



# **Assessment and Reporting in Music Extension Stage 6**

<b>Effective from</b>	<b>2010 (Preliminary and HSC courses)</b>
<b>Date published</b>	<b>November 2009</b>

This document contains the Board of Studies' requirements for assessing and reporting achievement in the HSC course in Music Extension for the Higher School Certificate, and provides details of the HSC examination in this course. From time to time changes are made to HSC assessment and examination requirements. Such changes will be made available through updates to this document. Please note that the version on the Board of Studies website is always the current version.

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## **Assessment in Stage 6**

Assessment is the process of gathering information and making judgements about student achievement for a variety of purposes. In the HSC course those purposes include:

- assisting student learning
- evaluating and improving teaching and learning programs
- providing evidence of satisfactory achievement and completion in the course
- providing the Higher School Certificate results.

*Assessment for Learning* provides a useful approach for the delivery of the Music Extension HSC course. It provides opportunities in the context of everyday class activities for students to demonstrate their learning.

The approach is most effective when students:

- are involved in setting learning goals
- know and understand standards and expectations about what is expected and the standards of work
- receive feedback that helps them understand the next steps in their learning and plan how to undertake the next steps.

## **Reporting achievement at the HSC**

The Higher School Certificate credentials received by students are used by the Board to report both the internal and external measures of achievement. Higher School Certificate results in Music Extension comprise:

- **an assessment mark** derived from the mark submitted by the school and produced in accordance with the Board's requirements for the internal assessment program
- **an examination mark** derived from the HSC external examination
- **an HSC mark**, which is the average of the assessment mark and the examination mark
- **a performance band**, determined by the HSC mark.

Student performance in an HSC course is reported against standards on a course report. The course report contains a performance scale for the course describing levels (bands) of achievement, an HSC mark located on the performance scale, an assessment mark and an

examination mark. The course report also shows, graphically, the statewide distribution of HSC marks of all students in the course.

The distribution of marks is determined by students' performances against the standards and not scaled to a predetermined pattern of marks.

The use of both internal assessment and external examinations of student achievement allows measurements and observations to be made at several points and in different ways throughout the HSC course. Taken together, the external examination and internal assessment provide a valid and reliable assessment of the achievement of the knowledge, understanding and skills described for each course.

The Board of Studies uses a standards-referenced approach to reporting student achievement in the Higher School Certificate. The standards in the HSC are:

- the knowledge, skills and understanding expected to be learnt by students – the syllabus standards
- the levels of achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding – the performance standards.

Both the syllabus standards and the performance standards are based on the aims, objectives, outcomes and content of the course. Together they specify what is to be learnt and how well it is to be achieved. Teacher understanding of the standards comes from the aims, objectives, outcomes and content in the syllabus together with:

- the performance descriptions that summarise the different levels of performance
- HSC examination papers and marking guidelines
- samples of students' achievement, collected in the standards packages and published on the Board's Assessment Resource Centre website.

## **Internal assessment**

This section should be read in conjunction with advice on internal assessment in the Board's [Assessment Certification and Examination \(ACE\) Manual](#).

## **HSC course**

The Board requires schools to submit an assessment mark for each HSC candidate in Music Extension. The internal assessment mark submitted by the school provides a summation of each student's achievements measured at several points throughout the course. The marks submitted for each course group at a school should reflect the rank order of students, and must be on a scale sufficiently wide to reflect adequately the relative differences in student performances.

Internal assessment provides a measure of a student's achievement based on a wider range of syllabus content and outcomes than may be covered by the external examination alone. The assessment components and weightings to be applied ensure a common focus for internal assessment in the course across schools, while allowing for flexibility in the design of tasks. A variety of types of task should be used to give students the opportunity to demonstrate outcomes in different ways and to improve the validity and reliability of the assessment.

The standards-referenced approach to assessment for the HSC involves schools ensuring that:

- assessment tasks reflect the weightings and components specified in this document
- tasks are designed to focus on objectives and outcomes
- the types of assessment task are appropriate for the outcomes being assessed
- students are given the opportunity to demonstrate their level of achievement of the outcomes in a range of different task types
- the assessment criteria for each task are such that higher marks are gained by demonstration of better achievement in relation to the syllabus outcomes
- students know the assessment criteria before they begin a task
- marks earned on individual tasks are expressed on a scale sufficiently wide to reflect the relative differences in student performances.

Students should receive meaningful feedback about what they are able to do, and what they need to do in order to improve their level of performance.

