

SCHOOL OF ARTS, LANGUAGES AND CULTURES

UNDERGRADUATE STEPPED MARKING SCHEME AND MARKING CRITERIA (GRADE DESCRIPTORS) FOR MUSIC

1. GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR COURSEWORK ESSAYS AND WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

NOTE: When marking written examinations, the criteria in the following descriptors that refer to academic and referencing conventions should be set aside entirely, and those that refer to matters of style and presentation should be applied with regard to the standards that may reasonably be expected of work produced under timed conditions.

Class	Descriptor	Mark
	Incorporates the categories of •Structure and Argument •Knowledge and Understanding •Use of Sources and Data •Style and Presentation	
Upper First	Exceptional work of the highest quality. It is exceptional in all or most of the following respects: accuracy and depth of knowledge and understanding; cogency, originality and logical development of argument; structural clarity and integrity; sophistication of methodology or theoretical framework; use of technical vocabulary and notation (where relevant); understanding and successful application of concepts; analytical accuracy and incisiveness; clarity and originality of thought; perceptiveness of insight; methods of data collection and/or analysis (when required); selection and presentation of examples; use of and critical engagement with sources; accuracy, lucidity and fluency of writing style and presentation, including word length, use of academic and referencing conventions (footnotes, bibliography, etc.) and formatting conventions (example numbering, interlinear glossing, etc.). The essential material is presented thoroughly, accurately and weighed appropriately. The work is highly authoritative and amply demonstrates very advanced knowledge and a very advanced ability to integrate the full range of principles, theories, evidence and techniques. The work attains all of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to all guidelines.	100
Upper First		95
Upper First		92
Mid First	Outstanding work of a very high quality. It is outstanding in all or most of the following respects: accuracy and depth of knowledge and understanding; cogency, originality and logical development of argument; structural clarity and integrity; sophistication of methodology or theoretical framework; use of technical vocabulary and notation (where relevant); understanding and successful application of concepts; analytical accuracy and incisiveness; clarity and originality of thought; perceptiveness of insight; methods of data collection and/or analysis (when required); selection and presentation of examples; use of and critical engagement with sources; accuracy, lucidity and fluency of writing style and presentation, including word length, use of academic and referencing conventions (footnotes, bibliography, etc.) and formatting conventions (example numbering, interlinear glossing, etc.). The essential material is presented thoroughly,	88
Mid First		85
Mid First		82

	accurately and weighed appropriately. The work is very authoritative and amply demonstrates very advanced knowledge and a very advanced ability to integrate the full range of principles, theories, evidence and techniques. A further refinement of the argument, analysis, structure, style and/or presentation is needed to make the work exceptional. The work attains almost all of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to almost all guidelines.	
Lower First	Excellent work of a high quality. It is excellent in all or most of the following respects: accuracy and depth of knowledge and understanding; cogency, originality and logical development of argument; structural clarity and integrity; sophistication of methodology or theoretical framework; use of technical vocabulary and notation (where relevant); understanding and successful application of concepts; analytical accuracy and incisiveness; clarity and originality of thought; perceptiveness of insight; methods of data collection and/or analysis (when required); selection and presentation of examples; use of and critical engagement with sources; accuracy, lucidity and fluency of writing style and presentation, including word length, use of academic and referencing conventions (footnotes, bibliography, etc.) and formatting conventions (example numbering, interlinear glossing, etc.). The essential material is presented thoroughly, accurately and weighed appropriately. The work is authoritative and demonstrates advanced knowledge and an advanced ability to integrate a wide range of principles, theories, evidence and techniques. The work attains most of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to most of the guidelines. A further refinement of the argument, analysis, structure, style and/or presentation is needed to make the work exceptional or outstanding.	78
Lower First		75
Lower First		72
Upper 2:1	Good to very good work, which exhibits an above average degree of knowledge and understanding; cogency, originality and logical development of argument; structural clarity and integrity; methodological or theoretical sophistication; use of technical vocabulary and notation (where relevant); understanding and successful application of concepts; analytical accuracy and incisiveness; clarity and originality of thought; methods of data collection and/or analysis (when required); selection and presentation of examples; critical engagement with sources; accuracy, lucidity and fluency of writing style and presentation, including word length, use of academic and referencing conventions (footnotes, bibliography, etc.) and formatting conventions (example numbering, interlinear glossing, etc.). The work addresses the specific topic very well and exhibits very sound skills of argument, analysis, critical engagement, expression and management of sources/evidence. The work attains many of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to many of the guidelines. A further expansion, deepening, exemplification and/or refinement of the argument, analysis, structure and/or presentation is needed to raise the work to a higher standard.	68
Mid 2:1		65
Lower 2:1		62
Upper 2:2	The work is good in parts and exhibits a reasonable degree of knowledge and understanding; cogency, originality and logical development of argument; structural clarity and integrity; methodological or theoretical sophistication; use of technical vocabulary and notation (where relevant); understanding and successful application of concepts; analytical accuracy and incisiveness; clarity and originality of thought; methods of data	58
Mid 2:2		55
Lower 2:2		52

