



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission
Leaving Certificate Examinations in Music, 2017
Practical Examinations

Notes for the Information of Teachers and Candidates

Syllabus clarifications

- NB: For each activity presented, candidates choose
(i) the performing skill (solo/group) and
(ii) the medium (voice/instrument) on which they wish to be assessed.

Music to be performed and the presentation on the day should be chosen carefully to ensure that both the performing skill and the candidate's ability on the instrument can be adequately assessed by the examiner.

1. Solo performing – choice of music and presentation

- Candidates presenting solo performing must choose music where they are playing the solo part, either for the **whole piece** or for a **substantial part** of the piece (the length of a verse/chorus).
- Examples of the standard of music required for OL and HL are given in the syllabus itself. While there are no specific examples of music for Higher Level Elective, the syllabus states that it should be a further expansion of Higher level, i.e. “**music of a higher degree of difficulty**”.
- Technology is a solo performing activity. HL one activity Technology (H1T) and HL Elective one activity Technology (HE1T) candidates must be singing/playing the main part if performing to own backing track. **The standard of music for this performance is that which is required for all H1 and HE1 performing activities** (see above).
- Care should be taken when choosing music to be input in technology. As time rarely allows for a full piece to be input in the examination, it is advisable that all parts to be input start in bar 1 of the piece, or close to bar 1. Similarly, it is best if edits can be made at/near the beginning of the piece so that the effect is heard at a point where all parts have been input.
- Singing to one's own accompaniment is a solo performing activity. Both singing and accompaniment are assessed and other performers may not take part in the performance. **The same instrument must be used for playing the accompaniment in all songs.**

2. Group performing – choice of music and presentation

- Group performing is specified in the syllabus as “singing or playing **as a member of a musical group.**” A wide range of examples is given, including traditional Irish groups, folk groups, recorder groups, choral groups, bands, mixed vocal and instrumental groups of all kinds, etc.
- The syllabus specifies (page 16) that candidates must:
 - Maintain their part as a **regular member of the musical group**
 - Interpret the notational and musical practices appropriate to each of the musical genres presented
 - Make a noticeable contribution **to the overall sound**
 - Realise the expressive and interpretative qualities of the music
 - Relate musically **with the other members of the group**

In order to assess the above elements, the candidate must perform as part of a live group on the day of the examination.
- A group performance consists of two or more performers.
- Pieces chosen for group performing should consist of not less than two parts (syllabus page 19).
- In group performing (singing / instrumental), the maximum number of performers per examinable part is two. This is for examination purposes and **there are no exceptions.**

3. Accompaniment

- a) All performances should be accompanied where appropriate. An accompaniment is backing of a chordal or rhythmic nature for the most part. It can be live or on a backing track. A recording where the solo part is present may not be used as a backing track.
- b) 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.
- c) Backing tracks must be in “hard copy” format (CD/DVD/tape/USB stick/hard disk of laptop or computer etc). **They may not be downloaded or streamed live from the internet during the examination itself.**

4. Unprepared tests

- a) All candidates, whether Ordinary level, Higher level or Higher level elective, one activity or two activities, take **one** unprepared test only.
- 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.
NB Aural memory tests will be presented in CD format in 2017 and thereafter. They will not be played live by the examiner.
- c) Candidates taking sight-reading (rhythm) for their unprepared test may not say the rhythmic names of the notes, **or tap their foot audibly** while performing the sight test.
- d) Improvisation: Ordinary level candidates will be required to improvise for at least 8 bars. Higher level and Higher level elective candidates will be required to improvise for at least 16 bars. **Reference to the given phrase must be apparent in the improvisation.**
- e) Candidates presenting conducting as a performing activity respond to a previously unseen score as part of the conducting examination itself. This is **in addition** to the unprepared test taken by all candidates.

