# Performing arts – assessment advice



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## Assessment

Performing arts is a department approved elective course and is not eligible for credentialing on the Record of School Achievement (RoSA).

The scheduling of assessment activities and the weightings applied should reflect the school's organisation of the course. Students should be given the opportunity to demonstrate their maximum level of achievement relative to the course performance descriptors.

Where activities or tasks are scheduled throughout a course, greater weight for grading purposes would generally be given to those activities or tasks undertaken towards the end of the course.

## General performance descriptors

Schools may choose to use general performance descriptors to describe performance at each of the 5 grade levels.

Table 1 – performance descriptors for the A–E grade scale

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Performance descriptor |
| A | The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply these skills to new situations. |
| B | The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations. |
| C | The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills. |
| D | The student has a basic knowledge and understanding of the content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills. |
| E | The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in few areas of the content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills. |

## Useful assessment strategies

Formative assessment strategies are used to gather evidence of student progress and provide self, peer and teacher feedback. Students maintain a multi-modal process log throughout the course which documents the creative process through examples of their practice, including research, planning, development of ideas, experimenting, creating, reflecting, revising, refining and evaluation. Formative assessment and feedback are used by students to inform and refine the development of their skills, understanding and works. Formative assessment can also be used by teachers to evaluate teaching strategies, resources and activities. This evaluation may be used to inform future teaching, such as by adapting and updating resources, or reconsidering the sequencing of activities.

Summative assessment strategies are used to evaluate and report student achievement against performing arts outcomes and the general performance descriptors. Examples of works used for summative assessment may include performances, analysis tasks, presentations, multi-modal process log tasks, portfolios and showreels.

In developing and selecting activities for the purpose of assessing and reporting, teachers will use a range of different approaches.

### Multi-modal process log

A multi-modal process log is a process log in which meaning is communicated through the combination of 2 or more modes. The multi-modal process log documents the formative development of students’ skills, knowledge and understanding in exploring the essential performing arts concepts. These may include:

* filmed moments of devising
* audio or video files
* recorded discussions of decision-making
* planning and structuring scenes
* digital images and sounds
* PowerPoint presentations
* online blogging of rehearsals
* written analysis and evaluation
* run sheets of technical cues
* annotated designs
* research across multiple platforms.

The multi-modal process log is a tool for students to capture and reflect upon their processes and development as a performing artist and provides a record of the problem-solving and planning involved in shaping and presenting a performing arts work.

Assessment activities may include the development of a multi-modal process log which documents examples of research, planning, development of ideas, experimenting, reflecting, revising, refining and evaluation. The multi-modal process log may be used for assessment purposes or provide the raw material for the development of a portfolio or showreel. The multi-modal process log also provides the teacher with formative assessment opportunities across the course.

When a multi-modal process log is used for assessment purposes, evidence of student achievement could be gathered that demonstrates a student’s ability to:

* research, gather and analyse information in a variety of forms
* communicate information in a variety of forms
* provide evidence of the development of skills, knowledge and understanding
* document, reflect on and evaluate processes.

### Portfolio or showreel

Students utilise material from their multi-modal process log to shape a portfolio or showreel that demonstrates the knowledge, skills and understanding they have acquired in both the processes of development and the performing arts event itself. It may provide evidence of the student’s active engagement and contribution to the development, refinement, and realisation of the performing arts work and/or event. Significant achievements in both co-creation and performance skills such as overcoming obstacles, trial and error, demonstrating resilience, applying grit, seeking opportunities and collaborating with others, may be collated and edited as a submitted individual portfolio or showreel for assessment. Post-school and industry opportunities and pathways may also be strengthened and targeted through a portfolio or showreel focus on specific industry or tertiary entry requirements.

### Provocations

Provocations are an essential pedagogy in the Performing arts course.

Provocations are stimuli used to initiate creative activity in which students apply their understanding of practice in one or more forms to create a work that satisfies the conditions of the provocation. The provocation should establish the possibilities and limitations of the work or activity and feature a direct prompt to initiate student practice. This prompt may take the form of creative stimulus, real or hypothetical briefs, exhibition or festival guidelines, literary sources, or other situations determined by the teacher. Depending on the class context, teachers may consult or negotiate the conditions of provocations with students, particularly in relation to longer projects such as assessment tasks, portfolio projects and the Core 2 – Performing arts event.