	collection and/or analysis (when required); selection and presentation of examples; critical engagement with sources; accuracy, lucidity and fluency of writing style and presentation, including word length, use of academic and referencing conventions (footnotes, bibliography, etc.) and formatting conventions (example numbering, interlinear glossing, etc.). The work goes some way towards addressing the specific topic and exhibits adequate but flawed skills of argument, analysis, critical engagement, expression and/or management of sources and evidence. The work attains some of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to some of the guidelines. A more competent demonstration of knowledge and understanding and a further expansion, deepening, exemplification and/or refinement of the argument, analysis, structure and/or presentation are needed to raise the work to a higher standard.	
Upper Third	The work exhibits sufficient knowledge and understanding; accuracy; clarity; analytical coherence; methodological or theoretical awareness; skills of data collection (when required) and/or analysis; presentational skills, including referencing and formatting conventions; and use of appropriate sources and evidence to warrant a basic pass. The work attains some of the learning objectives of the unit and adheres to some of the guidelines, but falls short of others by a significant degree. The work goes some way towards addressing the specific topic but exhibits markedly flawed skills of argument; critical engagement; expression and/or management of sources and evidence; data analysis; and use of technical vocabulary and notations (where relevant). Among the work's deficiencies are some or all of the following: failure to address the question adequately; overly descriptive content; lack of detail and depth; simplistic or unnuanced argument; inaccurate or unsupported claims; problems with the application and exemplification of concepts; inept handling and analysis of data; poor critical engagement with sources; poor expression; failure to adhere to prescribed word lengths. A much more competent demonstration of knowledge and understanding and of argument and analysis are needed to raise the work to a higher standard.	48
Mid Third		45
Lower Third		42
Compensatory Fail	The work demonstrates insufficient knowledge, understanding and skills in the specific topic and does not merit a pass mark. The work does not demonstrate adequately the study skills required at this level and fails to attain the learning objectives of the unit. Although the work shows some awareness of the topic, it omits many important facts and concepts, displays a lack of understanding of theoretical concepts, technical vocabulary and notation conventions (where relevant) and includes major errors of fact and analysis. There is little or no attempt to present and critically evaluate evidence or analyse (and collect) data (when required). The argument is difficult to discern and the content is mostly irrelevant. The work has minimal underlying structure and is frequently confused and incoherent, and/or there are problems with the word length. Extensive improvement is required in all of these areas of deficiency to raise the work to a higher standard.	38
Compensatory Fail		35
Compensatory Fail		32
Fail	The work demonstrates inadequate knowledge, understanding and skills in the specific topic and does not merit a pass mark. It does not demonstrate even a basic awareness of the subject matter and manifestly fails to attain	28
Fail		25
Fail		22

