

Musical Theatre Syllabus 2027

Overview of
Syllabus Updates



General Amendments

Assessment Criteria wording has been fully reviewed and all feedback from a range of stakeholders (including teachers and examiners) has been taken on board. The key changes to occur following this review include that the Knowledge Criteria have been updated to make them more Learner-Friendly.

For Entry Level to Grade 5

The Examiner will ask the Learner(s) to announce the title, lyricist/composer and character prior to the performance. This information may be memorised or read from a note card. A clean, legible, unannotated copy of the lyrics should be provided for the Examiner.

For Level 3 to Grades 6-8

The Learner(s) must present a brief introduction (not included in the overall performance time) of no more than 30 seconds, announcing the title, lyricist/composer, character and outlining the context of the song. This information may be memorised or read from a note card. A clean, legible, unannotated copy of the lyrics and of the published or devised text should be provided for the Examiner.

Further information and guidance can be found on our Help Centre, [Oracle](#).



Exam Regulation Updates

- New regulation on the inclusion of spoken dialogue
- New regulation on number of characters played
- Expansion of accompaniment guidance
- Expansion of costume guidance
- Expansion of unauthorised person guidance
- Expansion of electronic device guidance
- Expansion of electronic sound enhancement guidance
- New regulation on timescales
- New regulation on publication
- New guidance for selecting pieces with sensitivity

- **Removed regulation:** All songs must be presented in a clearly defined dramatic context.

For full details, please see the Musical Theatre 2027 syllabus.

Changes to Entry Level

Learning Outcomes

- **LO3:** create a physical response to the song is now: Use the face and body in response to the song
- **LO4:** know and understand the character in the chosen song is now: Understand the character in the chosen song

Changes to Entry Level

Assessment Criteria

- **1.1** Sing the words of the song with understanding is now: Perform the words of the song with understanding
- **2.1** Sing with audibility appropriate to the performance space is now: Perform with audibility appropriate to the performance space
- **2.2** Sing with clarity of diction is now: Perform with clarity of diction
- **2.3** Sing the melody with accuracy in the chosen song is now: Sing the melody with accuracy
- **2.4** Sing the rhythm with accuracy in the chosen song is now: Sing the rhythm with accuracy
- **3.1** Perform with facial expression appropriate to the chosen song & **3.2** Perform the song with appropriate movement and use of the performance space are now: **3.1** Perform with movement and facial expression appropriate to the character
- **4.1** Give a description of the appearance of the character in the chosen song is now: **4.2** Describe the appearance of the character in the song
- **4.2** Give a description of the feelings of the character in the chosen song is now: **4.1** Outline the feelings of the character in the song
- **Update:** Simplified and more specific wording in line with feedback.

Changes to Level 1

Learning Outcomes

For Grades 1, 2 and 3:

- **LO3:** create a physical response to the songs is now: Use the performance space in response to the songs

For Grade 1:

- **LO4:** know and understand the content of the chosen songs is now: Know and understand the characters and situations in the songs

For Grades 2 and 3:

- **LO4:** know and understand the content of the chosen songs and **LO5:** know and understand the context of the chosen songs are now: **LO4:** Know and understand the characters and situations in the songs

For Grade 3:

- **LO6:** Know and understand technical terminology for the actor/singer is no longer included at Grade 3.

Changes to Level 1

Assessment Criteria

The verbs have been updated to clarify the depth and type of answer expected and the wording simplified in line with feedback and other syllabi.

For Grades 1, 2 and 3:

- **1.1** Perform with an awareness of character and situation is now: Perform the words of the songs with understanding
- **1.2** Perform with an awareness of the mood(s) is now: Demonstrate an understanding of character and situation
- **2.1** Sing with audibility appropriate to the performance space is now: Perform with audibility appropriate to the performance space
- **2.2** Sing with clarity of diction is now: Perform with clarity of diction
- **2.3** Sing the melody with accuracy in the chosen songs is now: Sing the melody with accuracy
- **2.4** Sing the rhythm with accuracy in the chosen songs is now: Sing the rhythm with accuracy
- **3.1** Perform with facial expression appropriate to the chosen songs & **3.2** Perform the songs with appropriate movement and use of the performance space are now: **3.1** Perform with movement and facial expression appropriate to the character

Changes to Level 1

Assessment Criteria (continued)

For Grade 1:

- **4.1** Give a description of the appearance of the character in the chosen songs is now: 4.1 Describe the appearance of the characters in the songs
- **4.2** Give a description of the feelings of the characters in the chosen songs & 4.3 Give a description of what is happening in each of the chosen songs are now: 4.2 Describe what is happening and outline how your characters are feeling in each of the songs

For Grade 2:

- **4.1** Give a description of what is happening in each of the chosen songs & 4.2 Give a description of the feelings of the characters in the chosen songs are now: 4.1 Describe the location of the songs & 4.2 Outline what is happening and give an overview of how your characters are feeling in each of the songs
- **5.1** Give a summary of the plot of the musical or film musical from which one of the chosen songs has been taken is no longer asked at Grade 2

For Grade 3:

- **4.1** Give a description of the feelings of the characters in the chosen songs & 4.2 Give a description of the mood of each of the chosen songs are now: 4.1 Outline what is happening and give an overview of how the characters are feeling in each of the songs
- **5.1** Give a summary of the plot of the musical or film musical from which one of the chosen songs has been taken is now: 4.2 Outline the plot of the musical or film musical from which one of the songs been taken
- The understanding of technical terminology for the actor/singer has been moved to Level 2 in line with feedback on the knowledge section

Changes to Level 2

Key Changes

For Grades 4 and 5, Total Time Allowance:

- Was previously: Solo - 25 minutes; Duo - 30 minutes
- Is now: Solo - 20 minutes; Duologue - 25 minutes

The spoken song has been removed from Level 2, Grade 4 and 5 in line with feedback.