## **The HSC examination**

The external HSC examination provides a measure of student achievement in a range of syllabus outcomes that can be reliably measured in an examination setting. The external examination and its marking relate to syllabus standards by:

- providing clear links to syllabus outcomes
- enabling students to demonstrate the levels of achievement outlined in the course performance scale
- applying marking guidelines based on criteria that relate to the quality of the response
- aligning performance in the examination each year to the standards established for the course.

## **Board requirements for the HSC internal assessment mark**

The Board requires that the assessment tasks used to determine the HSC internal assessment mark must comply with the components and weightings specified. The collection of information for the HSC internal assessment mark must not begin before the completion of the Preliminary course.

Schools are required to develop an HSC internal assessment program that:

- specifies the various assessment tasks and the weightings allocated to each task
- provides a schedule of the tasks designed for the whole course.

Note that school-based assessment marks submitted to the Board must NOT include:

- measures of objectives and outcomes that address values and attitudes. (However, as these objectives are important elements of any course, schools may decide to report on them separately to students and parents, perhaps using some form of descriptive statements.)
- measures that reflect student conduct.

See the Board's [ACE Manual](#) for further information.

## Assessment components and weightings

### HSC course

The mandatory components and weightings for the HSC course are set out below. The internal assessment mark submitted to the Board of Studies is to be based on the HSC course only.

Component	Weighting
Performance OR Composition OR Musicology	50 (25 + 25)
	<b>50</b>

Teachers may use their discretion in determining the manner in which they allocate tasks within the course content. Two assessment tasks should be set during the course and weighted equally.

## Music Extension HSC examination specifications

The examination will consist of a performance practical examination or the submission of a composition or musicology essay, worth 50 marks.

### **Performance (50 marks)**

Maximum performance time will be 20 minutes.

#### **Ensemble (20 marks)**

Candidates will perform a piece of music on instrument(s) or voice as an ensemble item.

#### **Solo (30 marks)**

Candidates will perform two solo contrasting pieces of music on instrument(s) or voice.

**OR**

### **Composition (50 marks)**

Candidates will compose and submit two original contrasting pieces or movements. Maximum combined length of the two pieces or movements will be 6 minutes.

**OR**

### **Musicology (50 marks)**

Candidates will prepare and submit an essay of approximately 3000 words.

See *Requirements for the practical examination and submitted works*, below.

## Summary of external and internal HSC assessment

External examination	Mark	Internal assessment	Weighting
<b>Performance practical examination</b>		Performance OR Composition OR Musicology	50 (25 + 25)
One ensemble piece	20		
Two solo pieces	30		
OR			
<b>Composition</b>			
Two submitted works	50		
OR			
<b>Musicology</b>			
Submitted essay	50		
	<b>50</b>		<b>50</b>

### Resources and advice

Further guidance and advice related to assessment and the HSC examination in Music Extension can be found on the Board's website at [www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus\\_hsc](http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/syllabus_hsc).

### Requirements for the practical examination and submitted works

Development of the practical tasks or submitted work(s) may commence from the beginning of the HSC course.

Schools must have procedures in place that will allow effective supervision of the development of students' work. This is particularly the case where work is done away from school. Schools must be confident that effective supervision and sufficient documentation of this work is possible before giving consent for students to begin work on practical work.

Teachers must certify that the work has been completed under their supervision, and that the rules and procedures detailed here have been followed.

Principals must be able to endorse the teacher's declaration that the work:

- has been done under the teacher's supervision
- is the student's own work consistent with earlier drafts and other examples of the student's work
- was completed by the due date.

### Performance

Maximum performance time: 20 minutes.

Students will perform THREE contrasting pieces of music on instrument(s) or voice.

- One of the pieces must be an ensemble item.
- The part played by the candidate in the ensemble must be clearly displayed.
- Two solo pieces.

Students will be assessed on the musical effectiveness of their performance during the examination. Students should be able to demonstrate in performance an understanding of the stylistic features of the music.

A performance must be accompanied unless the work was composed to be performed unaccompanied. Accompaniments may be live or pre-recorded. In the case of pre-recorded accompaniments, the part of the candidate must be clearly displayed and must not be included on the tape.

Electronic instruments may be used as solo instruments or as an accompaniment or as part of an ensemble.

The term 'ensemble' refers to any piece presented by two or more performers that specifically demonstrates the individual candidate's use and understanding of ensemble skills. In ensemble performances the student is permitted to undertake a non-solo part, provided that the musical contribution can be clearly identified in the performance.

The legitimate use of technology such as synthesisers (analog and digital), MIDI-controlled instruments (sequencers, drum machines, electronic percussion and samplers) and recorded accompaniment tapes must be appropriate to the performance.

The use of technology should not delay the examination process. Sound and balance checks should be carried out before the examination begins. Candidates' programs should be scheduled to allow students to use the same technology without delaying the examination process.

