were able to offer in depth analysis of the music, using appropriate high-end terminology and clear musical examples.

The less successful responses commonly:

* exceeded the 3-5 minute duration
* wrote for very large ensembles/orchestras without demonstrating consistent attention to detail and editing through the entire work
* included instruments which appeared to have little to no role to play in the ensemble, and could have been omitted or substituted for by other parts.

# Ensemble Performance Subject Assessment Advice

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: First Performance

Students prepared and presented 8-10 minutes of their chosen repertoire for this assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* completed the time requirements as specified in the Learning and Assessment Plan
* presented a contrasting range of works that demonstrated musical and stylistic understanding
* presented works that were appropriately aligned with the technical abilities and musical maturity of the student
* showed great attention to all musical details
* demonstrated consistent control of tone and dynamics in the performance
* demonstrated fluent technique, controlled tone, and accurate dynamics in individual part testing

The less successful responses commonly:

* lacked the technical fluency required in the repertoire
* paid scant attention to the musical indications marked on the score
* included presentations of works that were under-rehearsed or too technically demanding for the student
* presented as part of an ensemble but did not supply individual part testing

## Assessment Type 2: Second Performance

Students prepared and presented 10 – 12 minutes of their chosen repertoire for this assessment. The repertoire presented must be different from Assessment Type 1: First Performance.

The more successful responses commonly:

* incorporated advice from teachers and audience member feedback in their performance preparation
* demonstrated a well-developed technique in their performance
* performed in a manner that showed a good understanding of the stylistic elements and technical demands of the repertoire.

The less successful responses commonly:

* failed to complete the required minimum time for this assessment
* were under-prepared and/or included a pattern of inaccurate parts
* performed parts that were beyond the technical level of the student
* failed to provide individual part testing to demonstrate their skills
* performed simplistic works that limited the student’s ability to achieve at the highest levels

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Final Performance

Students present a 10–12 minute final performance of works for external assessment. These may be performances of works that have been performed in either of the previous performance assessments.

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed the results of extensive preparation of their part for each work
* featured carefully selected programs of works that allowed students to demonstrate achievement at the highest level possible, through repertoire that was within the technical capabilities and musical understanding of the ensemble performer
* ensured the performance environment was organised appropriately; where possible, equipment was pre-set, sound checks had been carried out, and acoustics were conducive to the repertoire and type of ensemble
* performed part testing with confidence and demonstrated understanding of and familiarity with the repertoire

The less successful responses commonly:

* showed poor preparation and limited understanding of the musical style
* included ensemble works that did not allow the student to demonstrate a mature understanding of style, phrasing and genre
* allowed for limited opportunity for the student to achieve against the assessment design criteria of Accuracy and Technique
* demonstrated a lack of technical and musical understanding and control, during part testing

# Musicianship Subject Assessment Advice

## Overview

Subject assessment advice, based on the previous year’s assessment cycle, gives an overview of how students performed in their school and external assessments in relation to the learning requirements, assessment design criteria, and performance standards set out in the relevant subject outline. They provide information and advice regarding the assessment types, the application of the performance standards in school and external assessments, and the quality of student performance.

Teachers should refer to the subject outline for specifications on content and learning requirements, and to the subject operational information for operational matters and key dates.

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: Skills Development

These tests provide an opportunity for the students to demonstrate the development of their musicianship skills over the course of the year

As well as being important assessment items in themselves, the two tests in this assessment type are a valuable preparation for the external assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated high levels of competency in all areas, particularly rhythmic and melodic dictation, and harmonisation
* comprised assessments that covered the full scope of theory concepts for the subject progressively across the two tests, including the harmony. For example, Test 1 covering part of the scope of Musicianship at a less demanding level, with Test 2 covering the full scope at a level that reflects the higher learning required for the examination
* featured Skills Development tests that were designed with a range of questions that were of increasing levels of challenge, giving students the best opportunity to demonstrate their skills and knowledge at the highest levels, as described by the performance standards. For example, an assessment that included rhythmic and melodic dictation questions, as well as a comprehensive harmony question, allowed students to demonstrate both Knowledge and Understanding and Practical Application at the highest levels
* included a range of question types, reflecting those found in previous examinations (available as support materials on the Musicianship minisite) rather than an exclusive reliance on routine questions such as multiple choice
* contained tests that were in alignment with the time requirements prescribed in the subject outline.

