

# MUSICAL THEATRE 2020

## SYLLABUS CHANGES FROM 2010 VERSION



### INTRODUCTION

#### RELEASE DATES

- First exams can be taken from 1st September 2020
- The 2010 version will be withdrawn on 31st August 2020

The following tables detail where there are changes, providing details on what the changes are and the rationale for them.

#### SOME OVERALL CHANGES TO NOTE:

There are now learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and attainment descriptors for every exam.

All the conversation and discussion tasks have now been re-named 'Reflection' to underline the main aim of the task)

At Grades 7 and 8, the reflection task is now a minute longer (6 minutes)

For Grades 4-8, there is some slight re-wording of the reflection task - "The candidate should be prepared to engage in discussion on the following..." This is to highlight that a number of topics could be covered in the reflection task, while also clarifying that, due to the constraints of time, not every topic is necessarily going to be discussed.

#### WHAT IS THE OBJECTIVE OF THE MUSICAL THEATRE EXAMS?

The Musical Theatre exams are designed for candidates who want to focus on a variety of musical theatre genres as solo performers, in pairs or groups. Candidates demonstrate their skills integrating acting, singing and movement/dance from published works of musical theatre/film musicals. The exams present candidates with practical, creative tasks that prepare them for situations in both education and the workplace, enabling them to develop invaluable 21st Century Skills in communication and creativity and to build confidence.

#### WHY WERE CHANGES MADE?

To enable performance pieces across the grades to be marked separately so that teachers and candidates can receive marks and feedback specific to each piece

Provide more opportunity for the demonstration of integrated Musical Theatre skills



The tables below detail the main changes to the Musical Theatre specifications; however, teachers should still review the 2020 syllabus in detail to ensure they are up to date with the exam requirements.

## MUSICAL THEATRE (SOLO)

GRADE AND TASK	DETAILS OF CHANGE	RATIONALE
Initial	This is a new exam for Musical Theatre (solo)	To increase the options for young candidates.
Grade 1, task 2	Instead of a second song or a presentation of a character using poetry, prose, dance, movement or song, candidates can choose between delivering a performance of a movement/dance sequence or a monologue.	This provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop the individual skills that will eventually be combined at higher grades into integrated programmes.
Grade 2, tasks 1-2	The songs that candidates perform do not specifically have to be contrasting, and they can come from the same or different musicals.	The requirement on contrasting is now brought in at the end of Foundation grades (Grade 3).
Grade 2, task 3	Some re-wording of the task so that candidates can focus on either acting or movement.	To ensure that at least two of the three skills are covered in the exam and provides candidates with the opportunity to demonstrate and develop the individual skills that will eventually be combined at higher grades into integrated performances.
Grade 2, task 4	Content and meaning are the specified topics to be covered in the reflection instead of content and setting.	To provide a slightly wider brief for the topics reflected on.
Grades 3-6, tasks 1-2	The contrast for the songs must be in genre and/or style.	To provide clarity on what is expected.
Grade 3, task 3	Candidates can now choose between the performance of a movement/dance piece or a monologue.	This cuts down on the number of pieces the candidate needs to perform, while continuing to encourage focus on skills that will eventually be combined at higher grades into integrated performances.
Grades 4-6, task 3	This is a new task where the candidate performs a spoken extract that moves into song.	This recognises a key musical theatre skill.