No-one other than the performers and examiners is permitted in the examination venue. Ensemble members, accompanists and page turners are permitted for the duration of the piece in which they are involved.

A form will be supplied by the Board of Studies on which all students will list the title of the piece, the composer, performance times of the items and the order of performance. This form will be handed to the examiners at the commencement of the practical examination.

Teachers are reminded to contact the Office of the Board of Studies to seek advice and permission if their students wish to use unusual or less conventional musical instruments or sound sources in the examinations. It is not necessary to seek permission to use standard orchestral or band instruments, voice or instruments specific to a particular world culture.

Students must adhere to total performance time limits.

### **Performance examination criteria**

Candidates will be assessed on their musical effectiveness through:

- musical sophistication and sensitivity
- demonstration of technical skills
- stylistic interpretation of the chosen repertoire
- sense of personal expression and personal interpretation of the chosen repertoire
- understanding of solo/*ensemble* techniques.

## **Composition**

Maximum combined time of the two pieces or movements: 6 minutes.

Students will submit TWO original contrasting pieces or movements.

For the purpose of the Higher School Certificate examination, the term ‘Composition’ applies to original works. The composition should be of a musically substantial nature.

The marking of submitted compositions is based on both the written scores and the recordings. The recordings are used as a guide to the intentions of the composer, and therefore the technical quality will not be taken into consideration. All details necessary to realise the scores must be included on the submitted manuscript. Traditional and non-traditional notation is acceptable. If non-traditional notation is used, a key should accompany the score. Scores may be printed by computer. Page, bar numbers and all performance directions are to be included on each work, and instruments/voices should be labelled on each page opening.

Compositions must adhere to time limits.

TWO copies of the written scores and recordings must be made. ONE copy of the written scores and recordings is to be submitted to the Board of Studies while the second copy and Composition Portfolio should be retained at the school. This copy should be available if necessary during the HSC examination marking operation.

A Composition Portfolio is to be developed as a record of the compositional process. This portfolio may be requested by the Board of Studies to validate authorship of the composition. See the [Music Stage 6 Support Document](#) for more details regarding the Composition Portfolio.

### **Composition examination criteria**

Candidates will be assessed on how well they demonstrate:

- understanding of musical concepts and the relationships between them
- stylistic understanding
- knowledge of score conventions and performance directions
- ability to establish and sustain a musical idea
- a sense of personal compositional style.

## **Musicology**

Students will submit one essay of approximately 3000 words on one or more aspect(s) of music that they have studied in depth.

TWO copies of the Musicology essay must be made. ONE copy of the Musicology essay is to be submitted to the Board of Studies while the second copy and portfolio should be retained at the school. This copy should be available if necessary during the HSC examination marking operation.

A Musicology Portfolio is to be developed as a record of the musicological process. This portfolio may be requested by the Board of Studies to validate authorship of the essay.

A brief written record of each student's progress throughout the essay must be kept by the teacher. This should not be submitted with the Musicology essay, but may be requested in exceptional circumstances where the examiners require further information. This record should be retained in the school together with assessment records. A Practical Project: Record of Student's Progress pro-forma is available to download from *Schools Online*.

Musicology essays should demonstrate use of primary sources (eg scores, recordings, interviews, concerts) in a detailed investigation of the music studied. Students should demonstrate an understanding of the use of musical concepts and their cultural contexts in the music studied and be able to state a hypothesis and draw valid conclusions to their research. Relevant musical examples (chosen to illustrate important points) and quotations should convincingly support statements made in the essay. These may be presented in the body of the essay as short score extracts and/or short recorded excerpts.

Students are advised to choose an area of study for which they have access to primary sources, and to begin their study with an overview of the topic based on these sources. This will enable them to narrow the scope of the topic and to formulate a relevant hypothesis, to focus on specific works, aspect(s) of music or style(s) and to form their own conclusions. The essay should focus on specific musical concepts in the music studied, in their cultural contexts and present an in-depth analysis of the music which is relevant to the stated hypothesis.

Essays should be typed. Each typed A4 page equals approximately 200 words of 12 point, double-spaced type. Each essay must include page numbers and a progressive word count every 100 words.

Bibliography and/or discography, footnotes and/or end notes etc must be included but will not be counted in the word count.

Essays must adhere to word lengths.

### **Musicology examination criteria**

Candidates will be assessed on how well they demonstrate:

- establishment of an hypothesis and application of the skills of critical analysis and evaluation
- organisation, development and expression of ideas in a sustained argument supported by relevant musical examples and quotations
- understanding of the concepts of music and the relationships between them within the relevant context
- research and data collection skills from primary and secondary sources.