**Performance Do's and Don'ts**

**DO**
- Be enthusiastic
- Be prepared – know exactly what pieces you are playing and in what order
- Choose pieces you enjoy playing and have performed regularly
- Make sure your instrument is in tune. Tune outside if you want help from your teacher
- Make sure each piece validly represents the chosen or mandatory topic
- Feel free to warm-up beforehand both in and out of the exam room
- Practice in the area in which you are going to perform. You need to check balance and where to stand etc.
- Make sure your backing tracks are of good quality

**DON'T**
- Tell the examiner you hate this piece
- Decide on the day to change your pieces and do a totally different program
- Tell the examiner how nervous you are because you hate performing
- Perform lots of pieces, all in the same style by the same composer with the same accompaniment or group
- Decide not to attempt the sight singing – give it a go, you’ll get something for trying!
- Blast the examiners out of the room (rock bands!!). They are assessing musical ability
- Perform a piece which is missing vocals or accompaniment
- Choose pieces that you are on top of and that you can perform all the notes
- Be afraid to produce a Doctors certificate if you are sick
- Just play along with a CD – this is called doubling. A backing track is an accompaniment

It is **NOT** advantageous to:
- Change instruments for different pieces
- Change clothing
- Use choreography
- Speak about each work presented

It is **IS** advantageous to:
- Tune carefully between each piece
- Check balance with backing tracks, and with ensembles
- Take the performance space into consideration (You are generally not playing in the entertainment centre, you are usually in a classroom or hall. Examiners are marking technical ability and musicianship, not how loud you can play)
Performance Tips – What the Examiners Said

Each Year the examiners put out a report after marking all sections of your HSC. This is what examiners have had to say about previous HSC Performance exams.

GENERAL

- Students performance programs require thoughtful planning and consideration based on advice as to the level of performance required as well as topics studied and choice of pieces. Students disadvantage themselves if realistic programs are not chosen.
- The pieces chosen should match the student’s level of technical ability
- Multi-instrumentalists are advised to select the instrument which they are most competent in
- Candidates should be wary of performing their own compositions unless this provides scope for demonstrating a range of techniques, styles and musical expression
- Movement and costuming can at times interfere with a students performance and does not enhance the outcomes
- Performance programs should reflect adequate rehearsal in examination venues and special attention should be given to achieving an appropriate standard and balance of accompaniments, sound levels, technical details and layouts
- Sound levels need to be appropriate to the performance space
- Students need to carefully select electives which maximize their strengths
- Students should listen to a range of recordings and live performances, noting performance etiquette, subtleties of interpretation, phrasing and style and if possible videos of their own performances.

In the best performances, students:

- Displayed musical maturity, well developed technique and excellent sense of style
- Chose pieces which reflected the topics and which maximized their potential by showcasing their skills
- Provided well rehearsed ensembles and had obviously carefully chosen and worked often with accompanists and in the venue
- Played with confidence – indicating that ample performance opportunities had been afforded prior to the exam
- Demonstrated innate musicianship reflected in sensitivity, phrasing, tempo, intonation and tone control
- ENJOYED PERFORMING

Weaker performance often:

- Showed a lack of preparation and performing experience
- Were a result of poorly chosen repertoire; either being too demanding and thus highlighting lack of technical ability and sense of style, or being insubstantial and thus unable to allow the performer to demonstrate musical strengths
- Highlighted a lack of consideration of intonation, diction, articulation, dynamics and phrasing resulting in performances that were poorly prepared, insecure, mechanical and unmusical
- used incomplete ensembles or showed lack of accompaniment
- demonstrated unfamiliarity with the piece or other performers
MUSIC 1

The typical performance in this band:

Band 6
- displays extensive knowledge and skills about the concepts of music and of music as an art form in a variety of cultural and historical contexts
- displays extensive understanding of the concepts of music in a diverse range of aural experiences
- communicates a comprehensive understanding of the concepts of music and makes extensive musical observations on the chosen topic
- performs with a high level of technical skill and stylistic interpretation
- composes with a high level of stylistic understanding and musical discrimination

Band 5
- displays detailed knowledge and skills about the concepts of music and of music as an art form in a variety of cultural and historical contexts
- displays a detailed understanding of the concepts of music in a diverse range of aural experiences
- communicates a thorough understanding of the concepts of music and makes detailed musical observations on the chosen topic
- performs with sustained technical skill and an understanding of style
- composes with a thorough stylistic understanding and musical discrimination

Band 4
- displays sound knowledge and skills about the concepts of music and of music as an art form in a variety of cultural and historical contexts
- displays a clear understanding of the concepts of music in a diverse range of aural experiences
- communicates a clear understanding of the concepts of music and makes sound musical observations on the chosen topic
- performs with sound technical skill and a sense of style
- composes with a sound stylistic understanding

Band 3
- displays basic knowledge and skills about the concepts of music and of music as an art form in a variety of cultural and historical contexts
- displays a basic understanding of the concepts of music across a range of aural experiences
- communicates a basic understanding of the concepts of music and makes musical observations on the chosen topic
- performs with a basic technical skill and an inconsistent awareness of style
- composes with a basic stylistic understanding

Band 2
- displays limited knowledge and skills about the concepts of music and of music as an art form in a variety of cultural and historical contexts
- displays a simplistic understanding of the concepts of music in aural experiences
- communicates a limited understanding of the concepts of music and simple musical observations on the chosen topic
- performs with a limited interpretive and technical skill
- composes with a limited stylistic understanding

Band 1 •