



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority



# GCE A level performance descriptions for music

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## Introduction

Performance descriptions have been created for all GCE subjects. They describe the learning outcomes and levels of attainment likely to be demonstrated by a representative candidate performing at the A/B and E/U boundaries for AS and A2.

In practice most candidates will show uneven profiles across the attainments listed, with strengths in some areas compensating in the award process for weaknesses or omissions elsewhere. Performance descriptions illustrate expectations at the A/B and E/U boundaries of the AS and A2 as a whole; they have not been written at unit level.

Grade A/B and E/U boundaries should be set using professional judgement. The judgement should reflect the quality of candidates' work, informed by the available technical and statistical evidence. Performance descriptions are designed to assist examiners in exercising their professional judgement. They should be interpreted and applied in the context of individual specifications and their associated units. However, performance descriptions are not designed to define the content of specifications and units.

The requirement for all AS and A level specifications to assess candidates' quality of written communication will be met through one or more of the assessment objectives.

The performance descriptions have been produced by the regulatory authorities in collaboration with the awarding bodies.

## AS performance descriptions for music

	<b>Assessment objective 1</b>	<b>Assessment objective 2</b>	<b>Assessment objective 3</b>
<b>Assessment objectives</b>	Candidates should be able to: interpret musical ideas with technical and expressive control and a sense of style and awareness of occasion and/or ensemble.	Candidates should be able to: - develop musical ideas with technical and expressive control making creative use of musical devices and conventions.	Candidates should be able to: - demonstrate understanding of, and comment perceptively on, the structural, expressive and contextual aspects of music.
<b>A/B boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) present musically convincing and generally fluent performances that show musical understanding.	Candidates characteristically: a) produce coherent compositions that show an ability to manipulate musical ideas, and make use of musical devices and conventions in relation to the chosen genre, style and tradition.	Candidates characteristically: a) make critical judgements about music heard and show a breadth of understanding across the genres, styles and traditions studied.
<b>E/U boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) perform with a sense of continuity using appropriate tempi and showing some understanding of the music chosen.	Candidates characteristically: a) produce compositions that make some use of musical ideas and show some understanding of musical devices and conventions in relation to the chosen genre, style and tradition.	Candidates characteristically: a) comment on music heard showing some understanding across the genres, styles and traditions studied.

## A2 performance descriptions for music

	<b>Assessment objective 1</b>	<b>Assessment objective 2</b>	<b>Assessment objective 3</b>
<b>Assessment objectives</b>	Candidates should be able to: - interpret musical ideas with technical and expressive control and a sense of style and awareness of occasion and/or ensemble.	Candidates should be able to: - develop musical ideas with technical and expressive control making creative use of musical devices and conventions.	Candidates should be able to: - demonstrate understanding of, and comment perceptively on, the structural, expressive and contextual aspects of music.
<b>A/B boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) present musically convincing and fluent performances that show musical understanding and personal interpretation.	Candidates characteristically: a) produce musically convincing compositions that show musical imagination, and make effective use of musical devices and conventions in relation to the chosen genre, style and tradition	Candidates characteristically: a) make and justify personal judgements on music heard and show some depth of understanding within the genres, styles and traditions studied making connections between the structural, expressive and contextual aspects of music.
<b>E/U boundary performance descriptions</b>	Candidates characteristically: a) present generally fluent performances showing some understanding of the overall shape, direction and style of the music chosen.	Candidates characteristically: a) produce compositions that make creative use of musical ideas and show understanding of musical devices and conventions in relation to the chosen genre, style and tradition.	Candidates characteristically: a) comment in some detail on music heard, showing some understanding across the genres, styles and traditions studied.