The less successful responses commonly:

* were inconsistent in the application of skills and knowledge, demonstrating degrees of competency in some areas but providing less evidence in others
* comprised a collection of simple questions that assessed the same skill or understanding, such as multiple scale-writing questions or large sections of compositional techniques questions, that did not interrogate students’ understanding of more complex concepts, such as those found in dictation or harmony questions
* did not address the full range of skills, knowledge and understanding outlined in the relevant learning requirements (1-4).

## Assessment Type 2: Arrangement

The Arrangement provides an opportunity for students to synthesize their understanding of theoretical concepts, musical style and notation skills, through the creative development of an arrangement based on a pre-existing melody, with an accompanying statement.

The more successful responses commonly:

• demonstrated well-designed form and structure — deciding how to start, develop, and finish the arrangement successfully is an important part of the arranging process, conceived at the outset

• revealed good knowledge of the capabilities of the chosen instruments and/or voices, often derived from the student’s first-hand familiarity with the properties of the chosen instruments and/or voices, or through feedback from musicians who play the instruments

• used simple melodies to arrange that allowed students to easily modify rhythmic, melodic and harmonic elements to show creativity and development of ideas

• demonstrated knowledge of style — this was particularly clear in the writing when students showed evidence of having listened to or played and analysed examples of music within their chosen style or styles

• included concise and clear written statements that detailed the technical features of the arrangement using appropriate terminology — the well-considered use of musical quotes made it easy to link commentary with the musical passages described

• presented the score in a format (either portrait or landscape) to allow for the appropriate reading of the notation, to resemble professionally produced scores

* featured careful editing to produce a musically articulate score with highly appropriate use of dynamics, expression, performance direction, articulation and phrasing.

The less successful responses commonly:

• were written for instruments such as voice, piano, or drums, without clear stylistic structure or strong harmonic foundation, and that used the rhythm section in a repetitive manner by using the ‘cut and paste’ function of the arranging software

• included incorrect note grouping, incorrectly written chords and harmonic progressions with little sense of structure or tonality

• were simplistic, demonstrating an inconsistent and/or restricted use of arranging techniques and lacked performance directions such as dynamics and tempo markings

• featured arrangements that indicated a lack of knowledge and understanding of the capabilities and ranges of the instruments used

• presented parts in the arrangement that produced music in the computer playback with the sound required, but were not playable by a real musician. For example, writing guitar parts, where multiple notes were provided to achieve the chord sounds desired, and drum parts, where mapping was presented incorrectly. Students could consider producing two copies of their arrangement at the completion of the arranging process: one that plays back in the desired manner, and can be used to create the recording; and one that reads correctly, with chord symbols for guitar and correct drum mapping, which is presented for marking and moderating

• provided musical quotes in the written statement that did not support the text of the statement. When musical quotes are used, they should demonstrate an aspect of the process undertaken in producing the arrangement. Quotes should also make musical sense, with instruments being labelled and clefs, key, and time signatures being included. This may involve producing the quotes separately in the scoring program, rather than simply using the ‘copy and paste’ function.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Examination

The Examination provided students with ample opportunity to demonstrate their level of Knowledge and Understanding, and Practical Application of the musical concepts, harmonisation skills, musical techniques, and aural recognition skills described in the subject outline.

Students and their teachers are encouraged to structure their revision around the content of the subject outline.

### Part 1: Theory, Aural Recognition, and Musical Techniques

Question 1

Almost 80% of students were able to correctly identify the three rhythms.

Question 2

Around 50% of students were able to identify the incorrect bars and then write the rhythm as it was presented. Students generally found (a) easier than (b) with a number of less successful responses incorrectly indicating bar 3 in (b) as the incorrect bar rather than bar 2.

Question 3

Around 16% of students were able to complete the rhythm successfully. The most effective responses took note of the anacrusis and provided a dotted minim in the last bar followed by a double bar-line.

Question 4

Around 30% of students were able to complete the rhythmic dictation correctly. The most successful responses picked up the dotted quaver-semiquaver-quaver figure at the start of bar 2, and the two semiquavers at the end of bar 3.

Question 5

Almost 60% of students were able to identify both pairs of intervals correctly.

