



**BOTSWANA SENIOR SECONDARY EDUCATION**

**ASSESSMENT SYLLABUS**

**MUSIC**

**[CODE: 1258]**

**Assessment Guide  
for Centres**

**2021 - 2026**

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## **1 INTRODUCTION**

As part of the Botswana Senior Secondary Education (BSSE) programme, the Music Assessment guide are developed to assist both learners/candidates and facilitators.

This music syllabus guidelines should be read in conjunction with:

- (a) The senior secondary school Music teaching syllabus
- (b) The BSSE Music Assessment syllabus
- (b) The specimen question papers and marking schemes.

## **2 FACILITATOR SUPPORT**

In OBE, teachers are facilitators. The Botswana Examinations Council will provide a wide range of detailed guidance, innovative training and professional development on the assessment of this syllabus. This will enable facilitators to give learners the best possible preparation for BSSE Music. The following support documents will be availed to the facilitators,

- ✓ Assessment Syllabus
- ✓ Examiner reports to improve future learning
- ✓ Face-to-face workshop trainings
- ✓ Marking criteria / marking rubrics
- ✓ Assessment forms (standardised)
- ✓ Facilitator guidelines

## **3 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES**

Candidates will be assessed on the following:

1. Knowledge with comprehension
2. Performance skills
3. Music Creation/Application

There are three components:

Paper 1 (Listening)

Paper 2 (Practical Examination)

Paper 3 (Provider Based Assessment)

**PAPER 1****Candidates Instructions**

This will be a listening paper. You will be required to listen to six extracts each played four times, while continuously answering questions. The duration of this compulsory, written paper is **1 hour 15 minutes**. The paper consists of the following three sections:

**Section A [20 marks]**

Two extracts will be played, which may be instrumental and/or vocal, and selected from any style or tradition. A skeletal score will be provided for one of the extracts. The questions will focus on rudiments, melody and rhythm, notation, harmony (including recognition of chords, keys and cadences), structure, compositional devices and texture as appropriate to the music.

**Section B [20 marks]**

Two extracts selected from instrumental and/or vocal Botswana indigenous music will be played. One extract will be ceremonial and the other recreational. Questions will focus on the characteristics and elements of indigenous styles (including ensembles, instruments, and instrumental effects) and their cultural significance.

**Section C [20 marks]**

Two extracts selected from instrumental and/or vocal Botswana contemporary music will be played. Questions will focus on the characteristics and elements of contemporary styles (including ensembles, instruments, and instrumental effects) and influences from indigenous music.

**Centre Instructions**

- **As soon as** the CDs are received, they must be spot-checked by the music facilitator in the presence of the chief invigilator for recording and sound quality.
- On the working day before the examination, in order to check the acoustics (i.e. the loudspeaker and sound quality) Centre must spot-check the test materials at the appropriate volume in the examination room to ensure that all candidates will be able to hear the material. This check must not affect the security of the examination.  
Note: On neither of the above occasions may Centres listen to the test material in full or remove it from the Centre for checking. After each check Centres must return the CDs to the examination question paper store.
- The extracts on which this examination is based have been recorded on a CD and should be played on a good quality CD player. Centres are advised to conduct the listening test in groups of no more than 30 candidates at a time. CDs have been provided on the basis of 30 candidates per CD.

If the number of candidates entered is larger than can be accommodated at one time (as many suitable rooms as are available may be used at a single time):

- Centres may divide the candidates into groups.
- Groups must take the test on the same day and there should be the minimum possible delay between the sessions.
- The Centre must make very careful arrangements to keep the groups apart until candidates have completed the test and must maintain security of the examination at all times.
- In all sections the instructions to candidate and timed playing of the extracts, including the gaps in which candidates write their answers, are recorded. The invigilator's role is simply to make sure that the CD is started and is at an appropriate volume for all candidates.
- Once started, the invigilator must not stop the test except in the case of serious emergency. Noise from outside the examination room does not constitute a serious emergency and the

invigilator must not stop the test in these circumstances. The invigilator should warn candidates of this before the test begins.

In the event of the test being stopped in a serious emergency:

- The invigilator should restart it once they have dealt with the emergency, at exactly the same place.
- The invigilator must include a report with the candidates' scripts, indicating at which point in the test the interruption took place, the nature of the incident and the length of the interruption.
- If there is good reason for doubt whether all candidates have heard certain items, the invigilator must identify these items in the report and give the reason for doubt.
- Centres should contact the Botswana Examinations Council immediately if equipment fails during the examination, in order to make alternative arrangements for the conduct of the listening test.
- At the end of the examination you will hear "You now have 5 minutes to check your answers" (**Silence 5 minutes**) "This is the end of paper 1." Collect in the candidates' answer booklets.