	the learning objectives of the unit. The awareness of principles, theories, evidence is insufficient, as is the understanding of concepts, technical vocabulary, notations and techniques of data analysis and exemplification (where relevant). There is little or no evidence of critical engagement or ability to apply concepts. The argument is non-existent, partial and/or unsubstantiated and the work is badly structured. Insufficient attention is paid to the quality, range and appropriateness of sources and evidence. The level of style and expression is markedly inadequate for this level of study and/or there are problems with the word length. Very extensive improvement is required in all of these areas of deficiency to raise the work to a higher standard.	
Fail	The work demonstrates severely inadequate knowledge, understanding and skills in the specific topic and does not merit a pass mark. It shows little or confused awareness of the appropriate principles, theories, evidence and techniques, or of the understanding of concepts, technical vocabulary, notations and techniques of data analysis and exemplification (where relevant). The work manifestly fails to attain the learning objectives of the unit. There is little or no evidence of critical engagement or background reading or data collection (when appropriate). The arguments are unsubstantiated, unstructured, poorly presented, misrepresent and/or fail to demonstrate an understanding of the subject. The use of evidence and sources is inappropriate or non-existent. The level of style and expression is severely inadequate for this level of study and/or there are problems with the word length. Very extensive improvement is required in all of these areas of deficiency to raise the work to a higher standard.	15
Fail	The work is profoundly inadequate and does not merit a pass mark. It does not demonstrate any significant awareness of the subject matter and manifestly fails to attain the learning objectives of the unit. The work is confused and incoherent and does not address the question posed. There is little or no evidence of critical engagement or background reading or data collection (when appropriate). The arguments are unsubstantiated, unstructured, poorly presented, misrepresent and/or fail to demonstrate an understanding of the subject. The use of evidence and sources is inappropriate or non-existent. The level of style and expression is severely inadequate for this level of study and/or there are problems with the word length. Very extensive improvement is required in all of these areas of deficiency to raise the work to a higher standard.	5
Fail		0

2. GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR COMPOSITION ASSIGNMENTS

Class	Descriptor	Mark
	Incorporates the categories of •Content, structure and treatment of materials •Use of instrumental/electroacoustic resources •Presentation/notation and copying (as appropriate)	
Upper First	Exceptional work of the highest quality. The composition displays exceptional flair and creative innovation, and outstanding expressive fluency and sophistication in the handling of musical parameters, in the delineation of materials, and in the articulation of musical structures. Work of this quality would be deemed to be of the highest professional standard.	100
Upper First		95
Upper First		92
Mid First	Outstanding work of a very high quality. The composition is outstandingly fluent and exemplary in its imagination and technical execution. The student handles musical parameters in a controlled and directed manner such that materials are highly profiled and structures clearly articulated with powerful expressive intent. Work in this class would be deemed to be of a very high professional standard.	88
Mid First		85
Mid First		82
Lower First	Excellent work of a high quality. The work displays impressive technical command and a highly developed aural awareness. The handling of musical parameters is sophisticated, materials are imaginative and well profiled, and structures are clearly articulated. Work in this class would be deemed to be at or approaching a high professional standard. A consummate knowledge of the instrumental/vocal/electroacoustic resources is employed, with an acute sensitivity to the invention, shaping and combination of sounds and strong practical awareness. Professional or near-professional standard is evident in the production of scores, parts and/or audio outputs. Any notation demonstrates an accomplished level of professional literacy and attention to detail. There is excellent practical consideration in the preparation of any performance materials.	78
Lower First		75
Lower First		72
Upper 2:1	Good to very good work, with strong control of musical parameters and good aural awareness. Materials are well defined and developed in a coherent manner. The work has a clear structure and good sense of proportion. The use of instrumental/vocal/electroacoustic resources employed is good to very good, demonstrating a strong command of the relevant medium in the shaping of sounds, and it is sympathetic to practical issues. The standard in the production of scores, parts and/or audio outputs is good to very good. Any notation is clear, literate, and communicates all the necessary information. Any performance material is appropriate and practical.	68
Mid 2:1		65
Lower 2:1		62
Upper 2:2	The work is good in parts . There is modest control of several musical parameters in the construction of musical materials/gestures and these are developed with some effectiveness in a mostly well-heard manner. There is a discernible musical structure. The use of the instrumental/vocal/electroacoustic resources employed is good, exploring timbral combinations with some effectiveness and acknowledgement of practical issues. The production of scores, parts and/or audio outputs is at least adequate, but there may be room for improvement. Any notation (where	58
Mid 2:2		55
Lower 2:2		52