Question 6

Almost 50% of students were able to identify and notate all three intervals correctly. The most successful responses recognised the minor third in part (a), the tritone (or augmented fourth or diminished fifth) in part (b) and the perfect octave in part (c). Less successful responses for part (b) recognised the interval as a minor sixth, and a number of students also identified the third interval as just ‘octave’ rather than correctly using the quality as well as the size.

Question 7

Over one-third of students were able to correctly identify both the tonality and time of these examples. The most successful students were able to identify the time signatures in (ii) as simple duple in (a) and compound triple in (b).

Question 8

Almost 40% of students were able to identify both melodies correctly.

Question 9

Approximately 36% of students were able to identify the type, and write the scale used, and correctly name the scale degree name of the note given.

Question 10

Around 40% of students were able to place the four missing melodic fragments correctly. Less successful students incorrectly identified the final fragment as G, B flat, C, missing the raised seventh in the minor key. The correct response was G, B natural, C.

Question 11

Students were challenged by this question, with only 3% of students able to notate the entire melody correctly. The most successful responses were able to utilise the chord symbols provided in the question to inform their choices about the notation in the melody. They also identified the G natural chromatic passing note in bar 4, and the A major arpeggio in inversion starting on E in bar 6.

Question 12

Almost 40% of students were able to complete all four chords correctly using D flat and E flat in part (a), and A sharp and G sharp in part (b).

Question 13

Around 30% of students were able to identify and complete both broken chords. A number of less successful students identified the chord in part (a) as F sharp minor in inversion rather than an A augmented triad.

Question 14

Over 40% of students identified both harmonic progressions correctly.

Question 15

Just over half of the students answered all three parts of this question successfully.

Question 16

Around 35% of students were able to answer the three parts of this question successfully.

Question 17

There were a variety of answers for these questions. The most successful responses were able to correctly rewrite the viola part into bass clef, including the key and time signatures. Additionally successful responses correctly identified the modulation in part (e) to D major, which is the sub-dominant key.

Question 18

Around 15% of students were able to answer all parts of this question successfully. The less successful responses were unable to correctly identify the chord at part (b) as A minor, with many confused by the timpani A being in bass clef, thus erroneously providing F major seventh as their answer. Others were unable to correctly identify the interval in part (f) as Major sixth.

Question 19

Over 40% of students were able to rewrite this excerpt correctly. Less successful responses tended to incorrectly present bar 3.

Question 20

This proved to be one of the more difficult questions with only 6% of students correctly answering all questions. Successful responses were able to identify the passing notes as the final notes in bar 2 in the tenor and bass, and correctly identify the modulations in Parts (c) and (d) as F minor and G minor.

### Part 2: Harmony

Question 21

The more successful responses commonly:

• substituted G minor seventh in the last half of bar six and C minor seventh for the first half of bar seven, moving the F dominant seventh chord to the last two beats of that bar.

• extended the C minor and F major chords in bar three to C minor seventh and F dominant seventh. Some students also chose to extend the E flat major chord in bar five to E flat major seventh.

• were generally accurate with writing the chords and demonstrating smooth voice-leading.

• created countermelodies that finished after the melody on a D to create a consonant interval with the final note of the melody. They also featured rhythmic motives used in the melody (crotchet then two quavers, dotted crotchet then quaver) and were active where the melody was not. Most students used an appropriate pitch range to allow melodic shape.

• wrote the correct key signature (one sharp) for the transposition and transposed all the notes up a major sixth.

The less successful responses commonly:

• tried to place a substitution chord in the second half of bar four, or in the second half of bar seven (leaving the F dominant seventh chord at the start of the bar).

• extended their chord by changing the B flat chord in bar eight to B flat major seventh, causing a clash with the melody note.

• did not use the middle-to-moderately low register when voicing chords in piano or keyboard style (i.e. avoiding writing above the third space C in the treble clef and writing the root notes in the bass clef as low as possible without using ledger lines). Students are also reminded it is best to write three notes in the treble clef, meaning where it is a seventh chord, the root note only appears in the bass clef.

• made excessive use of arpeggiated chords in the countermelody. Clashing pitches of notes between melody and countermelody (and the piano chords) are also best avoided.

• failed to avoid pitch clashes between the melody and countermelody.

• did not write the correct key signature, but transposed the notes correctly. Others wrote the correct key signature, but transposed down a minor third instead of up a major sixth.