**PAPER 2****Candidates Instructions**

This component will reward candidates for positive achievement in:

- Technical competence on one or more instrument(s), or voice:
  - (i) a prepared solo performance
  - (ii) a prepared ensemble performance
- Interpretative and expressive understanding of the music through their performance

All candidates will perform live and be assessed by a visiting panel. These live performances must also be recorded for future moderation by BEC.

**Prepared solo performance [30 marks]**

The solo performance may be either accompanied or unaccompanied. The accompaniment may be live or through a backing track, so long as the solo part is not included on the track. The performance must last for a minimum of two minutes but should not normally exceed **three** minutes. More than one piece may be performed to meet the minimum time.

**Prepared ensemble performance [30 marks]**

An ensemble should consist of two to eight live performers, performing independent roles. The candidate's part may not be consistently doubled by any other part or performer. The performance must last for a minimum of two minutes but should not normally exceed **three** minutes. More than one piece may be performed to meet the minimum time.

**Facilitators instructions**

- Prepare the examination room (check if sockets are working, there is electricity, backup batteries, sort backing tracks).
- Provide instruments required by learners for the practical examination.
- Setup equipment for learners' performance.
- Assist in ushering in candidates during the examination.

**Centres instructions**

- Monitor the preparation of the practical test and to host the assessment team.
- Schedule invigilation for the practical test.
- Provide the practical test schedule to the learners.
- Avail required resources for the practical test.
- Write centre reports on the administration of the practical test (learners with SPED, absenteeism).

**PAPER 3****Candidates Instructions**

The paper will be assessed by the centre and then externally moderated by Botswana Examinations Council.

The component will reward the candidates for achievement in:

- Imagination, creativity, and aural discrimination in song writing, composing and /or arranging.
- The use of staff notation.
- The use of music technology.

**1. Composing or arranging for instruments [15 marks]**

Candidates will be required to submit **either** an original composition **or** an arrangement. The composition may be in any style and for any combination of any instruments. The arrangement should take as its starting point the melody of a Botswana indigenous song chosen by the candidate. It may be in any style and for any combination of instruments.

The work will be assessed by the centre and externally moderated by Botswana Examinations Council.

**Requirements**

- The composition or arrangement must be notated using staff notation.
- An audio recording of the composition or arrangement must also be included. This may be a live recording, or generated by computer software / music technology, and must be submitted on USB or CD.
- An arrangement must not simply be a transcription of the original song for different instruments but should clearly demonstrate new compositional input by the candidate. This might include the addition of an introduction, interlude(s) and coda, accompaniment (including harmony and bass lines) and countermelodies.
- A composition should not just be a single melody line.
- Each composition or arrangement must be accompanied by written documentation in the form of a journal or folio, with dates, which records the progress and development of the composition/ arrangement from initial ideas through to the final version. This folio will assist the facilitator in validating the composition as the candidate's own work.
- If the original stimulus for the arrangement was taken from sheet music, this should also be included with the written documentation.
- The facilitator will be required to certify that the composition or the arrangement is the individual work of the candidate. They should pay particular attention to ensuring AI is not used inappropriately in any task involving music technology.

**2. Song writing [25 marks]**

Candidates will be required to write the lyrics and create the music for an original song, and to use music technology to produce a recording of it. The song may be in any musical style; it must contain at least one voice part and include accompaniment. The work will be assessed by the centre and externally moderated by Botswana Examinations Council.

**Requirements**

- The song must be submitted as an audio recording on USB or CD.
- The lyrics should be sung live, but the candidate does not need to be the singer. The accompaniment can be sung and/or played live and/or use computer generated sounds; the candidate does not need to be the performer of any live instrumental or vocal parts.
- Music technology should be used to produce the final recording of the song.
- A copy of the lyrics must also be included, but the music itself does not need to be notated.

- The song must be accompanied by written documentation in the form of a journal or folio, with dates, which records the progress and development of the song from initial ideas through to the final version. This folio will assist the facilitator in validating the song as the candidate's own work.
- The facilitator will be required to certify that the lyrics and the musical content of the song (but not necessarily the singing or performing of any instrumental parts) are the individual work of the candidate.

### **Facilitators instructions**

You will be required to

- Certify the work of the learner.
- Mark the learner's work and submit the marks to Botswana Examinations Council.
- Assist the learners to record the audio products.
- Provide resources for the recordings.
- Monitor the learner's folio.

### **Centre Instructions**

- Conduct internal moderation.
  - Standardize criteria and project.
  - Mark the project.
  - Order the marks.
  - Package and label the project.
  - Submit to Botswana Examinations Council.
- Keep the attendance register.

- External Moderation (Moderators)
  - Check the packages submitted for compliance.
  - Sample projects according to Botswana Examinations Council procedures
  - Mark the sampled projects.
  - Adjust marks accordingly
  - Where there are disparities between the centres marks and moderator's marks, make recommendations to Botswana Examinations Council.