A simple model for structuring provocations in Performing arts is provided below, and this format may be adjusted, modified, or translated to suit the class context, or other activities in the Performing arts course. This model features:

* a creative stimulus for students to respond to, such as a prompt, brief, direction or problem statement
* specific features, techniques, conventions, or practices for students to be included
* limitations specific to the form (such as a runtime limit, or other creative or practical restrictions that initiate student problem-solving).

Provocations may also be used to drive classroom activities, such as discussion questions where students respond from a variety of viewpoints.

### Collaborative activities

Collaborative learning activities occur as a result of productive and focused interaction between students co-creating a work or progressing towards achievement of a common goal. Collaborative learning activities are an essential pedagogy of the Performing arts course. They create opportunities for productive and focused interaction between students engaged in co-creation or achieving common goals. Collaboration should be explicitly taught and reflected upon both during and after activities.

When students are immersed in the components and processes of collaboration, they gain a clear understanding of what they need to do to succeed. Collaboration can be assessed formatively and summatively through multiple learning experiences. For example, observing a rehearsal will allow teachers to witness students offering yielding, challenging, evaluating and extending to progress co-constructions and connections. Students achieve this through sharing ideas, listening to one another and using effective body language to ensure the shared vision is achieved.

Assessment activities may include a performance task, the presentation of an event such as a showcase, concert or exhibition, a group composition, or co-operative group work including the allocation of specific roles and responsibilities. Option 5 – Sum of its parts provides the opportunity for schools to develop industry connections and explore future pathways.

When collaborative activities are used for assessment purposes, evidence can be gathered about students’ ability to:

* work collaboratively and cooperatively as a team
* use clear communication to solve problems and make informed decisions with others
* value and respect diverse perspectives and ideas
* take responsibility and ownership for individual and group learning
* think critically and creatively, and offer constructive criticism to drive the work or event forward
* take risks, and demonstrate courage and trust to experiment with new ideas and learn through trial and error
* respect diverse ideas, ways of learning and approaches to creating
* demonstrate rigour of commitment and agency
* demonstrate cognitive skills, such as the ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise information
* understand the roles and responsibilities of individuals in groups, including the capacity to communicate effectively within a group
* demonstrate awareness of the whole as greater than the sum of its parts.

When assessing a collaborative activity, it is important to recognise the individual’s active engagement within a collaborative activity. Like any other assessment task, a collaborative activity allows individuals to achieve the outcomes with the support and empowerment of collaborative learning. For example, if students are building to a group performance or exhibition, they work towards a shared vision but may have individual roles. Therefore, the design of assessment tasks and rubrics must allow all students to be assessed individually when working collaboratively.

Further examples of collaborative assessment rubrics are given in [Appendix 2](#_Appendix_2_–). These have been divided into 3 sub-characteristics of collaboration which include ‘I can co-construct’, ‘I can give and receive feedback’ and ‘I can make and express connections’.

## Peer assessment

Performing arts encourages the active involvement of students in the learning process. Opportunities exist for individual and collaborative feedback as part of this process. Feedback should be differentiated for the individual learner and may be verbal, visual, written or digital and may provide an opportunity for students to develop their social, collaborative and reflective skills.

Activities involving peer assessment might include evaluating the contributions of individuals to a group task or a peer evaluation of a performance. It could also include providing suggestions and feedback on aspects of a task either in action, or of a task that has been completed well and requires further refinement. Teachers may refer to additional [peer feedback](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/549) learning activities to scaffold feedback sessions for students.

An example of a peer assessment rubric is given on the following page.

### Peer assessment rubric

Teachers may use or adapt this example for peer assessment activities.

**PA5-7** responds to provocations and/or stimulus to select, develop and produce performance material.

Table 2 – peer assessment rubric

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| **A** | I can tell that you can respond to provocations and/or stimulus to accurately select, develop and produce sophisticated and evocative performance material. |
| **B** | I can tell that you can respond to provocations and/or stimulus to select, develop and produce innovative and increasingly sophisticated performance material.I can tell that you may need to further consider the provocations and/or stimulus to develop and produce sophisticated and evocative performance material. |
| **C** | I can tell that you can respond to provocations, and/or stimulus to select, develop and produce performance material.I can tell that you may need to consider all possibilities that the provocations and stimulus offer to further develop innovative performance material. |
| **D** | I can tell that you can respond to, with the support of your peers or teachers, provocations and/or stimulus to select and/or develop and/or produce performance material.I can tell that you may need to ask questions about the provocations and/or stimulus to help you select, develop and produce performance material. |
| **E** | I can tell that you can respond to, with the support of your peers and teachers, some provocations and/or stimulus to plan performance material.I can tell that you need to ask questions about the provocations and/or stimulus to help you move forward. |

## Self-assessment

Performing arts encourages students to become reflective and self-directed learners. Opportunities exist for students to develop greater agency as they reflect on their progress towards the achievement of the course outcomes. This reflection provides them with the basis for improving their learning. Developing self-assessment skills is an ongoing process that can become increasingly sophisticated and self-initiated as a student progresses. It may enhance the ways students interpret and respond to feedback.