Question 22

The more successful responses commonly:

* demonstrated a strong grasp of the performance standards in this question and showed a general grasp of the harmonic concepts required to answer the question appropriately. This included both starting and finishing in the tonic key (B flat major) and making successful use of the circle of fourths progression. Successful students used the 2-5-1 progression in the last half of bar seven and bar eight.
* recognised that the B natural in bar four indicated that the first modulation was to the supertonic (C minor)

• comprised chords in minims in most bars with an occasional chord in crotchets

• achieved the second modulation to the relative minor (G minor) in bars six and seven

• chose and executed chord extensions effectively– being mindful of potential clashes with the melody

• notated piano chord voicings that were playable and featured smooth voice-leading, with correctly-observed writing in the middle to moderately-low range.

The less successful responses commonly:

• attempted to modulate to a key based on the A flat in bar four

• either harmonised every crotchet in several bars or harmonised too many bars with semibreves

• began the modulation to the relative minor (G minor) in bar five, which created problems in the subsequent bars

• chose chord extensions that were either poorly executed or that clashed with the melody

• wrote piano chord-voicing that would have been difficult or even impossible to play, with issues such as exposed ninths or undesired semitone clashes

Question 23

The more successful responses commonly:

• used an imperfect cadence at the end of the first phrase, an interrupted cadence at the end of the second phrase, and finished the harmony successfully with a plagal cadence

• added a passing note in any of the three added parts

• placed the dominant seventh successfully at the beginning of the exercise or at the start of the second phrase

• used the passing 6/4 chord in a correct progression in bar one

• used appropriate harmonic rhythm and chose suitable chords

• used appropriate chord voicing, voice ranges and note doublings

• used correct chord spelling, and good voice leading, especially when using the leading note

• used the cadential 6/4 at the end of the first phrase as a part of an imperfect cadence

The less successful responses commonly:

• attempted to harmonise the question in G minor, rather than B flat major

• used too many passing notes (only one was required) thus causing problems with surrounding chords and voice leading

• omitted or incorrectly placed the passing and/or cadential 6/4 progressions

• chose unsuitable chords which made voice leading difficult, and at times, led to consecutive fifths or octaves

• failed to resolve the leading note to the tonic when utilising the dominant seventh chord

# Musical Styles Subject Assessment Advice

# School Assessment

Assessment Type 1: Skills Development

In this assessment, student study an approved topic, devised by the teacher, and undertake one 1-hour assessment incorporating short answers and extended answer questions.

The best tasks elicited answers that were relevant to the topic, invited a range of responses from students, engaged critical thinking in response to sophisticated musical techniques, and thoroughly tested the student’s knowledge of the aural, historical, cultural, stylistic and musical aspects of the topic.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had opportunity to utilise high-end musical terminology in the discussion and analysis of the music
* clearly articulated how the historical and cultural contexts of the topic influenced the resultant music
* analysed musical techniques such as harmony, rhythm, melody and texture

The less successful responses commonly:

* described musical elements rather than providing insightful analysis
* focussed on a narrow range of musical techniques and elements
* contained in-depth discussion of cultural and historical context, but provided limited discussion of the stylistic features of the music
* used musical terminology incorrectly.

## Assessment Type 2: Investigation

In this assessment, students write a 1500 word investigation (or equivalent multi-modal) on a topic of the student’s choice. The topic must be different from the other topics studied in the subject, and may be refined and developed throughout the year.

The more successful responses commonly:

* had a well-structured, thoughtful topic for investigation, and successfully articulated the findings of the research in relation to the topic
* used a range of resources to research the topic, and used footnotes correctly
* embedded relevant tables and musical examples in the writing, enabling the investigation to read fluently and clearly
* chose to investigate music with enough detail to enable perceptive analysis and allow opportunity for high end musical terminology.

The less successful responses commonly:

* responded to an investigation topic that, through its wording, made it difficult to address the full range of performance standards being assessed
* demonstrated competent rather than highly development aural skills
* approached the investigation as a ‘side by side’ analysis without integration of composers, styles, songs etc. This was particularly problematic when the question suggested there would be a ‘compare and contrast’ approach, or some intersection between the different music studied
* focused much of the investigation on lower end musical techniques
* used terminology incorrectly
* tended to narrate the music descriptively rather than analytically
* included tables and musical examples that were misleading and irrelevant to the discussion or were poorly placed and referenced within the body of the investigation.

# External Assessment

Assessment Type 3: Examination

In this assessment, students sit a 1½ hour exam in which they answer questions on two core topics studied throughout the year.