	appropriate) is adequate in providing most of the essential information, but further attention to detail and quality is required. Performance material is adequate.	
Upper Third	The work demonstrates sufficient basic technical control of a limited number of musical parameters and some aural awareness. There is evidence of some attempt to articulate structure. The use of the instrumental/vocal/electroacoustic resources employed is limited but sufficient to demonstrate a basic control and understanding of the relevant medium. The standard of scores, parts and/or audio outputs is low, providing only the basic means necessary for a realisation in performance. Any notation communicates some relevant information and a basic level of literacy, but requires much greater attention to detail and contains elementary errors. Performance material requires significant revision.	48
Mid Third		45
Lower Third		42
Compensatory Fail	The control of musical parameters and aural awareness is insufficient to delineate musical materials. There is little or no evidence of structure, and insufficient understanding of the relevant medium such that the use of instrumental/vocal/electroacoustic resources is misjudged, unidiomatic and/or impractically conceived. The production of scores, parts and/or audio outputs is of an unacceptable standard. Notation (if used) displays significant shortcomings in terms of literacy and insufficient attention to detail. Performance material may be unfit for purpose. Unsatisfactory overall.	38
Compensatory Fail		35
Compensatory Fail		32
Fail	Inadequate. A very unsatisfactory composition that seriously fails to fulfil the criteria for a pass mark at the appropriate level, e.g. serious shortfall in quality, absence of material or information, frequent serious errors or misjudgements, or standards of presentation/notation that are so low that the musical intention is severely impeded. The composition fails to address the set task adequately and shows no sign of relevant technical skills or understanding of the issues involved.	28
Fail		25
Fail		22
Fail	Severely inadequate. The work suffers from the above shortcomings to a more extreme degree, with serious shortfall in quality, absence of material or information, frequent serious errors and misjudgements, and low standards of presentation/notation. There are gross errors or inadequacies in all areas, with almost total lack of composition skills and almost no awareness of basic musical grammar. The work displays a lack of even the most basic musical awareness.	15
Fail	Profoundly inadequate. The work falls very seriously short of the requirements of the set task and shows very little effort. There are no intelligible passages or only a few disconnected fragments. Nothing is conveyed relevant to the task, and there is no evidence of understanding principles of composition. The whole is totally unsatisfactory.	5
Fail		0

3. GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR ORAL PRESENTATIONS

Class	Descriptor	Mark
	Incorporates the categories of •Communication on Skills and Content •Grammatical Accuracy •Vocabulary and Register •Pronunciation and Intonation •Presentation Skills (including structure and communication, knowledge and understanding, use of sources and data)	
Upper First	An exceptional performance demonstrating a complete overall understanding of the major issues and their implications and an exceptionally clear grasp of all the relevant critical or conceptual approaches to the subject and their application. Evidence of very advanced capacity to think independently, to formulate one’s own ideas, criteria and judgements, and to collect (where required) and present data or examples. Argument is exceptionally cogent and very clearly supported by appropriate evidence derived from data and/or sources. Excellent use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions (if slides are used). A flawless performance.	100
Upper First		95
Upper First		92
Mid First	An outstanding performance demonstrating near complete overall understanding of the major issues and an extremely clear grasp of virtually all the relevant critical or conceptual approaches to the subject and their application. Evidence of advanced capacity to think independently, to formulate one’s own ideas, criteria and judgements, and to collect (where required) and present data or examples. Argument is extremely cogent and very clearly supported by appropriate evidence derived from data and/or sources. Excellent use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions (if slides are used). A near flawless performance.	88
Mid First		85
Mid First		82
Lower First	An excellent performance demonstrating a very high degree of understanding of the major issues and very clear grasp of most of the relevant critical or conceptual approaches to the subject and their application. Evidence of well-developed capacity to think independently, to formulate one’s own ideas, criteria and judgements and to collect (where required) and present data or examples. Argument is highly cogent and clearly supported by appropriate evidence derived from data and/or sources. Excellent use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions (if slides are used).The presentation itself is very polished.	78
Lower First		75
Lower First		72
Upper 2:1	Good to very good. A well-focused performance in all or most areas. Shows moderate competence in some areas and excellence in others. Able to present and interpret data or content from sources in a way that demonstrates awareness of major issues, a clear grasp of most of the relevant critical approaches to the subject and a very good understanding and application of concepts. Very competent use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions (if slides are used). Evidence of capacity to think independently and to collect (where required) and present data or examples. Less ambitious in scope than First Class, but still aiming to achieve a very good level of analysis and very well-structured and supported argument. At the lower end of the scale, there may be some shortcomings, but major errors are avoided. Presentation is generally	68
Mid 2:1		65
Lower 2:1		62

	competent, though there may be some minor problems related to clarity of the delivery, choice of register and vocabulary or grammatical accuracy.	
Upper 2:2	A performance that is good in parts and reasonably competent in most areas. Shows moderate competence in some areas but weakness in others. Performance would benefit from sharper focus and more reflection. Fairly competent knowledge or understanding of the material presented, but characterised by one or more of the following deficiencies: understanding and application of concepts is not always successful; lack of considered thought and critical thinking; argument not always well structured or relevant; some awareness of critical debates but may be too descriptive or generalised; some gaps in planning and use of evidence; inaccuracies in use of technical vocabulary and/or notational conventions (if slides are used); data or examples presented are not fully appropriate; there are problems with the collection of data (where required) or the selection of sources. Overall, the performance lacks the comprehensiveness, accuracy and/or cohesiveness expected of an Upper Second. The delivery is not flawless and shows problems with clarity of delivery, choice of register and vocabulary and/or grammatical accuracy.	58
Mid 2:2		55
Lower 2:2		52
Upper Third	A sufficient performance in most areas, though tends to be descriptive with uncritical coverage of debates and issues and/or shows problems with the understanding and application of concepts and/or the use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions (if slides are used). Some basic (or minimal, at the lower end of the scale) relevant information and understanding. Some evidence of research, either in the form of consultation and presentation of sources or of collection (when required) and presentation of data or examples. There is an attempt to address question or topic, but with substantial omissions or irrelevant material. Skills of planning, structuring and presentation relatively weak. Barely adequate understanding of concepts; barely adequate use of data and/or sources. Problems with clarity of the delivery, choice of register and vocabulary and grammatical accuracy. Barely satisfactory overall.	48
Mid Third		45
Lower Third		42
Compensatory Fail	An insufficient performance showing minimal achievement but containing some elementary relevant information. Reliant on a minimal range of background reading and/or engagement with data or examples, with poor attention to detail. May consist of a series of weak statements/opinions which may not relate to each other. Assertions made without supporting evidence from data or sources, and use of technical vocabulary and notational conventions is very poor. Minimal reflection, poor planning and presentation. Unconvincing overall.	38
Compensatory Fail		35
Compensatory Fail		32
Fail	An inadequate performance in almost all areas, displaying little knowledge or understanding. Insufficient evidence that the candidate has adequately researched sources or collected data/examples or prepared their presentation. Poorly organised and confused argument. Little or no use of technical vocabulary and conventions. Little or no evidence of analysis, planning or presentation skills; very poor use of sources and data/examples. Very unsatisfactory overall.	28
Fail		25
Fail		22

