Candidate Handbook

Performance Diploma (Music)

Level 6 LRSL

Acknowledgements

Written by Mary Keene
Edited by Mike Stylianou
Additional proofing by Emily Nash

Contacting Rockschool

Web: www.rslawards.com
Telephone: +44 345 460 4747
Email: diplomas@rslawards.com

Section 1

General Information

Overview

The following information is a guide for candidates who have already registered for the Licentiate Performance Diploma Level 6. Although aiming to guide and clarify each element required for this Licentiate, it should not be seen as the definitive course book and it is highly advised that candidates use it in association with the Syllabus Guide and the Repertoire Requirements. These are available as PDF documents on our website www.rslawards.com and can be downloaded free of charge.

For additional assistance in the preparation of the Performance Licentiate, candidates may use the Recommended Resources section to research and prepare as fully as possible. This can be found at the end of this handbook.

Exam Dates and running the day

On the day of the exam it is crucial that candidates arrive with enough time to fully prepare themselves for the performance. They will need to take responsibility for any changes to the standard room set-up, including any preparation for the other musicians playing with them. It is standard practice for time to be allowed at the start of the exam for the candidate to complete this.

The candidate should also ensure that they leave enough time to sound check and prepare all the equipment to their needs. The examiner will expect the candidate to be in control of everything, including the PA system. The examiner will not be able to offer any advice on sound levels nor on the candidate's set-up.

Learning Outcomes (LOs) and Criteria

The titles of the Learning Outcomes for the Performance Licentiate and the corresponding criteria are as follows:

1.1 Demonstrate own skills in Performance
- Evidence of Advanced Technical skills
- Evidence of Advanced Development skills
- Evidence of Advanced Soloing skills
- Range and depth of stylistic understanding
- Memory and Communication
- Programme Timekeeping
- Self reliance – equipment and audio management

1.2 Understand how to Promote as a Performer
- Understanding of Target Audience
- Relevance and Range of submitted material
- Effectiveness and quality of communication
- Practical use of materials

1.3 Viva Voce – Self Development and Performance Planning
- Own evaluation of the performance
- Justification of programme theme/objectives
- Ability to understand and articulate Level 6 music
- Health and Safety knowledge
- Contract knowledge

- Liabilities and insurance knowledge

Classification Breakdown and Grading

Licentiate candidates can achieve the following possible classifications:

- Distinction
- Merit
- Pass
- Unclassified

Within each LO, there will be a number of criteria, each receiving a mark between 0-7 as follows:

- 0-1 = Unclassified
- 2-3 = Pass
- 4-5 = Merit
- 6-7 = Distinction

The marking formula is mathematical and takes the average of the marks given to each criterion within each Learning Outcome. Each threshold needs to be reached, with no rounding up or down. Therefore, an average score of '1.9' is Unclassified, whereas '2' is a Pass.

The Performance Diplomas also have differing weightings for each section or Learning Outcome as follows:

1.1	Demonstrate own skills in Performance – 55%	
1.2	Understand how to Promote as a Performer – 22.5%	
1.3	Viva Voce – Self Development and Performance Planning – 22.5%	

To gain the final result an overall percentage is calculated and then changed back to a number from 0-7, matching the final classification awarded.
The full mathematical calculations for the qualification can be provided on request.

Each Learning Outcome must receive a Pass overall in order for the qualification to be awarded. Therefore, if any of the three Learning Outcomes results in an overall Unclassified classification, the whole qualification is Unclassified.

Unclassifieds and Re-sits

The Performance Licentiate is a one Unit qualification. Therefore, if a candidate wishes to re-sit for the exam, they must re-take the whole of the Licentiate again. They are, however, allowed to re-use the same programme or submitted materials if these achieved a pass mark or higher on their initial attempt.

Translator and Interpreter Requirements

Candidates should refer to the Interpreter and Translator policy available from the RSL representative(s) in their territory.

Section 2

Exam Guidance

Demonstrate own skills in Performance (LO 1.1)

At Level 6 candidates should be looking to showcase already established skills in live performance. Candidates will be expected to have some experience of working in a professional environment where they have taken responsibility for some or all of the performance. Examiners will expect to see this in the conduct and communication of the candidate throughout the exam.

Candidates should be aware that the standard and maturity expected in selecting, developing and performing the programme for the exam is a significant step up from Level 4.