The more successful responses commonly:

* clearly addressed the question and presented an argument substantiated with examples
* understood the distinctions between musical elements and were able to focus on the relevant details in the music
* discussed higher level aspects of the music such as harmony, melodic structure, textural relationships, rhythmic development, form and motifs
* were able to synthesise observations and analytical points into a conclusion that answered the question
* wrote analytically using a range of musical terminology

The less successful responses commonly:

* did not address the question, and included irrelevant information in their answers
* focused on extraneous biographical, lyrical or contextual information rather than musical analysis
* made assertions without supplying clearly located musical evidence
* focused on lower level aspects of the music such as instrumentation, key, metre or tempo
* misapplied terminology.

### Topic 1: Bach

Students showed they had been well prepared to discuss aspects such as the concepts of ritornello form, keys, concertino, ripieno and the overall forms of the movements. They were less confident discussing the varied ways in which Bach uses the harpsichord within the concerto, and aspects of fugal structure discussed in the third movement did not go into much depth; few students were able to use correct terminology to discuss Bach's harmonic, contrapuntal or development techniques.

### Topic 3: Schubert

Few students studied this topic. Students were able to discuss the relationship of the text to the music and use examples to illustrate their points. They tended at times to get distracted by explaining the stories or meanings of the text in place of focusing on musical points. Schubert's techniques of depicting characters and word painting were well studied, but understanding of the harmonic and textural details was much less confidently understood.

### Topic 4: Stravinsky

This was again a popular choice from teachers. Students had been very well prepared to discuss some of the complex and groundbreaking ways in which Stravinsky superimposes musical material, in terms of tonality, rhythm and orchestration, but some students tended to also feel the need to include irrelevant material not needed to answer the question.

### Topic 6: The Blues

This topic was more popular for short answer questions than the essay question. Students were able to distinguish between the different eras and styles of the Blues to some degree, but had much more difficulty locating these differences in musical details. Musical terminology appropriate to the genre was fairly well known in terms of guitar techniques, but other aspects such as the melodic, rhythmic and harmonic features of the Blues were much less confidently described.

### Topic 8: Miles Davis

Few students studied this topic. Students understood the contexts of the different styles represented by these set pieces, but had difficulty going into depth in discussing Davis's improvisations and the harmonic and rhythmic features of the pieces.

### Topic 9: Beatles/Beach Boys

This topic was a popular essay response question. Better responses focused on the innovative instrumentation and recording techniques used in these songs, but many students struggled to discuss timbral characteristics without lapsing into vague and subjective language that was impossible to validate through analysis. Students were confident discussing the contextual features of the songs and the stories of their recording, but less confident in analysing the musical features

### Topic 10: Sculthorpe

Students had learnt most of the large scale programmatic elements of the piece well and had been instructed in the basic score details, but most struggled to respond to higher order questions asking them to look deeper into the music to discuss compositional techniques. Students found it hard to respond with appropriate depth and detail when asked to compare two sections of the piece.

# Music Individual Study

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: Folio

The requirements for this assessment type were the same as for previous years.

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed the music focus of the project in detail with strong evidence of planning
* were well researched and in most cases showed evidence of reflections on what had been learned from a variety of appropriate sources including professional musicians and/or music teachers
* communicated the learning either through videos of presentations that included PowerPoint slides showing evidence of research, skill development and learning and included relevant short video footage of aspects of the project or in written reports, with carefully selected aspects of their project through pictures using clear captions and succinct text
* analysed the researched information and personalised their response
* demonstrated reflection and critical self-appraisal through reference to planning schedules and adjustments to timelines

The less successful responses commonly:

* exceeded the word/page limit for this assessment type
* provided a recount of what the student did
* omitted or made minimal reference to learning in music ignoring key features of this subject’s assessment rubric
* failed to adjust planning schedules and or not include evidence of planning and/or research

## Assessment Type 2: Product

For this assessment students choose their topic, and after planning and researching developed a product. There were some amazing products produced by students this year in a range of quite different projects. The following project types will all be possible within the new stage 2 music subjects on offer for the first time in 2019.