Fail	A severely inadequate performance in which there is no evidence of understanding or knowledge of the topic and the appropriate vocabulary and conventions. Inability to construct an argument; lack of planning or presentation skills; significant elements of irrelevance or error; no use of sources or data/examples. Extremely poor overall.	15
Fail	A profoundly inadequate performance. Incoherent, irrelevant and error-strewn. No evidence of effort having gone into research or preparation of the topic or task. Extremely poor overall.	5
Fail		0

4. GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR HARMONY AND COUNTERPOINT ASSIGNMENTS

Class	Descriptor	Mark
	Incorporates the categories of • Technical capabilities and stylistic awareness • Notation and Presentation	
Upper First	The work is of exceptional quality in most or all respects, combining a highly creative harmonic approach with a profound understanding of and respect for the relevant stylistic conventions, with impeccable part-writing and harmonic progressions within that style. Grammatical, technical and notational errors are entirely absent, and the work is presented impeccably. Articulation and dynamic marks, if appropriate, are used to enhance the overall sound while being in line with the style of the period. Work of this standard is in the highest range of the class and must be considered to be of at least equivalent standard to the models by the original composer.	100
Upper First		95
Upper First		92
Mid First	The work is of outstanding and exemplary quality in most or all respects, combining a creative harmonic approach with a well-developed understanding of the relevant stylistic conventions, with consistently outstanding part-writing and harmonic progressions within that style. Grammatical, technical and notational errors are entirely absent, and the work is presented to the highest standards. Where appropriate, the work exploits particular idiomatic characteristics of the ensemble and/or instrument(s) in question. Articulation and dynamic marks, if appropriate, are in line with the style of the period. The standard of work would be considered to be closely approaching that of the models by the original composer.	88
Mid First		85
Mid First		82
Lower First	Excellent work, showing excellent understanding and application of the relevant stylistic conventions. Part-writing and harmonic progressions are sound, with very few, if any, grammatical, technical or notational errors. Dissonance is used in accordance with the conventions of the given style, and exploited effectively. The best passages approach the standard of the models by the original composer. The work is idiomatically suited to the ensemble and/or instrument(s) in question, both in terms of technical possibilities and conventional textures, and presentation is excellent in terms of notational clarity and accuracy.	78
Lower First		75
Lower First		72
Upper 2:1	The work is of good to very good quality, showing a good understanding of the style and few grammatical, technical or notational errors. Most problematic passages are dealt with effectively, though ambitious handling may occasionally over-stretch technical resources or stylistic propriety. Harmony and harmonic progressions are generally sound. Voice-leading errors are mostly avoided, and dissonance is usually handled competently according to the conventions of the given style. The work is appropriate to the ensemble and/or instruments in question, both in terms of technical possibilities and conventional textures. The implications of given materials are mostly recognised and sensitively realised. Very good presentation in terms of notational clarity and accuracy.	68
Mid 2:1		65
Lower 2:1		62
Upper 2:2	The work is good in parts , showing a basic understanding of the style but	58