5. General conditions

- a) Duration of examination, including unprepared test:

Ordinary level	Higher level	Higher level elective
10 minutes	15 minutes	25 minutes

- b) Examiners may, at their discretion, request candidates to stop at appropriate points in their performance.
- c) All songs/pieces in an 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.
- d) All aspects of a performance (i.e. backing track, if candidate using headphones) must be audible to the Examiner.
- e) In the interest of Health and Safety, the volume of a performance must be kept at an acceptable level. If an examiner considers the volume of any performer to be in excess of safe levels, **the examination will not proceed** until the volume has been reduced to a satisfactory and safe level.
- f) The same music may not be presented for two different activities, even when presented on a different instrument or medium, including music technology, conducting and improvisation.
- g) Other than for certified medical reasons where a candidate is unable to present during the assigned examination dates, it will not be possible to reschedule the examination to an alternative date.
- h) 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.
- i) **Instrument combinations:** The following instruments may be combined in one activity. They may not be presented as two different activities, unless one is a solo activity and the other group.

flute and piccolo

concert flute and traditional flute

acoustic guitar and six-string electric guitar

banjo and mandolin

piano and electronic keyboard

any combination of recorders

any combination of percussion instruments

6. Examination Centre & Scheduling

- a) All performing examinations must take place in **one** room/hall in the school. Where technology is being presented, the computer/laptop/equipment to be used for the examination must be set up in advance and must be disconnected from the internet/local network/wifi. School authorities/candidates must ensure that computer speakers are turned on and sound enabled during music technology examinations.
- b) Instruments and/or sound equipment required for performances must also be set up in advance. In exceptional circumstances (e.g. when presenting pipe organ) a candidate may be permitted to move to a different venue. State Examinations Commission must be informed of this in advance.
- c) 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. **Candidates should be made aware that they will not necessarily be examined at a specific time or on a specific day.**
- d) All candidates are required to attend a group meeting with the Examiner when he/she arrives in the school. Schools are asked to ensure that candidates are made aware of this requirement, and to provide a suitable room for the group meeting.

Performing Activities

Ordinary Level

Candidates choose **one** of the following activities

GROUP			SOLO				
Singing	Playing	Improvising	Singing	Playing	Conducting	Improvising	Technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces or songs answer questions on unprepared score one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one score of two parts three edits show how to print or record save, close and retrieve one unprepared test

Higher Level (candidates taking Composing or Listening elective): Candidates choose **one** activity from band A or **two** from band B

	GROUP			SOLO				
	Singing	Playing	Improvising	Singing	Playing	Conducting	Improvising	Technology
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three pieces demonstrating three types of improvisation or combination one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three pieces or songs answer questions on unprepared score one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> three pieces demonstrating three types of improvisation or combination one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one score of two parts six edits show how to print or record save, close and retrieve play two pieces from electronic repertoire or compile and play to own previously compiled backing track * one unprepared test
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two songs one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces or songs answer questions on unprepared score one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> two pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> one score of two parts three edits show how to print or record save, close and retrieve one unprepared test

All candidates take **one** unprepared test only.

* Backing track to consist of at least 32 bars. Candidates must show evidence of / describe the compiling of the backing track. The music input in part one of the examination may not be used as the backing track for the performance element. As Music technology is a solo performing activity, the performance to own backing track must be a solo performance.

Higher Level Elective (50% performing)

Candidates choose **one** activity from band C or **two** from band D

	GROUP			SOLO				
	Singing	Playing	Improvising	Singing	Playing	Conducting	Improvising	Technology
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six songs • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six pieces • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six pieces demonstrating three types of improvisation or combination • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six songs • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six pieces • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • six pieces or songs • answer questions on unprepared score • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six pieces demonstrating three types of improvisation or combination • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two scores of three parts • six edits • show how to print or record • save, close and retrieve • play four pieces from electronic repertoire or compile and play to own previously compiled backing track** • one unprepared test
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four songs • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four pieces • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four songs • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four pieces • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four pieces or songs • answer questions on unprepared score • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • four pieces demonstrating one type of improvisation • one unprepared test 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one score of four parts or two scores of two parts • three edits • show how to print or record • save, close and retrieve • one unprepared test

All candidates take **one** unprepared test only.

** Backing track to consist of at least three parts/lines of at least 32 bars each. Candidates must show evidence of / describe the compiling of the backing track. The music input in part one of the examination may not be used as the backing track for the performance element. As Music technology is a solo performing activity (see Appendix A, LC Music Syllabus page 14), the performance to own backing track must be a solo performance.