## **7      EQUALITY AND INCLUSION**

The syllabus encompasses assessment where the principle of inclusivity is core which aims at curbing the presence of unnecessary barrier for learners with Special Education Needs (SEN).

Great care has been taken in the preparation of this syllabus and assessment materials to avoid bias of any kind. The assessment is designed with the aim of avoiding direct and indirect discrimination. The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. Access Arrangements would be put in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. Access arrangements will not be agreed if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the assessment standards.

## 8 PAPER 2 MARKING CRITERIA

### SOLO AND ENSEMBLE PERFORMANCE

A mark out of six must be awarded under each of the following headings:

#### a) Accuracy of notes and rhythm or quality of improvisation

Descriptor	Marks
Entirely accurate and consistently maintained throughout OR a high quality of fluent improvisation.	5 – 6
Moderately accurate but with several passages spoilt by hesitation or a moderate quality of fairly fluent improvising.	3 – 4
Inaccurate and hesitant performance OR a poor quality of aimless improvisation.	1 – 2
Hardly any accurate notes or rhythm OR hardly any evidence of an ability to improvise.	0

#### (b) Choice and control of tempo in an individual performance OR ensemble coordination

Descriptor	Marks
An entirely appropriate choice of tempo, consistently maintained throughout the performance OR excellent ensemble co-ordination.	5-6
Choice of tempo not wholly appropriate and with some fluctuations OR moderate ensemble co-ordination.	3-4
An inappropriate choice of tempo with many fluctuations throughout the performance OR poor ensemble co-ordination.	1-2
No sense of a consistent tempo OR no sense of ensemble.	0

#### (c) Sensitivity to phrasing and expression

Descriptor	Marks
Suitably phrased and fully effective in expression.	5-6
Moderately well phrased and fairly effective in expression.	3-4
Little account taken of phrasing and expression.	1-2
No phrasing or expression evident.	0

#### (d) Technical control of the instrument or voice

Descriptor	Marks
Very good technical control.	5-6
Moderately good technical control.	3-4
Weak technical control.	1-2
Not in control of the instrument or voice.	0

**(e) Range of technical and musical skills demonstrated**

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Marks</b>
A wide range of well-developed skills, allowing the candidate to perform music which makes substantial demands.	<b>5-6</b>
A range of moderately developed skills, allowing the candidate to perform music of moderate difficulty.	<b>3-4</b>
A narrow range of modest skills, allowing the candidate to perform music which makes simple demands.	<b>1-2</b>
An inadequate range of very basic skills, allowing the candidate to perform at a very elementary level.	<b>0</b>

Add together the marks under each heading to give the **TOTAL MARK out of 30 for Individual Prepared Performing**

Add together the marks under each heading to give the **TOTAL MARK out of 30 for Ensemble Performing**

Add the two total marks together to give the **GRAND TOTAL MARK out of 60 for PERFORMING**

**9 PAPER 3 / PBA MARKING CRITERIA**  
**Composing or Arranging for instruments (15 marks)**

Descriptor	Marks
A musical and imaginative composition or arrangement that displays a high level of creative ability and a keen sense of aural perception. There is evidence of structural understanding, and the use of instruments is idiomatic, with keen attention to timbre and balance. The score is accurate, well-presented and shows attention to detail throughout. The arrangement (where applicable) displays very clear evidence of new compositional input.	<b>13 – 15</b>
A composition or arrangement that is imaginative and displays mainly secure and confident handling of materials, together with an organised approach to overall structure. There is some evidence of idiomatic instrumental writing, although there may be some unevenness in terms of consistent quality of ideas and balance between parts. The score is well-presented overall, displaying reasonable attention to performing details. The arrangement (where applicable) displays clear evidence of new compositional input.	<b>11 – 12</b>
A composition or arrangement that displays evidence of sensible instrumental writing and a creative effort to organise sounds into a coherent and satisfying whole. Aspects of structure and musical ideas may lack imagination and the quality of invention may not be consistent. The score may contain aspects that are ambiguous or contradictory, although the general level of presentation is accurate and performance indications are clear. The arrangement (where applicable) displays fairly clear evidence of new compositional input.	<b>8 – 10</b>
A composition or arrangement that displays some elements of musical understanding and a degree of aural perception but is uneven in quality in several assessment areas. Aspects of melodic writing, rhythm and structure may be overly formulaic and or/ repetitive, reflecting little confidence to depart from the security of standard conventions. Scores may be rather imprecise in their notation of performance instructions and lack attention to detail in several places. The arrangement (where applicable) displays some evidence of new compositional input.	<b>6 – 7</b>
A composition or arrangement that displays relatively little security and limited musical imagination. There is little evidence of a consistent attempt to write in an idiomatic manner and/ or to explore balance and the organisation of ideas may suggest that the overall structure has not been thought through carefully. The scores may contain many ambiguities together with consistent imprecision and a lack of attention to details in providing instructions for performance. The arrangement (where applicable) displays little evidence of new compositional input.	<b>3 – 5</b>
A composition or arrangement that displays little evidence of consistent application or musical understanding. All assessment areas exhibit consistent evidence of weakness and low levels of achievement. The score is imprecise throughout and/or incomplete. The arrangement (where applicable) displays no evidence of new compositional input.	<b>0 – 2</b>