Mid 2:2	containing frequent grammatical, technical or notational errors. Attempts at more problematic passages demonstrate awareness of the difficulties, but do not always find viable solutions. Voice-leading errors are common, but some attempt has been made to eliminate them. Handling of dissonance shows awareness of stylistic conventions, but is not always successful and may result in the introduction of further basic errors. Most implications of given materials are appropriately realised, though some may be misinterpreted (e.g. modulations incorrectly handled). The ensemble and/or instrument(s) in question are usually handled idiomatically, though some textures may be poorly executed or stylistically inappropriate. Good presentation in terms of notational clarity and accuracy.	55
Lower 2:2		52
Upper Third	The work is of sufficient quality to warrant a pass, showing sufficient awareness of basic harmonic principles and relevant textures but no real understanding of the style. Passages requiring more than the most basic treatment are poorly handled; simple or familiar procedures are employed in inappropriate contexts. Basic voice-leading errors are rife, to the extent that they weaken the underlying progressions. Chords are often correct in themselves but progression from one chord to the next is generally unsatisfactory. Handling of dissonance is frequently incompetent and/or stylistically inappropriate. Implications of given materials are often insufficiently understood, resulting in inappropriate harmonisations and/or short passages left incomplete. The work shows poor understanding of the technical capabilities of the instrument(s) in question, and at times employs inappropriate textures.	48
Mid Third		45
Lower Third		42
Compensatory Fail	The work is of insufficient quality to warrant a basic pass, showing little or no grasp of basic harmonic principles or failing to use appropriate textures. The work shows little evidence of familiarity with even the most basic harmonic procedures, and consistently fails to differentiate sufficiently between the handling of consonant and dissonant intervals. The implications of given materials are either completely misunderstood or ignored; harmony is selected arbitrarily, and substantial passages may be left incomplete. Elementary voice-leading errors are very common, and textures are frequently inappropriate. Notational errors are plentiful, and accidentals are erratic enough that it becomes difficult to differentiate notational carelessness from lack of harmonic competence.	38
Compensatory Fail		35
Compensatory Fail		32
Fail	The work is of inadequate quality, showing inadequate grasp of all aspects of the style. It betrays ignorance of any conventions of tonal harmony, inability to form and manipulate simple triads and cadence patterns, and serious deficiencies in the standard of notation and presentation. It fails to demonstrate even a basic awareness of the subject matter, and is frequently confused and incoherent. Long passages may be left incomplete or even empty. The candidate shows little sign of having understood the requirements of the assessment.	28
Fail		25
Fail		22
Fail	The work is of severely inadequate quality, with severely inadequate grasp of all aspects of the style. It fails to demonstrate even a basic awareness of the subject matter and has minimal structure, clarity and coherence. The work is highly deficient in its style and notation, and has extensive gaps	15

	where nothing has been contributed.	
Fail	The work is profoundly inadequate , with no intelligible passages or only a few disconnected fragments. It conveys nothing relevant to the task, and there is no evidence of understanding principles of harmony or counterpoint. The whole is totally unsatisfactory.	5
Fail		0

5. GRADE DESCRIPTORS FOR RECITALS

Class	Descriptor Incorporates the categories of •Technical Command •Musicianship and Communication	Mark
Upper First	An exceptional performance in most or all respects, showing flawless technical command and accuracy, artistry and musicianship of the highest order, with a profound understanding of the music, and exceptional projection and communication. Performances in this class would be deemed of a high professional standard.	100
Upper First		95
Upper First		92
Mid First	An outstanding performance in most or all respects, showing exemplary technical command and accuracy, artistry and musicianship of a high order, with an impressive understanding of the music, and highly developed projection and communication. Performances in this class would be deemed to be of a good professional standard.	88
Mid First		85
Mid First		82
Lower First	An excellent performance, showing very high levels of technical assurance and accuracy, highly sensitive artistry and musicianship, with excellent understanding of the music, and strong projection and communication. There are no obvious areas of weakness. The programme is performed with a very high degree of fluency and accuracy, reflecting very careful attention to detail (e.g. in following notated markings). The performance shows excellent command of style. The performer gives an entirely confident performance that is very well projected and engaging for the audience, with excellent presentation. The performance demonstrates a clear understanding of the music's structure and content. It is very sensitive and expressive, resulting in a musically mature interpretation. Communication with and awareness of the roles of any other performers are excellent, and balance between the performers is entirely appropriate. Any non-notated or improvised music exhibits flair and imagination, excellent stylistic awareness, and impressive handling of musical parameters and materials. Performances in this class would be deemed to be approaching a good professional standard.	78
Lower First		75
Lower First		72
Upper 2:1	A good to very good performance, showing good technical control, although minor flaws may very occasionally be evident. The programme is performed fluently and accurately, and notational details on the score are followed consistently and with precision, with very good stylistic awareness. The performer is assured and acknowledges the audience, although projection may be lacking to some degree. Communication with and awareness of the roles of any other performers are good to very good. The performance is well presented, and indicates very good musical understanding for the most part. The player takes into account the expressive requirements of the music, and the interpretation shows promise, although it may lack sensitivity or maturity at times. Any non-notated or improvised music exhibits some imagination, a developed stylistic awareness, and strong control of musical parameters and materials.	68
Mid 2:1		65
Lower 2:1		62
Upper 2:2	Good in parts. The performance demonstrates a reasonably sound	58