Although some elements have had to be tweaked to allow for comprehensive assessment in an exam situation, the overall aim is for candidates to prepare the exam as if they were preparing for a live performance.

Choosing a theme and programme pieces

The candidate is free to choose a theme of their preference as long as the programme chosen clearly reflects a concept. Be careful when choosing pieces to reflect your theme and make sure it is clear to the audience why they would be incorporated into your programme. You will need to be able to explain this to the examiner and clearly demonstrate it within the images and presentation of your promotional materials.

Detailed technical criteria for each specific discipline in the RSL range can be found on the website under https://www.rslawards.com/music/diplomas/performance-diploma/level-six

It is essential that candidates read through this and understand how they will incorporate the skills to their pieces before choosing their programme.

This element is particularly important at Level 6 in relation to the need to perform with other musicians. Candidates should note that although these Repertoire Requirements are pertinent to their own performance, it is not necessary for the other musicians to play at the same level as them.

The wide variety of technical elements that candidates can choose to incorporate within their programmes is deliberate, due to the large range of different genres/styles in contemporary performance. Candidates therefore need to thoroughly understand the stylistic techniques, both physical and expressive, that apply to their chosen genres/styles.

It needs to be clear to the examiner that what the candidate is presenting is stylistically appropriate to the piece or to the candidate's interpretation of the piece. For example, if the candidate chooses to take a standard pop piece but develop it with a funk twist, they must clearly showcase the high level technical elements pertinent to the funk style.

Candidates are also welcome to use their own compositions as long as they comply with the Repertoire Requirements. Full score will still need to be provided in this case, as well as a backing track (unless the particular piece/s form/s part of the performance with other musicians).

In order to fully showcase a candidate's ability and to present a full Level 6 standard programme, a mix of styles (at least two) will be needed in the programme. In line with this, candidates may choose to incorporate additional shorter 'seg' or 'filler' pieces at a lower level to enable the programme to run fluently and to a more professional standard.

Select pieces that best demonstrate your abilities and strengths, it is acceptable to choose pieces you like but remember your skills are what are being assessed. Try to keep in mind that you are performing as a professional musician who is being 'paid' to entertain an audience.

Incorporating communication, memory, timekeeping and self-reliance

In line with the expectation of a professional approach at Licentiate level, the timekeeping, communication, organisation of equipment, other musicians and backing tracks will all be left to the candidate to arrange. During the performance, candidates should treat the examiner as an observer only, taking responsibility for all elements of the performance and preparation/set-up prior to beginning.

Candidates should consider carefully if they are using more than one piece of equipment during the performance, and keep in mind how this might affect things, such as time for changing between equipment and the flow of the programme. Innovative ways to deal with these issues will be credited, however, similarly, they will be penalised if they have a negative impact on the performance.
Level 6 candidates should particularly consider this in relation to the use of the other musicians within the programme. Decisions in this respect may be affected by number of other musicians, amount of additional equipment needed, changes to PA settings for those particular pieces, and placement of musicians within the exam room.

Communication through performance is expected, and short introductions to pieces or similar are encouraged. Consider the suitability and appropriateness of the communication as well as the size of your "venue".

Candidates are expected to perform their whole programme from memory but they will need to have provided full score or drum sheet for the examiner. Development and solo sections must be clearly indicated on the scores, though they do not need to be notated.

Understand how to Promote as a Performer (LO 1.2)

All elements of the Performance Licentiate are designed to be symbiotic and reflective of the essential basic requirements for a standard live performance, whether solo or with a group. For the promotional portfolio therefore, the candidate should prepare by themselves everything they or their group would usually produce for a live performance. Although RSL are aware that certain group members might normally be charged with creating this promotional material and others not, for the purposes of the assessment, the candidate must take responsibility for producing everything to the best of their ability and not commission assistance in the creation of the materials from any other party.

If certain promotional elements, such as the creation of a website or similar specialist task are used, then the candidate should clearly credit the appropriate person with their work and also outline/describe their own input to this element and what it involved.

Set questions will be asked in the Viva Voce about the candidate's promotional portfolio and the candidate should be prepared to discuss how the portfolio has promoted the gig satisfactorily, how it is appropriate for the target audience, how it reflects the programme they have created and how they would use the promotional materials in a real life situation. Candidates should remember that it should be clear to the examiner how this would attract the anticipated audience and how it is communicating the theme of the programme.