Learning Outcomes

- **LO1** Perform two songs and one spoken song from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the material is now: Perform two songs from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the material
- **LO2:** use vocal skills in response to the chosen songs is now: Use vocal skills to respond appropriately to the songs and dialogue

Changes to Level 2

Assessment Criteria

For Grades 4 and 5:

- **1.1** Demonstrate an understanding of the place and period in which the characters live is now: Demonstrate an understanding of the situation and place in which the characters live
- **1.2** Demonstrate an understanding of the characters' moods and thoughts is now: Demonstrate an understanding of how the character feels, including showing their moods and thoughts
- **2.3** Sing the melody with accuracy in the sung songs is now: Sing the melody with accuracy
- **2.4** Sing the rhythm with accuracy in the sung songs is now: Sing the rhythm with accuracy
- **3.1** Communicate the physicality of each character through appropriate stance, movement, gesture(s) and facial expression is now: Communicate the physicality of the characters through appropriate movement, posture, body language and facial expression
- **3.2** Make effective use of the performance space through appropriate staging is now: Make appropriate use of the performance space
- **4.1** Give a description of how the character is feeling and how they react to their situation in one of the three chosen songs is now: Describe how the characters are feeling in the songs and how they react to their situations

Changes to Level 2

Assessment Criteria (continued)

For Grade 4:

- **4.2** Give a description of how the published or devised text was selected and developed for one of the sung songs is now: Explain how your physical characterisation helped to reflect the character, their feelings, moods and thoughts
- **4.3** Demonstrate the positions of up to four of the working stage areas is now: Identify the positions of up to four of the working stage areas, giving an example of how and why one area was used in one of your songs
- **5.1** Give an outline of the plot of the musical or film musical from which one of the sung songs has been taken, and what happens to the character portrayed is now: Outline the plot of the musical or film musical from which one of the songs has been taken.

For Grade 5:

- **4.2** Give a description of the reasons for the chosen staging in one of the three songs using technical terminology of the working stage areas is now: Explain the reasons for the staging choices in one of the songs using technical terminology of the working stage areas
- **4.3** Give a description of how the published or devised text was selected and developed for one of the sung songs is no longer required at Grade 5
- **5.1** Give an explanation of the key themes in the musical or film musical from which one of the sung songs has been taken is now: Summarise the key themes in the musical or film musical from which one of the songs has been taken
- **6.1** Give definitions of three technical terms for the actor/singer is now: Define up to three technical terms for the actor/singer

Changes to Level 3

Key Changes

The spoken song has been added to Level 3, Grade 6 in line with feedback.

Content

In line with feedback, the date requirements have been removed from Level 3 and have been replaced by **Genre**:

- Operetta
- Musical Comedy
- Golden Age
- Pastiche Musical
- Pop/Rock Musical
- Juke Box Musical
- Concept Musical
- Book Musical

Learning Outcomes

For Grade 6:

- **LO1:** perform three songs from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the material is now: Perform two songs and one spoken song from memory, demonstrating an understanding of the material

For Grades 6 – 8:

- **LO4:** know and understand the content of the chosen songs and **LO5:** know and understand the context of the chosen songs are now: **LO4:** Know and understand the content and context of the chosen songs

For Grades 6 –7 (and 8):

- **LO6:** know and understand the techniques required for musical theatre is now: **LO5** and is now included at Grade 8

Changes to Level 3

Assessment Criteria

For Grades 6 – 8:

- **1.2** Demonstrate understanding of the intentions and objectives of the characters portrayed is now: Communicate understanding of the intentions and objectives of the characters portrayed
- **2.1** Perform with adequate breathing, voice production and resonance is now: Perform with appropriate breathing, voice production and resonance
- **3.1** Communicate the personal characteristics of each character through appropriate stance, movement, gesture(s) and facial expression is now: Communicate the personal characteristics of each character through appropriate posture, movement, body language and facial expression
- **4.1** Give a summary of the character's objective in each of the chosen songs is now: Summarise the character's objective in each of the songs
- **4.2** Give a description of how the published or devised spoken dialogue was selected and developed for one of the chosen songs is now: 4.4 (Grade 6) 4.3 (Grade 7) 4.2 (Grade 8) Describe how the published or devised spoken dialogue was selected and developed for one of the songs
- **5.1** Give an explanation of the role of one of the characters portrayed, within the context of the musical or film musical as a whole is now: 4.2/4.3 Explain the role of one of the characters portrayed, within the context of the musical or film musical as a whole

Changes to Level 3

Assessment Criteria (continued)

For Grades 6 – 7:

- **6.1** Give an explanation of the breathing techniques required to support the voice in song is now: **5.1** Explain the breathing techniques required to support the voice in song

For Grade 6:

- **5.2** Give an explanation of the musical genre to which each song belongs is now: **4.2** Explain the musical genre to which each song belongs

For Grade 7:

- **5.2** Give a description of the work and influence on musical theatre of one of the composers, librettists or lyricists of the chosen songs (chosen by Examiner at the time of the examination) is now: **4.4** Describe the work and influence on musical theatre of one of the composers, librettists or lyricists of the songs (chosen by the Learner)

For Grade 8:

- **4.1** Give an explanation of the processes involved in developing the three songs for performance is now: Explain the processes involved in developing the songs for performance
- **5.1** is now: Describe the vocal techniques required to perform the chosen songs
- **6.1** Give a summary of the influences on musical theatre of one chosen practitioner is now: Summarise the influences on musical theatre of one chosen practitioner