Grades 4&5, task 4	This is a new task where the candidate performs the lyrics of one of their songs as a monologue from memory.	This recognises a key rehearsal skill.
Grade 4, task 5	The discussion topics now include the vocal and physical aspects of characterisation.	This is to underline the importance of character in musical theatre.
Grade 6, task 4	This is a new task where the candidate performs the lyrics of one of their songs as a monologue - the examiner chooses the song	To provide a task which reflects an authentic rehearsal/performance experience to further understanding of the performance material.
Grade 6, task 5	The discussion topics now include the use of safe rehearsal and preparation practice.  The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas useful to musical theatre.
Grade 7, tasks 1-3	Candidates now perform a continuous programme of three contrasting songs, one of which is a scene into song piece.	To encourage candidates to build cohesive performance programmes.
Grade 7, task 4	This is a new task where the candidate will now perform a modification of one of their pieces from memory.	To provide a task which reflects an authentic rehearsal/performance experience, to further understanding of the performance material.
Grade 7, task 5	The discussion topics now include the vocal and physical techniques employed in performance and the possible staging options  The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas most valuable to musical theatre.
Grade 8, tasks 1-4	Candidates now perform a continuous programme of four contrasting songs, one of which is a scene into song piece.	To encourage candidates to build cohesive performance programmes.
Grade 8, task 5	This is a new task where the candidate will work with the examiner on a modification of one of their pieces - the choice of song and context is made by the examiner.	To provide a task which reflects an authentic rehearsal/performance experience, to further understanding of the performance material.
Grade 8, task 6	The discussion topics now include how the vocal techniques and delivery contributed to the performance.  The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas most valuable to musical theatre.

## MUSICAL THEATRE (PAIR)

GRADE AND TASK	DETAILS OF CHANGE	RATIONALE
Initial	This is a new exam for Musical Theatre (pair)	To increase the option for young candidates.
Grades 1&2, task 2	Instead of second song or a presentation of a character using poetry, prose, dance, movement or song, candidates can choose between delivering a performance of a movement/dance sequence or a duologue.	This provides the opportunity for candidates to demonstrate and develop the individual skills that will eventually be combined at higher grades into integrated programmes.
Grades 3-6, tasks 1-2	The contrast for the songs must be in genre and/or style.	To provide clarity on what is expected in terms of contrast.
Grade 3, task 3	Candidates can now choose between the performance of a movement/dance piece or a monologue.	This cuts down on the number of pieces the candidates need to perform, while continuing to encourage focus on skills that will eventually be combined at higher grades into integrated performances.
Grades 4&6, task 3	This is a new task where the candidates perform the lyrics of one of their songs as a monologue from memory.	To provide a task which reflects an authentic rehearsal/performance experience, to further understanding of the performance material.
Grade 4, task 5	The discussion topics now include the vocal and physical aspects of characterisation	This is to underline the importance of character in musical theatre.
Grades 5&6, task 3	This is a new task where the candidate performs a spoken extract that moves into song.	This recognises that musical theatre moves between scene and song often seamlessly.
Grade 6, task 5	The discussion topics now include the use of safe rehearsal and preparation practice. The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas useful to musical theatre.
Grade 7, tasks 1-3	Candidates now perform a continuous programme of three contrasting songs, one of which is a scene into song piece.	To encourage candidates to build cohesive performance programmes.

Grade 7, task 5	The discussion topics now include the vocal and physical techniques employed in performance and the possible staging options.  The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas useful to musical theatre.
Grade 8, tasks 1-4	Candidates now perform a continuous programme of four contrasting songs, one of which is a scene into song piece.	To encourage candidates to build cohesive performance programmes.
Grade 8, task 5	This is a new task where the candidate will work with the examiner on a modification of one of their pieces - the choice of song and context is made by the examiner.	To provide a task which reflects an authentic rehearsal/performance experience, to further understanding of the performance material.
Grade 8, task 6	The discussion topics now include how the vocal techniques and delivery contributed to the performance.  The discussion task no longer includes an improvisation.	To focus the discussion on areas useful to musical theatre.

## MUSICAL THEATRE (GROUP)

The Musical Theatre (group) graded exams contain only small wording changes. Read through the syllabus specifications, taking note of the following main points:

- There is a new initial level exam, in line with the offer for solo and pair grades
- There is no separately marked introduction component
- For Initial and Grades 1-3 the performances should include acting, singing and movement/dance either integrated or demonstrated separately
- For Grades 4-8 the performances should demonstrate integrated acting, singing and movement/dance.

**PREPARE TO PERFORM**

**COMBINE ACTING, SONG AND  
MOVEMENT THROUGH PERFORMANCE**

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