* Students made instruments either from kits or components to a high standard and demonstrated their features confidently in videos that also showed the student making music on the finished product.
* Many chose to complete creative projects researching the art of composing original musical works/songs and completing 12 minutes of their own creations. Many were notated either fully or as a lead sheet and recorded to a high standard.
* Some students took the opportunity presented by working with community groups to further their music studies and give them performance opportunities, which allowed them to work towards a goal.
* Many research essays were presented that were clearly drafted and redrafted, based upon extensive sources, with sources well acknowledged, and a strong argument thread and conclusion.

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed a development in musical skills and knowledge
* used a large variety of sources including professionals who worked within the field relevant to their study
* reflected on the researched information and used this information to shape their project choices and final product
* sought frequent feedback from others during the development stages of their product
* analysed research findings and incorporated these in their product. For example:
* song writers sought inspiration from the songs of others by analysing the style of both the music and the lyrics
* instrument builders and restorers researched the relative merits of various components and chose the most cost effective to achieve their desired outcome

The less successful responses commonly:

* were poorly researched, using Internet resources without discriminating accuracy
* carried out interviews and surveys but failed to summarise findings from these or show the impact on their approach to their study
* submitted incomplete projects
* had a greater focus on the presentation for example
* the CD case artwork rather than the completion of the required 12 minutes of music, or the quality of the work
* the advertising and ticketing for a performance rather than the music being performed

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Report: Documentation of Skills and Evaluation

This provides an opportunity for students to reflect on their learning and evaluate their project.

A few teachers over scaffolded this task causing students to use some of their word count on aspects like time management and communication skills that were not always highly significant to the particular project and which decreased the number of words that could be devoted to discussions of the musical knowledge and skills gained through the study.

The more successful responses commonly:

* understood that the two 500 word documents could be taken as a whole and avoided making the same point in both. This gave opportunity to make more detailed presentations of the skills they developed and the musical outcomes achieved.
* presented evidence of their learning and newly acquired skills in highly efficient language
* reflected in a sophisticated manner on the processes and the outcomes of their project
* reflected on the researched information and used this information to justify and evaluate the effectiveness of the project
* reflected on the feedback provided and on survey and interview responses
* analysed the researched information and personalised their response.

The less successful responses commonly:

* provided a recount of the progression of the project
* focused on the practicalities of the event(s) for the topic ‘event management’ without any reference to the music presented as requested in the topic approval process
* used limited sources and did not reflect on these sufficiently to incorporate into the project what may have been useful findings.

# Music Technology

In 2018, students submitted recordings in a wide range of musical styles, including rock band, electronic, dance, hip hop, soundscapes, radio advertisements, and vocal recordings. The recordings presented showed a good balance between recording original songs or compositions and creating arrangements of covers. Most commentaries were in written essay form, although several filmed presentations and multimedia formats were also submitted.

Students who were most successful in this subject demonstrated a high degree of creativity and musical effectiveness, and approached their recordings from the perspectives of a music producer and an audio engineer, rather than only as an audio engineer.

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: Folio — Part 1

Approximately two-thirds of the students chose to record their three minor projects in a combination option. The remaining students chose a single recording option, divided approximately evenly between digital recording, MIDI sequencing, and loops and waves. Most commentaries were submitted in written essay form with screenshots and photographs.

The more successful responses

* demonstrated creative development
* showed textural contrast
* featured appropriate and varied use of the nominated recording process or processes within approximately 30 seconds
* clearly stated the nominated recording process or processes
* explained the function of the process
* used annotated diagrams or screen shots
* provided supporting evidence, such as original source loops and their alterations
* explained the recording process
* demonstrated appropriate use of technical and musical terminology
* described the changes made to the final sound
* were selective in their discussions, focusing upon their nominated processes and keeping within the combined limit of 700 words for all three commentaries.

The less successful responses

* demonstrated limited creative development
* made reduced use of textural contrast
* demonstrated only one application use of a nominated process
* repeated nominated processes in the commentary
* included unsupported or unannotated screenshots or diagrams
* provided little supporting evidence, such as original source loops or alterations made to them
* demonstrated limited use of technical or musical terminology
* included nominated processes that were not clearly explained or identified
* tended to discuss processes and procedures other than the nominated processes
* did not adhere to the word-limit.

## Assessment Type 2: Folio — Part 2

The more successful responses

* demonstrated creative development
* showed textural contrast
* featured appropriate and varied use of the nominated recording process or processes within approximately 30 seconds
* clearly stated the nominated recording process or processes
* explained the function of the process
* used annotated diagrams or screen shots
* provided supporting evidence, such as original source loops and their alterations
* explained the recording process
* demonstrated appropriate use of technical and musical terminology
* described the changes made to the final sound
* were selective with their discussions, focusing upon their nominated processes and keeping within the combined limit of 500 words for both commentaries.

