

# Performance – The Discussion

## (20 Marks – 5%)

For further information about the performance aspect of your exams, please consult the **Specification** (<http://www.ulstercollegeofmusic.com/classes-2/gcse-music/>). In particular, look at pages **6-8, 15-16** and **Appendices 2 & 3**.

### **BACKGROUND OF PIECE:**

- Name the Composer. For what purpose did they write the piece?
- Is it a stand alone piece or part of a larger work?
- What year or period is it? How would you describe its style?
- How would you describe its mood (i.e. what is it expressing?)
- Is it modern, old-fashioned? Where would you expect to hear this music?
- Is the piece in its original form or in an arranged version? What is different about the original?
- What stylistic features are there in the piece?

### **PERSONAL DECISIONS & OUTCOMES**

- Why did you choose this piece? What do you like about it?
- How has it helped you to develop as a performer and musician? Did you learn any new technical skills?
- How does it show off your instrument? Are there any particularly characteristic features that you can point out (e.g. something that is typical of piano writing that wouldn't work as well on a cello or another instrument, but are very typical on your particular instrument)?
- Any problems you may have had during the learning and performing of it? How did you overcome these difficulties?
- What recordings/performances have you listened to and how have these influenced your final performance?

Examiners don't want you to recite information that you have "learned" that is irrelevant. They want a proper honest appraisal from you of your experience during the learning process with your teacher and **fellow musicians**. Also any difficulties in the preparation of an ensemble...or just getting your part together with your accompanist in your solo. For example:

- Who has the **tune** at any given point? Is there another tune with that tune?
- Is there an accompaniment that should be less prominent?
- Has it been tricky to work out the correct **balance** (bring the correct part into prominence using varied dynamics) during your practice sessions together?
- Who leads at any given point and who follows at any given point?

Try to answer all these questions before your exam so that you can have a conversation comfortably. CCEA's advice: play very well in a piece **that is not too difficult for you**. Make sure you play as the composer intended. **"Put Your Heart And Soul Into It"**

### **CHECK LIST**

- Which key, form, style and period is your piece?
- What is the composer saying, conveying, describing?
- What aspect of the piece suits your instrument well?
- What did you find most difficult in conveying the composers wishes?
- How many recordings /performances of this did you listen to?
- What impact did this have on your own performance?
- Do you have a favorite recording of this piece? Why this one?
- Do you know any other music by this composer?