Materials

Promotional material should clearly show the examiner what the key selling points of the live performance are and include specific information such as the theme, venue, date, time, entry price and artist/band name. Design should be clear, eye-catching and have a clear representation of the performer and the theme running through all material. Level 6 candidates should be able to produce material with a mature approach to promotion, understanding what is key and what other information should be included and how this is presented.

Consider the following:

- A font that works well for the promotional medium, for example a font that works well digitally doesn't always work well in print.
- Font size; will the text be readable for the utility of the material i.e. a poster will need bigger text than a flyer, but also probably contain less text overall.
- What are the key colours, do they represent the theme?
- Is the image reflective of what the candidate wants to convey to the audience and how has this been achieved?
- Who are the target audience?
- How is the proposed audience being reached?
- What images/designs will work best to reach those people?
- Are there any age sensitivities to consider, are the images appropriate?
- Is the image suitable for the target audience, i.e. will it gain their attention and relate to their demographic?

Standard and utilisation

Promotional material should be produced to as high a standard as possible and clearly be indicative of a paid event. Candidates will not be credited for having more expensive materials than others but will be assessed on the professional quality of the materials produced, along with the practical application of their use e.g. if a flyer is made of very thin paper and the candidate is planning to place them in an external environment, these will not have good practical value.

Level 6 candidates in particular will be well versed in the newer tools of using online and social media promotion and will be able to show the examiner how they would exploit any feedback, data and contacts from these mediums. Due to this, candidates are encouraged to bring a tablet or laptop with saved screen images to clearly illustrate to the examiner how they utilise online promotion. In the case that candidates do not have access to a portable device, they should bring screen shots and be prepared to explain to the examiner how they develop from these.

Level 6 candidates should also be prepared to discuss how the materials/sites/pages they produce or create will be used and what steps they will take to follow up on any leads or further expand their promotional opportunities. A clear concept of how the candidate would take materials produced and utilise them to the best outcome is expected.

At this level, the examiner will require the candidate to have a very strong understanding of the importance of promotion to a professional performer and what impact poor or limited promotion can have on attracting audiences.

Submitting the portfolio

Candidates should remember that the examiner will need to take their promotional portfolio with them at the end of the exam and so should factor this into their portfolio preparation. This is particularly pertinent to any web based promotion and candidates should make sure they include printed screen shots or a USB stick with digital screen shots. Any screen shots should be presented in a clear and logical manner, with information as to their purpose, outcome, or potential for continued promotion, being fully explained below each shot.

Merchandise

For the purposes of assessment, anything designated as merchandise will not be considered as promotional material. Any merchandise submitted will be considered as a secondary submission to the main promotional portfolio. However, credit may be given in rare circumstances where merchandise is particularly reflective or pertinent to the specific performance. General items such as artist t-shirts, keyrings, hoodies, badges etc. will be considered null and void when considering the portfolio for assessment.

Viva Voce – Self Development and Performance Planning (LO 1.3)

Although set up as an interview in terms of the assessment, in order to gain the best marks possible, candidates should be prepared to lead the conversation after the examiner has introduced each initial topic. Candidates are welcome to bring any supplementary material they may have produced or that they already use for their own live performances to illustrate and provide visual reference to their discussion.

Own evaluation

Examiners will be looking for a balanced assessment of the candidate's own performance and programme presentation. Candidates should try and present a selection of positive and critical aspects across the performances as a whole. Candidates should remember that this will include not only the actual performance but whether the programme worked well in its delivered format and any external influences that may have affected the overall presentation.

Level 6 candidates may comment on aspects that did or did not work when performing with the other musicians but this should be discussed in a professional manner, within a solution based discourse. Fault-finding or specifically personal criticism of other musicians is not encouraged.

Awarding the
Contemporary Arts

Justification of Level 6 and programme themes

Candidates will be expected to fully understand the Level 6 elements they have chosen to incorporate into their programme, including not only technical but also sound production and professional performance skills. Candidates will need to be able to articulate this clearly to the examiner, with references back to their programme to illustrate. As a more experienced performer, the examiner will also expect a Level 6 candidate to be able to discuss thoroughly how and why they chose the particular pieces for the programme. The examiner will want to hear the candidate justify why they felt any lower level pieces were needed in the programme and what function they provided. The candidate should also discuss why they chose this particular combination of styles/genres and how they managed to fit them into a coherent programme.

The candidate should expand upon the criteria they used to select their programme, how the pieces showcased the theme and what reasoning they had for putting the pieces together in the performed order.