Self-assessment activities may include reflection on progress towards achieving outcomes in a specific activity or task such as a viva voce, individual and/or strategic goal setting. This could incorporate the use of a multi-modal process log for documenting, analysing and reflecting on learning.

When peer and self-assessment is used for assessment purposes, students could be assessed on their ability to:

* evaluate and critique their own work as well as the work of others
* develop learning strategies based on their evaluation.

An example of a self-assessment rubric is given on the following page.

### Self-assessment rubric

Teachers may use or adapt this example for use in self-assessment activities.

**PA5-10** acknowledges the significance of Country, cultural protocols, and Aboriginal Peoples' perspectives and contributions in the performing arts.

Table 3 – self-assessment rubric

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| **A** | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts in a sensitive and insightful way. |
| **B** | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts in a respectful way.I need to consider increasingly sensitive ways to acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts. |
| **C** | I am developing the skills to acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts.I need to consider all possibilities to acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts in a respectful way. |
| **D** | I can acknowledge some of the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts.I need to ask questions to help me understand the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts. |
| **E** | I can acknowledge the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts in a limited way.I need to ask questions about the significance of Country, cultural protocols and Aboriginal Peoples’ perspectives and contributions in the performing arts. |

## Ongoing development of projects

Performing arts provides opportunities for students to revisit, reinterpret, rework and refine their work completed throughout the course. In particular, the Core 2 – Performing arts event may expand on ideas, practices and performances initiated in Core 1 or option topics. Teachers should ensure that in situations where material that has been previously assessed recurs in later projects, updated rubrics are used to assess revised and redeveloped material.

The following examples outline circumstances where existing material could recur in later projects:

* a performance work where an initial short scene or idea is expanded into a larger work
* a multi-modal process log is used to develop a portfolio or showreel
* a Core 2 performing arts event where components have been developed throughout the production process. In this case, a Core 2 assessment should consider the final production, and the individual student’s contributions to the group production.

## Appendix 1 – learning tools for formative assessment

Teachers may refer to the department’s [Digital Learning Selector](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/), suggested [Teaching strategies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#landing), and [Aboriginal pedagogies](https://www.8ways.online/) when developing classroom activities in Performing arts. A selection of suggested resources are provided.

* [Gallery walk](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/555) format could be used for the presentation of experiences of student process and progress, or as an exhibition of completed works.
* [Fishbowl](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#/asset8) activity protocol could be used to structure a production meeting or other collaborative planning session.
* [Peer discussion and conferencing](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/547) models could be used to support peer feedback protocols.
* [One pager](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies/one-pager) format could be used to present a summary of learning or a snapshot of progress.
* [Hexagonal thinking strategies](https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/LearningActivity/Card/579) could be used to support individual or collaborative development of concepts.
* [Socratic circles](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/learning-from-home/teaching-at-home/expectations/contemporary-learning-and-teaching-from-home/learning-from-home--teaching-strategies#/asset2) could be used as a protocol for students to share ideas or preliminary work and exchange feedback.

## Appendix 2 – assessing collaboration

Collaboration between students is an essential aspect of practice in Performing arts, as outlined in:

**PA5-8** demonstrates the commitment, collaboration and agency required to stage a performing arts event.

Collaborative work could involve students:

* working in pairs, small groups, or full production teams to co-create and present a performance work
* engaging in peer feedback to guide development of individual or collaborative works.

One model for effective collaboration that may be used to develop formative and summative assessment outlines 4 components of collaboration:

* **offering:** communicates and commits to sharing and influencing others with ideas, purpose and initiative
* **yielding:** actively engages with and elaborates on others’ offered ideas and purpose to support and shape the initiative
* **challenging, evaluating and extending:** contributes and activates the free flow of divergent and diverse ideas and reasoning to explore and co-construct more possibilities and understandings of the ideas, purpose and initiative
* **advancing co-constructions and connections:** jointly builds and owns the co-constructed ideas and purpose of the group, and advances the initiative by taking action as a shared endeavour.

