WHAT IS A VIVA?

It is a two way discussion between examiner and candidate.

The purpose of a viva:
- to give the candidate the opportunity to demonstrate his/her understanding and knowledge of the topic selected.
- to evaluate the candidate's understanding of the musical content studied.
- Students should be prepared for examiners to ask questions exploring their depth of knowledge and understanding of the chosen area of study.

DO

- Be articulate and enthusiastic have a point or area to focus on.
- discuss the MUSIC
- choose a realistic area
- know your pieces inside out and refer to them
- sing or play sections/motifs/rhythms to make a point,
- use short specific taped examples
- be organized, practice your viva many times and be familiar with the equipment so there are no technical hitches.
DON'T

- Do a prepared rote talk.
- concentrate on history or information that has no direct relevance to the music you're discussing
- use taped examples if you haven't listened to them.
- play huge chunks of taped excerpts
- use terminology or information that you don't understand
- take cue cards or written notes in with you.

Summary sheet:

- What is it that you want to say?
- what it is you are saying? How do your examples support this through the musical concepts
- What conclusions can you draw?
- The candidate's copy of the outline should be exactly the same as that provided for the examiners. Cue cards, palm cards and additional notes are not permitted.
- Each recorded example should be on a CD and an index clearly available for the candidate's use. Take care that the index is complete so that you can select accurately. If using tapes (old technology!!!) have each excerpt on a different tape and cued.
- Students should carefully select and record examples of short, relevant excerpts to be used in their discussion with examiners. Do not use the complete work and try to select excerpts from it.

ALWAYS CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK THAT YOU ARE MEETING COURSE REQUIREMENTS.
HOW DO I PREPARE A VIVA?

Timeline

Use your Preliminary course to develop your: analysis skills
understanding of concepts
topic interests

In Term IV
• start to consider your topic area
• choose something you are interested in and can access sources for.

Use the end of term IV /School Holidays to:
• Get background reading/listening done.
• Identify topic area
• Research.... Research - contact Universities, libraries, Australian Music Centre, Performance groups.
• Collect music.... Scores... Commentaries
• Collate ......summarise ......reflect ........decide on.

What is the focus of your study?
• a comparison of composers
• a specific style
• a specific work-(make sure it’s substantial)

How to prepare
• Make a list of works and identify/list compositional features (the concept areas make a good framework)
• Listen ...listen....... listen....... analyse........... Write out your ideas
• Select examples that best illustrate your points
• learn them so you can play motifs, rhythms, harmonies easily.
• Do a rough draft
• Test yourself
• write out from memory
• talk onto tape
• discuss with parents/friends/ practice with your teachers

PREPARE FINAL SUMMARY... TAPE EXCERPTS... SCORE EXCERPTS
MUSICOLEGY
VIVA VOCE

Best Responses

Candidate is enthusiastic about the topic. Is confident and prepared to discuss the topic with the examiners

Has an excellent understanding of the musicology aspects about the topic and the specific area of Study. Has listened widely

Concentrates on the MUSIC. Always concentrates on the MUSICAL aspects

Can discuss in detail the topic, referring to specific musical examples

Can support observations made about the topic studied with evidence of research

Can discuss and understand the use of the musical concepts and stylistic features of the topic studied

Can refer to musical scores demonstrating an understanding of features notated

Provides a clearly structured summary sheet

Has a clear understanding of the broader context of the topic

Knows how to work the cassette player and can easily locate chosen musical examples.

Weaker Responses

Does not show an interest in the topic....... ("My teacher wanted me to do this.")

Shows little preparation

Attends the examination without supporting material

Has a limited understanding of the topic. Is unable to respond to questions

Makes little reference to the music. Concentrates on non-musical details.

Shows evidence of superficial listening - or none

May not understand the terms written on their summary sheet. Cannot explain everything on the summary sheet

Uses broad generalizations (e.g. It always..... or...... It usually......)

Unable to discuss composition techniques. Demonstrates superficial listening and/or limited musical vocabulary

Often presents a sparse or incomplete summary sheet