Candidates should find the Repertoire Requirements and Assessment Criteria available on the RSL website of great value for this part of the exam. Candidates will need to deliver a cohesive and concise explanation, with reference to these criteria, noting the Level 6 elements they have incorporated into each piece of their performance, or, for places where they have not incorporated these elements, explaining the purpose of such within their programme. However, Level 6 candidates in particular will be expected to expand more on the Level 6 standard of their performance and programme and not just reiterate the list of elements as described on the website.

Health and Safety/Contracts/Liability & Insurance Knowledge

Along with performance skills and promotional ability, it is key that every professional performer is aware of certain practical aspects in order to protect themselves and their audiences. In this section of the Viva Voce, candidates should be prepared to elaborate on what health and safety issues affect a live performance and performing/practising in general as well as any potential issues surrounding the wider aspects of health and safety in a live venue.
Candidates will need to demonstrate that they have both an awareness of the issues as well as solutions and strategies for approaching these issues when preparing for a live performance.

Contracts, liability and insurance knowledge are other crucial issues surrounding live performance which, in particular, affect self-employed performers. Candidates should have a clear idea on how they can protect their professional interests in this environment and be able to explain to the examiner what a standard performance contract would contain, what type of liability insurance they would expect to be in place for themselves and for the venue and how they might proceed should this not be in place. In addition, they should be able to take the examiner through what they would include in any performance contract and with whom they would make such contracts. Candidates should show thorough knowledge of any potential recourse for them should the contract be broken and/or their own liability should they be the ones to break the contract.

Overseas candidates
Candidate will be expected to understand UK regulations and law, but will be credited for also knowing the relevant regulations in their own country of residence. At Level 6, the examiner will expect any overseas candidates to be able to show their comprehension of why such laws and regulations might be in place both in the UK and in their own country and how they would ensure they comply with them.

Section 3

Recommended Resources

Below are some recommended texts and websites that seek to give guidance, direction and ideas on all aspects of the Performance Diplomas. Candidates are advised that this should not be considered a complete or definitive list and are more than encouraged to read and look at any material they have access to on the subject.

RSL does not receive any financial gain from any of the products listed below and these are purely recommended as easily available, and, in some cases, free reference points.

Programme creation

- http://blog.sonicbids.com/how-to-create-compelling-setlist
- http://diymusician.cdbaby.com/musician-tips/the-art-of-the-set-list-choosing-the-right-songs-in-the-right-order/

Promotion

- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Music-Business-Dummies-Loren-Weisman-ebook/dp/B00TWK3U38/ref=sr_1_fkmr1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1443622486&sr=8-1-fkmr1&keywords=promoting+contemporary+music+performance
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B00TOVOLYW/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1443622535&sr=8-2&keywords=promoting++music+performance
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Music-Marketing-Promotion-Distribution-Retail/dp/087639098X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1443622619&sr=8-1&keywords=music+promotion
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Guerrilla-Music-Marketing-Online-Strategies/dp/0971483876/ref=pd_sim_14_2?ie=UTF8&refRID=1P13HQ68PWBFCMD2CRXD&dpID=51ByBC8f3KL&dpSrc=sims&preST=_AC_UL200_SR133%2C200_
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Social-Media-Promotion-For-Musicians/dp/0988839113/ref=pd_bxgy_14_img_3?ie=UTF8&refRID=1A21MNXPFQYC6MN8AWXB
- http://www.howdesign.com/design-creativity/idea-generating-tips/gigposter-tips/

Development and Planning

- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Music-Business-Essential-Guide-Deals/dp/0753539586/ref=pd_sim_14_13?ie=UTF8&refRID=1DVJTNTQ46T2S9GJP9R6
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Music-Law-Your-Bands-Business-ebook/dp/B0153VIEJY/ref=sr_1_8?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1443623004&sr=1-8&keywords=music+contracts
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/0876391390/ref=dp_ob_title_bk
- https://www.docracy.com/5972/band-performance-contract#
- http://www.musicbizacademy.com/articles/perfcontracts.htm
- https://www.prsformusic.com/users/businessesandliveevents/musicforbusinesses/Documents/MusicMakeoverleaflet.pdf
- http://www.amazon.co.uk/Music-Management-Bible-Managers-Forum/dp/1844920259/ref=pd_sim_14_9?ie=UTF8&refRID=0T7V8RH61F5CG8BFXGTE