



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission
Junior Certificate Examination in Music, 2020
Practical Examinations
MEMORANDUM

1. Syllabus requirements

- a) The performing examination in music consists of a test in one or two of the categories given on pages 6 – 9 of the Junior Certificate Music Syllabus.
- b) Examinations in performing, including unprepared test, shall not, in general, exceed the following times:
Ordinary level: 10 minutes **Higher level: 15 minutes**
- c) Higher level candidates must perform
 - i. four different pieces on the same instrument (or voice) in the same activity **or**
 - ii. two different pieces each in two different activities (i.e. four different pieces in total).No other combination is permissible.
- d) Ordinary level candidates must perform two different pieces on the **same** instrument (or voice) in the same activity. No other combination is permissible.
- e) Candidates can select a programme of their own choice for the performing test. Prior permission of the State Examinations Commission to do so is not required.

2. Group performing

- a) In group performing, candidates may present for examination as follows:
 - i. Where candidates are singing/playing in unison, they may present in groups of up to five
 - ii. Where candidates are singing/playing in harmony, the number of performers per examinable part should not exceed two.
- b) All songs/pieces in one activity must be presented as a performing unit in one sitting. Where members of a group are not presenting the same selection each candidate's complete programme must be heard separately.
- c) **Candidates presenting two activities are not required to present the activities consecutively.**
- d) Except in the case of accompanists or a person to operate backing tracks or those involved in group performances, no person other than the candidate(s) under examination shall be allowed in the room with the examiner(s). The accompanist/backing-track operator/other performers may not be in the room while the unprepared test is in progress.

3. Accompaniment

- a) **All** candidates, whether performing the melody or a supporting/harmony line, may perform with a live accompaniment **or with a recording.**
- b) All aspects of a performance (e.g. backing track if candidate using headphones) must be audible to the Examiner.
- c) Mobile phones may not be used to play backing tracks. They may not be brought into the examination room by candidates **or** accompanists/teachers under any circumstances.
- d) Backing tracks must be in "hard copy" format (e.g. CD/DVD/tape/USB stick/hard disk of laptop or computer). They may not be downloaded or streamed live from the internet during the examination itself. I pads/ipods/laptops etc, if used for playing backing tracks, must be in flight mode.

4. Unprepared tests

- a) All candidates, including category 4, have a choice of unprepared test and may select either aural-memory or sight-reading. **There are no other options.**
- b) Aural memory tests will be played three times. The candidate responds after the second and third playings. Marks are awarded for the better attempt.
- c) Sight-reading tests for JC music are instrument-specific. **They may only be performed on the instrument specified.**
- d) **Rhythm sightreading is not an option in the Junior Certificate unprepared tests.**

5. Instrument combinations - clarifications

- a) Recorders (descant, treble, tenor, bass) may **not** be presented in two different activities unless one is solo and the other group.
- b) Electric guitar and acoustic guitar may **not** be presented in two different activities unless one is solo and the other is group.
- c) Violin and fiddle may **not** be presented in two different activities unless one is solo and the other is group.
- d) Singing to ones own accompaniment is not an option in the Junior Certificate performing examinations. Candidates may accompany themselves, but must choose either their singing or their accompaniment to be assessed in any one activity.

6. Examination Centre & Scheduling

- a) The performing test will be held between **23 March and 3 April, 2020 inclusive**. It is essential that all examinations start at the time agreed with the examiner.
- b) Other than for certified medical reasons (form MP7 refers), where a candidate is unable to attend during the assigned examination dates, it will not be possible to reschedule the examination to another date.
- c) The entire performance must be completed in the one examination session i.e. during the main scheduled examination period or, where authorised, on the rescheduled exam date.
- d) In the interest of Health and Safety, the volume of a performance must be kept at an acceptable level.
- e) Examiners may, at their discretion, request candidates to stop at appropriate points, and/or, in a group performance where the piece is very short, to play it again. It should be noted that this has no implication whatsoever for the marking of the candidate's performance.
- f) School authorities are advised not to allocate times to candidates as it is not possible to estimate accurately the time at which any practical examination will take place. Please note that a visit by an Advising Examiner for monitoring purposes **will** cause a delay. This is unavoidable and is essential for the integrity of the examination.
- g) As this is a performance examination, care must be taken in the preparation of the examination centre in advance of the examination. **The examination venue must be in an area of the school that is free from noise or disturbance by other students/intercom announcements.**
- h) Form MP4A must be completed by candidates in advance and given to the examiner on the day of the performing examination.
- i) The Examiner is precluded from discussing any aspect of the examination with any party. Any queries in relation to the examination should be addressed directly to the State Examinations Commission.
- j) **All** candidates are required to attend a group meeting with the Examiner when he/she arrives in the school.

7. General information

- a) Candidates who wish to present **improvisation** under category 6 (pg 69, Appendix E of the syllabus) are required to forward to the State Examinations Commission two themes on which they wish to perform prepared improvisations. Higher-level candidates must show proficiency under three of the headings given in Appendix E, and ordinary-level candidates under one heading. An unprepared improvisation will be given on the day of the examination. **A sight-reading or aural-memory test will also be given.**
- b) Candidates and Teachers are advised that past papers, unprepared tests and other relevant information can be viewed, downloaded and printed from the State Examinations Commission's website www.examinations.ie.
- c) Any issues in relation to the performing examinations in Music should be addressed to:

Practicals Section (Music)
State Examinations Commission
Cornamaddy
Athlone, Co Westmeath

Telephone: 090-644 2751 / 090-644 2752

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