

MUSICAL THEATRE

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

This Musical Theatre Syllabus seeks to offer Learners the opportunity to:

- Aim to be accurate in both lyrics and tuning
- Demonstrate an awareness of the various and appropriate musical theatre styles
- Perform selections with flow and enjoyment
- Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of acting techniques throughout the performance

Guidelines for Musical Theatre Learners:

- All selections must be performed from memory.
- Selections must be taken from published and recognised Musical Theatre works, and must be sung in English.
- Own compositions are not permitted.
- Learners should bring legible copies of the libretti to the examination for the Examiner, and must adhere to all copyright laws.
- Unless specified in the individual musical, selections must be accompanied; this can be live or recorded, and must be arranged by the Learner.
- Any pre-recorded backing tracks should not include vocals or vocal harmonies.
- Accompanists and sound operators are only permitted to remain in the examination room for the duration of the specific selection in which they are involved.
- The use of vocal amplification is not permitted.
- Full costume or make up is not permitted, although a suggestion of costume (eg: shawls, practice skirt or hat) and hand props are allowed (eg: fans, bags, walking sticks, etc.)
- In line with current standard Health and Safety advice, all Learners should ensure they are warmed up both vocally and physically before the examination.
- Teachers should ensure that the key of the song is within the Learner's comfortable range to avoid vocal damage. (Songs may be transposed from the original key to accommodate this.) Similarly, "belting" or "chesting" should be avoided unless the Learner has received specific training in that technique.
- Should the Examiner feel that there is a risk of damaging the Learner's vocal apparatus they have the right to curtail the examination.

SOLO

ENTRY LEVEL

At this Level no song should exceed 2 minutes.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Entry Level	Technique and Interpretation	Discussion
Preparatory	90	10
Introductory	90	10
Preliminary	90	10
Transition	90	10

PREPARATORY GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform one song of their own choice.
2. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The song

INTRODUCTORY GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform one song of their own choice
2. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The song
 - The reason for choosing it

PRELIMINARY GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform one song of their own choice.
2. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The song
 - The character who sings it

TRANSITION GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform two contrasting songs of their own choice.
2. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The meaning of the songs
 - The characters who sing them

LEVEL 1 – FOUNDATION

At this Level no song should exceed 3 minutes.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Foundation – Level 1	Technique and Interpretation		Discussion
Grade 1	90		10
Grade 2	45	45	10
Grade 3	45	45	10

GRADE 1 (15 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform two contrasting songs of their own choice
 - One up-tempo
 - One lyrical
2. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - One of the chosen songs
 - Discuss the story of the Musical from which it is taken
 - The various vocal singing ranges

GRADE 2 (15 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform one song from any film Musical written before 1950.
2. Perform one contrasting song written after 1970.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - Either the composer or the lyricist of their first selection
 - How the song features in the story of the film.

GRADE 3 Foundation Medal (20 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character, either using the original script or a devised one, leading into a song of their own choice.
2. Perform a contrasting song of their own choice taken from any Musical by Walt Disney.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - Either the composer or the lyricist of their first selection
 - The vocal changes encountered as a performer ages

LEVEL 2 – INTERMEDIATE

At this Level no song should exceed 4 minutes

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Intermediate – Level 2	Technique and Interpretation		Discussion
Grade 4	40	40	20
Grade 5	40	40	20

GRADE 4 (20 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character leading into a song of their own choice by either:
 - Stiles and Drewe; or
 - The Sherman Brothers.
2. Perform a contrasting song of the Learner's own choice expressing a strong emotion.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - Breathing techniques and vocal support
 - Effective ways of warming up and cooling down the voice pre- and post-performance

GRADE 5 (25 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character leading into a song of their own choice by either:
 - Bock/Hahnick; or
 - Charles Strouse.
2. Perform a contrasting comedy song of the Learner's own choice.
3. Discuss with the Examiner:
 - The works of either Bock/Hahnick or Charles Strouse
 - How acting styles have changed as Musicals have evolved
 - How the physicality of characterisation impacts on the voice

LEVEL 3 – ADVANCED

At this Level no song should exceed 5 minutes

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Advanced – Level 3	Technique and Interpretation				Discussion
Grade 6	30	30	20		20
Grade 7	20	20	20	20	20
Grade 8	20	20	20	20	20

GRADE 6 Bronze Medal (30 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character leading into a song of the Learner's own choice by either:
 - Rodgers and Hammerstein; or
 - Kander and Ebb
2. Perform a contrasting song taken from any modern pop compilation musical
3. Perform a short acting improvisation, suggested by the lyrics or situation of one of the selections, which will be given by the Examiner in the examination room. A short time will be allowed for preparation
4. Discuss in depth with the Examiner:
 - Compare and contrast the different styles used in the two selections
 - The vocal techniques used to sing/perform their selections
 - Methods of sustaining vocal health and consistency over an extended period of performance

GRADE 7 Silver Medal (35 Minutes)