The less successful responses

* demonstrated limited creative development
* made reduced use of textural contrast
* demonstrated only one application use of a nominated process
* repeated nominated processes in commentaries
* included unsupported or unannotated screenshots or diagrams
* provided little supporting evidence, such as original source loops or alterations made to them
* demonstrated limited use of technical or musical terminology
* included nominated processes that were not clearly explained or identified.
* tended to discuss processes and procedures other than the nominated processes.
* did not adhere to the word-limit.

### General information

Task designs that created an authentic purpose for these minor projects assisted many students to construct more complex music and address the A and B grade bands of the performance standards. Successful examples included advertising jingles, movie soundtracks, and song excerpts featuring drum, guitar, and vocal solos that emphasised the nominated production techniques within the required 30-second duration.

There were a number of students incorrectly combining projects, such as audio loops, digital recording, and MIDI combined into a single 30-second project. There was also a noted increase in the number of recordings that significantly exceeded the 30-second duration for a minor project.

The diversity of software tools now available to students will continue to cloud the distinction between MIDI and software/hardware synthesis. Care should be taken to ensure minor projects continue to focus upon developing technical process skills for a specific recording option.

Teachers are encouraged to assist the moderation process by including annotated performance standards rubrics or other assessment notes with moderation materials.

Teachers should carefully check the nominated processes for students’ minor project assessment. In some cases, teachers did not nominate any processes within their marking. A number of teachers nominated ineligible processes from other recording options or repeated previous process options, and some incorrectly created their own process options. Supporting audio data containing wave and loop data should be referred to as evidence within the commentary. A concerning tendency was seeing examples of student work containing audio tracks and screen shots that contained clipped recording signals, as well as inappropriate use of devices and terminologies.

## Assessment Type 3: Major Project

This component provides students with the opportunity to explore musical styles that they find motivating and engaging. It was pleasing that many students demonstrated an understanding of appropriate production and engineering techniques for the musical style of their recording. The majority of recordings were combination projects including audio, MIDI, and wave loops.

Students who were successful followed a task design that demonstrated the technical skills to accurately record a performance and then continue to improve the recording through music production and processing. Students who were most successful also matched the minor project recording options and processes closely to the skills and techniques required to successfully complete their major project.

The more successful responses

* used overdubbing and multi-tracking of instruments
* showed rearranging and editing of the recording
* demonstrated a discerning and appropriate use of EQ and FX processing
* considered textural and musical variety and development within the recording
* applied post-production mastering techniques to balance and reference the tone and volume intensity of their recording
* organised their commentary into clearly labelled sections
* provided supporting evidence such as original source loops and their alterations
* discussed aspects of pre-production and trial recordings
* provided track sheets with explanations of production decisions and processing
* demonstrated appropriate application and understanding of relevant core and option topics
* discussed recording and production influences
* focused upon an effective and appropriate musical outcome.

The less successful responses

* used single recording sessions with limited instrumentation
* made scant use of production editing or processing of the recording
* were less discerning with the accuracy of their musical performances
* displayed minimal form and textural contrast
* presented commentaries with limited structure and insight
* did not include supporting images, or included diagrams or screenshots that had limited relevance
* demonstrated little evidence of connection or application to the relevant core and option topics
* had partial discussion of recording and production influences
* showed a lack of supporting evidence, such as original source loops or alterations made to them
* did not adhere to the word-limit for the commentary (maximum of 1200 words).

# Performance Special Study Subject Assessment Advice

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: First Performance

Students prepared and presented a quarter to one half of their approved extended work for this assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* completed a performance that demonstrated a mature understanding of the style and structure of the approved repertoire
* presented works that were within the technical and musical abilities of the student
* demonstrated great attention to even the subtlest of musical details
* showed good control of tone and dynamics

The less successful responses commonly:

* needed more technical preparation to achieve the required fluency in the performance
* showed limited understanding of the style(s) presented
* paid partial attention to the musical indications marked on the score
* were presentations of works that appeared to be poorly rehearsed
* presented repertoire that was too demanding technically, for the student

## Assessment Type 2: Second Performance

Students prepared and presented one half to three quarters of the approved extended work not assessed in the First Performance.