Once the students have been explicitly taught and immersed in the components and processes of collaboration they will have a clear understanding of what they need to do to succeed. Collaboration can be assessed formatively or summatively through multiple learning experiences. For example, observing a collaborative planning session will allow teachers to witness students offering, yielding, challenging, evaluating and extending to progress co-constructions and connections. They will do this via sharing their ideas, listening to one another, and using eye contact and appropriate body language to ensure the shared vision is achieved.

## Collaboration rubric examples

Teachers may use these rubric examples to develop formative assessment, and to develop protocols for collaborative work, including peer and self-evaluation.

### Collaboration rubric 1 – teacher review

**Core characteristic:** The student can work collaboratively.

**Sub-characteristic:** The student can co-construct.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* recognise and encourage the blending of all team members’ skills to cultivate teamwork
* respond to, and consider thoughtfully, the offers of others to influence and strengthen ideas
* contribute to the building of a shared vision and purpose.

Table 4 – collaboration rubric 1: teacher review

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | * formulates the vision and purpose of the group’s learning in connection to the ‘big picture’, considering the individual strengths and interests of group members
* demonstrates ideas and modifications that complement the skills or ideas of others to improve the learning
* cultivates teamwork by actively involving and enabling all voices within the team
 |
| B | * contributes to forming the vision and purpose of the group’s learning and considers individual strengths and interests of group members to build learning
* adopts and integrates the offers of others to improve the learning
* engages in teamwork by enabling and listening to all voices within the team
 |
| C | * articulates the vision and purpose of the group’s learning
* offers ideas and modifications that complement the skills or ideas of others to improve the learning
* contributes to teamwork by considering all voices within the team
 |
| D | * identifies the vision or purpose of the group’s learning
* works to complement the skills or ideas of others
* attempts to consider the ideas of others
 |
| E | * identifies their own skills and ways of contributing
* contributes to teamwork through the offering of ideas.
 |

### Collaboration rubric 2 – self-assessment

**Core characteristic:** I am collaborative.

**Sub-characteristic:** I can give and receive feedback.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* being an effective critical friend by contributing to the ideas of others and consider how my own ideas might be improved
* recognise the process of applying feedback to improve a product, including being a critical friend
* understand and apply criteria to measure success.

Table 5 – collaboration rubric 2: self-assessment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | I can model how to positively and effectively critique peers’ work related to the learning, by identifying and reinforcing strengths and offering alternatives.I actively use feedback for planning my next steps and implement it to improve my work.I support peers in developing and implementing their next steps based on the feedback I have provided. |
| B | I can be an active and effective critical friend by critiquing peers’ work related to the learning.I evaluate and reinforce strengths and offer alternatives.I use feedback for planning my next steps and implement that plan to improve my work. |
| C | I can be an effective critical friend by giving and receiving feedback appropriately and productively.I highlight strengths and areas to be improved by assessing the work against success criteria.I effectively use feedback to inform my next steps and improve my work. |
| D | I can review peers’ learning and give ideas on strengths and ways it may be improved.I can listen to ideas given to me by a peer and think about how my work could be improved. |
| E | I can use sentence starters such as ‘I like the way you…’ or ‘Even better if…’ to guide my feedback in response to my peers’ work.I can receive ideas from others about how my work could be improved. |

### Collaboration rubric 3 – peer assessment

**Core characteristic:** My peer can work collaboratively.

**Sub-characteristic:** My peer can make and express connections.

Looks, feels and sounds like:

* see links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
* connect meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios
* convey or present individual ideas to create a cohesive group product or result.

Table 6 – collaboration rubric 3: peer assessment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Criteria |
| A | * actively enables individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and build positive and productive dynamics
* connects meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios and transfers this learning into a range of different scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners as opportunities to extend knowledge and understanding
 |
| B | * proactively involves individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and build meaningful collaboration
* connects meaning and relevancy between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners and can build on these to create a product
 |
| C | * encourages individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships to form and contribute to meaningful collaboration
* connects meaning between learning and ‘real-world’ examples or scenarios
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
 |
| D | * supports individual (personal) and collective (group) relationships
* identifies links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
 |
| E | * identifies some links between ideas, concepts or questions posed by learners
 |

# References

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