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character leading into a song of the Learner's own choice by either:
 - Gershwin; or
 - Cole Porter.
2. Perform a contrasting song of the Learner's own choice written in the last 15 years.
3. Perform a song of the Learner's own choice which must be in an accent or dialect other than the Learner's own.
4. Perform a short acting improvisation, suggested by the lyrics or situation of one of the selections, which will be given by the Examiner in the examination room. A short time will be allowed for preparation.
5. Discuss in depth with the Examiner:
 - Two contrasting styles of musical theatre (e.g. compilation, through-sung, book musical, operetta) selected by the Learner
 - The differences in performance techniques of the two styles selected
 - The changing use and techniques of amplification in the stage musical

GRADE 8 Gold Medal (40 Minutes)

The Bill Kenwright Certificate of Excellence

Is awarded annually to the Learner gaining the highest Distinction mark in this examination.

Learners should:

1. Perform a short scene in character leading into a song of the Learner's own choice by Stephen Schwartz.
2. Perform a contrasting song of the Learner's own choice by Frank Loesser.
3. Perform a song of the Learner's own choice which must contrast in style, period, mood and performance to the two songs.
4. Perform a short acting improvisation, suggested by the lyrics or situation of one of the selections, which will be given by the Examiner in the examination room. A short time will be allowed for preparation.
5. Discuss in depth with the Examiner:
 - Two decades from the early 20th century to the present day selected by the Learner
 - How musical theatre has both reflected and affected the social and political situation of those decades
 - The process needed to approach a musical theatre performance

DUOLOGUES

The criteria for Duologue examinations are as for Solo Examinations. Five minutes is added for each exam from Grade 3 upward.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The Duologue section of this Syllabus provides Learners with the opportunity to:

- Work with a partner in equally weighted roles
- Explore different texts
- Increase confidence
- Understand a sense of dependency

Guidelines for Musical Theatre Duologue Learners

- Learners may enter for the Musical Theatre examinations specified above in Duologue form up to and including Grade 8.
- Duologues are marked as one performance. The criteria for marking Duologues is the same as that for the Solo Grades.
- Learners should put the word **Duologue** on their entry form together with the name of the Learner with whom they are entering.

GROUP EXAMINATIONS

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

The Group Musical Theatre section of this Syllabus provides Learners with the opportunity to:

- Perform together as a team
- Experience the exciting challenge of working in a group musical item
- Demonstrate an awareness of each other and a sense of sharing
- Demonstrate an appropriate sense of timing
- Demonstrate an increased development in performance

Guidelines for Musical Theatre Group Learners

A group must contain a minimum of three persons and up to a maximum of twelve persons and will be marked as a one performance. If it is intended to enter a larger group, please contact the NEA Office first.

ENTRY LEVEL

At this Level no song must exceed 5 minutes. It is permissible to adapt pieces to fit into the time restriction.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Entry Level	Technique and Interpretation	
Preparatory	50	50
Introductory	50	50
Preliminary	50	50
Transition	50	50

PREPARATORY GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should perform a song of their own choice and devise appropriate actions to complement it.

INTRODUCTORY GRADE (10 Minutes)

Learners should perform a song of their own choice and devise appropriate actions to complement it.

PRELIMINARY GRADE (15 Minutes)

Learners should perform one song from a musical or film and create a short scene to lead into it.

TRANSITION GRADE (15 Minutes)

Learners should perform one song from a musical or film and create a short scene to lead into it.

LEVEL 1 – FOUNDATION

At this Level no scene must exceed 10 minutes. It is permissible to adapt pieces to fit into the time restriction.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Foundation – Level 1	Technique and Interpretation	
Grade 1	50	50
Grade 2	50	50
Grade 3	50	50

GRADE 1 (15 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and one or more songs.

GRADE 2 (15 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and one or more songs.

GRADE 3 (15 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and one or more songs.

LEVEL 2 – INTERMEDIATE

At this Level no scene must exceed 15 minutes.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Intermediate – Level 2	Technique and Interpretation	
Grade 4	50	50
Grade 5	50	50

GRADE 4 (20 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene, or series of scenes, from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and two contrasting songs.

GRADE 5 (20 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene, or series of scenes, from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and two contrasting songs.

LEVEL 3 – ADVANCED

At this Level no scene must exceed 25 minutes. It is permissible to adapt pieces to fit into the time restriction.

Marks awarded at this Level taking into consideration technique and interpretation throughout each section:

Advanced – Level 3	Technique and Interpretation	
Grade 6	50	50
Grade 7	50	50
Grade 8	50	50

GRADE 6 (30 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene, series of scenes or compilation of scenes, from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and two or more contrasting songs. (Cuts are permitted but the flow and meaning must not be lost).

GRADE 7 (30 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene, series of scenes or compilation of scenes, from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and two or more contrasting songs. (Cuts are permitted but the flow and meaning must not be lost).

GRADE 8 (30 Minutes)

Learners should:

- Perform a scene, series of scenes or compilation of scenes, from a film or stage musical, that includes both acted sequences and two or more contrasting songs. (Cuts are permitted but the flow and meaning must not be lost).