The more successful responses commonly:

* incorporated advice from teachers and audience member feedback in their performance preparation
* demonstrated a well-developed technique in their performance, including a high level of tone control, accurate intonation, expressive dynamics, and clarity of articulation.
* understood the stylistic requirements of their approved work(s) and were able to meet all of the technical demands

The less successful responses commonly:

* were underprepared and/or inaccurate
* performed works that appeared to be too difficult for the performer, both technically and musically
* performed simplistic repertoire that limited the student’s ability to demonstrate achievement at the highest levels

## Assessment Type 3: Commentary

Students prepared and presented a commentary of their approved extended work that analysed the form, structure and musical features of the approved repertoire.

*The more successful responses commonly:*

* focused on the form and structure of the work(s), as well as the harmonic and rhythmic treatment of the compositional material
* discussed, analysed, and cited compositional devices employed by the composer
* included clearly labelled and referenced score extracts and examples to support their analysis
* used appropriate language and technical terms
* wrote succinctly and clearly within the prescribed work limit

*The less successful responses commonly:*

* wrote extensively about the history and societal context of the approved extended work
* provided limited and/or inaccurate annotations of the score to support their analysis
* used terminology inaccurately
* did not meet, or exceeded, the word limit prescribed for this assessment type

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 4: Final Performance

Students present a final performance of the entire extended work as approved, for external assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed the results of extensive practice and preparation of the work, and preparation with their accompanist (where relevant)
* were well-selected works that allowed students to demonstrate achievement at the highest level of their technical capabilities and musical understanding
* demonstrated familiarity with the requirements of a successful performance, including being comfortable with the performance space and acoustics.

The less successful responses commonly:

* showed limited preparation and understanding of the musical style
* presented repertoire that did not allow the student to demonstrate a mature understanding of style, and control of phrasing, tone and dynamics
* allowed limited opportunity for the student to achieve against the assessment design criteria of Accuracy and Technique

# Solo Performance Subject Assessment Advice

# School Assessment

## Assessment Type 1: First Performance

Students prepare and present 5 – 9 minutes of their chosen repertoire for this assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* fulfilled the time requirements as specified in the Learning and Assessment Plan
* presented works that were clearly solos
* presented works that were comfortably within both the technical abilities and musical maturity of the student
* showed great attention to the most subtle musical details
* demonstrated superb control of tone and dynamics and used these most effectively to highlight and contrast the musical elements in accordance with the style and genre of the work.

The less successful responses commonly:

* performed with an instrumental/vocal technique that was underdeveloped, resulting in an uneven and inaccurate performance
* paid little or no attention to the musical indications marked on the score
* were presentations of works that were under-rehearsed
* presented a part of an ensemble work with a full band backing

## Assessment Type 2: Second Performance

Students prepare and present 9 – 13 minutes of their chosen repertoire for this assessment. The repertoire presented must be different from the first performance assessment.

The more successful responses commonly:

* incorporated constructive feedback from their teacher(s) and audience members, in their performance preparation
* demonstrated a well-developed technique
* performed in a manner that showed a comprehensive understanding of the stylistic elements, analytical structure and the musical requirements of their works
* were accurate, fluent and well sustained in this longer performance, compared to the first performance.

The less successful responses commonly:

* failed to fulfil the required minimum time for this assessment
* were under-prepared
* attempted levels of technique and musicianship that were beyond the performer’s skills
* featured repertoire that was so simplistic it limited achievement at the higher levels.

# External Assessment

## Assessment Type 3: Final Performance

Students present a 10–12 minute final performance of works for external assessment. These may be performances of works that have been performed in either of the previous performance assessments.

The more successful responses commonly:

* showed the results of extensive preparation and study of the musical score and style of each work
* featured carefully chosen programs of works to show achievement at the highest level possible, through repertoire that was compatible with the technical capabilities and musical understanding of the student
* were familiar with the requirements of a successful performance including being comfortable with the acoustics of the space and the equipment used, as well as the accompaniment, whether live or a backing track
* presentations of works that were equally familiar to the student.

The less successful responses commonly:

* showed poor preparation and limited understanding of the musical style
* were ensemble works presented with or without a full backing band
* allowed for limited opportunity for the student to achieve against the assessment design criteria of Accuracy, Technique and Musicianship.