Mid 2:2	technique overall, but there is repeated evidence of some problems or flaws that require attention. The programme is performed accurately for the most part, but with some errors, slips, or untidy passages. Attention to notational detail such as dynamic and articulation markings may be inconsistent and lacking in places. The performance shows some awareness of stylistic considerations, but is inappropriate or inconsistent in some respects and suggests some deficiencies in musical understanding. The performer makes some attempt to communicate with the audience, and with any other performers, but projection may be problematical and there may be some inconsistencies with ensemble and balance. Presentation is adequate, and the performer mostly follows expression markings in the notation, but the interpretation is not well developed and lacks sensitivity or maturity. Any non-notated or improvised music exhibits some stylistic awareness and modest control of musical parameters and materials.	55
Lower 2:2		52
Upper Third	The performance is of sufficient quality to warrant a pass, but indicates technical weaknesses that are sufficient to hinder the fluency of the playing/singing and/or communication of the music. It includes numerous inaccuracies that may lead the player/singer to break down. The performer pays little attention to notational details such as dynamic and articulation markings, and may demonstrate inaccurate realisation of other aspects of notation. The performance indicates poor musical understanding and insensitive interpretation, with little or no expressiveness. It is stylistically inappropriate and/or shows ignorance of the need for stylistic differentiation between pieces in the programme. The performer makes little or no attempt to communicate with the audience or with any other performers, and may play as if merely practising. There may also be notable problems with ensemble or balance. Presentation is problematical, and may include long and/or inappropriate gaps between pieces, or excessive time spent setting up or tuning. Any non-notated or improvised music exhibits only basic stylistic awareness and very limited control of musical parameters and materials.	48
Mid Third		45
Lower Third		42
Compensatory Fail	The performance is of insufficient quality to warrant a basic pass. It is severely impaired by major technical weaknesses. The programme is inadequately prepared, resulting in a very inaccurate performance, with numerous or serious breakdowns. The notation is realised very inaccurately and with little or no attention to details such as dynamic and articulation markings. The performance is highly inappropriate stylistically. The performer does not acknowledge the presence of the audience at all. Presentation is unacceptable. The performance indicates no understanding of the music and is entirely inexpressive. Communication with any other performers is very poor, resulting in major problems with ensemble. Any non-notated or improvised music exhibits insufficient stylistic awareness and poor control of musical parameters and materials	38
Compensatory Fail		35
Compensatory Fail		32
Fail	The performance is of inadequate quality. It seriously fails to fulfil the criteria for a pass mark at the appropriate level, and contains very serious technical weakness, entirely inadequate preparation, very significant errors and breakdowns, a complete lack of musicianship, and/or unacceptably poor communication and projection. The performer shows little sign of	28
Fail		25
Fail		22

	understanding the requirements of the assessment. Extensive improvement is required in all of these areas to secure a pass.	
Fail	A severely inadequate performance, well short of the required length, with very serious technical weakness, entirely inadequate preparation, very significant errors and breakdowns, a complete lack of musicianship, and unacceptably poor communication and projection. The performer shows no sign of understanding the requirements of the assessment. Very extensive improvement is required in all of these areas to secure a pass.	15
Fail	A profoundly inadequate performance, which is extremely short of the required length, with only a few short passages or pieces attempted, or is wholly without merit and shows no command of the instrument.	5
Fail		0