Music Technology Examination

Candidates will be required to:

1. Set up the score(s) to be input.
2. Input **all** or part of each part/track, **at the discretion of and when directed by the Examiner**. Music is input track by track.
3. Make the required number of edits. Edits (see below) should make musical sense. **Edits must be performed on the score input on the day of the examination (see syllabus page 14)**. Candidates will be asked to play back the score after inputting and after each edit is executed.
4. Demonstrate the ability to record or print a score.
5. Save, **close** and retrieve the file.
6. Perform the required number of pieces, if presenting Higher level (one performing activity – Band A) or Higher level elective (one performing activity – band C). See pages 4 and 5 of this document. If performing to their own previously compiled backing track they must show evidence of having compiled or input the backing track themselves.

General Conditions

1. Methods of inputting, as defined in the syllabus must be via electronic instruments and/or conventional instruments with midi controllers/interface. Music may also be input by use of the mouse directly onto the stave using appropriate notation sequencing software. Inputting may be in real time or step time. Copying and pasting is not a valid method of inputting unless the music copied was first input by the candidate.
2. Music to be input should be at least 16 bars long (in each part) and of an appropriate degree of difficulty i.e. contain a variety of pitches and rhythms. All parts to be input should start in bar 1.
3. Candidates may not bring any documentation into the examination room apart from the music to be input/performed and the LMP4A form.
4. Any software package/electronic instrument/sequencer that fulfils the requirements of the syllabus may be used in the Technology examination. **Marks cannot be awarded for elements of the examination that are not audible to the examiner.**
5. Technology is a solo performing activity. HL one activity Technology (H1T) and HL Elective one activity Technology (HE1T) candidates must be singing/playing the main part if performing to own backing track. **The standard of music for this performance is that which is required for all H1 and HE1 performing activities.**

Edits

1. Acceptable edits are those which change the **sound** of the music when played back on the computer or sequencer. Changes to the lyrics or structure of the piece (e.g. repeat marks) do not fulfil the requirements of the syllabus.
2. Changing tempo or dynamics by simply typing in a new term does not fulfil the requirements of the syllabus unless the changes are executed when played back on the computer/sequencer.
3. Slurring and articulation are different forms of the same edit (attack), in the same way as *f* and *p* are different forms of dynamics. Candidates should ensure that they present three (or six) different edits for examination.
4. Where a candidate presents the option of inputting two scores, edits are carried out on one score only (the candidate chooses).
5. Due to time constraints it may not be possible to input a full score. Candidates should prepare edits that can be executed successfully at the beginning of the score being input.

Composing Paper

School authorities are reminded that all candidates presenting for the Leaving Certificate Examinations in Music in 2017 and thereafter will be expected to use the suffix ‘^o’ to indicate diminished chords and ‘⁺’ to indicate augmented chords as exemplified below for the keys of C major and C minor”.

Key: C major

Chord Symbol	C	D _m	E _m	F	G	A _m	B ^o
Roman Numeral	I	ii	iii	IV	V	vi	vii ^o

Key: C minor

Chord Symbol	C _m	D ^o	E _b ⁺	F _m	G	A _b	B ^o
Roman Numeral	i	ii ^o	III ⁺	iv	V	VI	vii ^o

Listening Elective

Candidates choosing this elective

1. sit a Listening Elective paper of 45 minutes duration (as well as the Core Listening and Composing papers) **and**
2. prepare a recording, in advance of the examination, containing ten excerpts of music studied for the elective.

Candidates should note the following:

- Source references listed as required on the Examination paper must be sufficiently detailed to allow for verification e.g. internet web addresses, publication details etc.
- The CD is submitted to the Superintendent at the time of taking the Listening elective paper in June.
- The candidate's examination number should be written clearly on the CD and on the inlay card.
- The titles of all ten recorded excerpts should be clearly listed on the inlay card.
- Each excerpt should be between twenty and thirty seconds long.
- As the Listening elective is intended to assess the personal response of a candidate to the topic of his/her choice (see Syllabus, page 12), the copying / dubbing of CDs by groups of students is not permitted.

Composing Elective

- The composing elective material, supported by a full written description (see Syllabus, page 9) of the compositions/arrangements/orchestrations, must be submitted to the school authority by 28 April 2017.
- The school authority must safely store the composing elective material and pass it to the Superintendent of the Composing (core) examination at the time of that exam on 22 June 2017.
- Where electro-acoustic music is being submitted, a prepared tape is a necessary requirement (see Syllabus, page 9).
- The candidate must complete Form P2, certifying the authenticity of the work. The class Teacher and the school Principal must also sign the form.

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.

Any issues in relation to the performing examinations in Music should be addressed to:

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