## Song writing (25 marks)

### (a) Musical content (15 marks)

Descriptor	Marks
A musical and imaginative song that displays a high level of creative ability and a keen sense of aural perception in response to the lyrics. There is evidence of structural understanding, and the use of voice(s) and instruments/sounds is idiomatic, with keen attention to timbre and balance.	13 – 15
A song that is imaginative and displays mainly secure and confident handling of materials in response to the lyrics, together with an organised approach to overall structure. There is some evidence of idiomatic vocal and instrumental writing, although there may be some unevenness in terms of consistent quality of ideas and balance between parts.	11 – 12
A song that displays evidence of sensible vocal and instrumental writing and a creative effort to organise sounds into a coherent and satisfying whole. Aspects of structure and musical ideas may lack imagination in response to the lyrics and the quality of invention may not be consistent.	8 – 10
A song that displays some elements of musical understanding and a degree of aural perception in response to the lyrics but is uneven in quality in several assessment areas. Aspects of melodic writing, rhythm and structure may be overly formulaic and/or repetitive, reflecting little confidence to depart from the security of standard conventions.	6 – 7
A song that displays relatively little security and limited musical imagination in response to the lyrics. There is little evidence of a consistent attempt to write in an idiomatic manner and/or to explore balance and the organisation of ideas may suggest that the overall structure has not been thought through carefully.	3 – 5
A song that displays little evidence of consistent application or musical understanding in response to the lyrics. All assessment areas exhibit consistent evidence of weakness and low levels of achievement.	0 – 2

### (b) Lyrics (5 marks)

Descriptor	Marks
Evocative and well-articulated ideas and/or storyline. Well-structured and fully coherent.	4 – 5
Ideas and/or storyline of some interest to the listener but somewhat lacking in richness and/or impact. Some success in structuring and sequencing.	2 – 3
Unclear or no ideas and/or storyline. Little or no attempt at structuring and sequencing.	0 – 1

**(c) Use of music technology (5 marks)**

Descriptor	Marks
The recording is well-balanced with excellent sound quality. There is clear evidence that music technology has been used effectively to enhance the song.	<b>4 – 5</b>
The recording is fairly well-balanced, and the sound quality is good. There is evidence that some aspects of music technology have been used to enhance the song.	<b>2 – 3</b>
There are problems with the balance and/or sound quality in the recording. There is little evidence that aspects of music technology have been used to enhance the song.	<b>0 – 1</b>

## 10 FORMS



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

YEAR	
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**BSSE**

### 1258/03 MUSIC COMPOSING OR ARRANGEMENT COVER SHEET

Centre Number					Centre Name	
Candidate Number					Candidate Name	

Cover sheet [please see syllabus for detail of requirements]	Tick
Staff notation script for composition OR arrangement	
Composition OR Arrangement on CD (CHECK THAT IT PLAYS ON AN ORDINARY MACHINE) - labelled with candidate number and centre number	
Written documentation (folio) with dates	
Sheet music of original stimulus of arrangement, if applicable.	
Facilitator's certification that the composition OR arrangement are the candidate's own work	
Mark for composition OR Arrangement	/15

Comments:

Assessor's name: (please PRINT)	Signature of Assessor:	Date:



BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

YEAR	
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**BSSE**

**1258/03 MUSIC**

**SONG WRITING COVER SHEET**

Centre Number					Centre Name	
Candidate Number					Candidate Name	

<b>Cover sheet [please see syllabus for detail of requirements]</b>	<b>Tick</b>
Script	
Audio	
Written documentation (folio) with dates	
Facilitator's certification that the song is the candidate's own work	
Marks	/25

Comments:

Assessor's name: ( <i>please PRINT</i> )	Signature of Assessor:	Date:





BOTSWANA  
EXAMINATIONS  
COUNCIL

### BSSE EXAMINATION 1258/02 MUSIC – INDIVIDUAL MARK SHEET

Circle the appropriate box

CENTRE NO							CENTRE NAME	
CANDIDATE NAME								

#### SOLO

a) ACCURACY OF NOTES AND RHYTHM

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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b) CHOICE AND CONTROL OF TEMPO IN AN INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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c) SENSITIVITY TO PHRASING AND EXPRESSION

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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d) TECHNICAL CONTROL OF THE INSTRUMENT OR VOICE

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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e) RANGE OF TECHNICAL AND MUSICAL SKILLS DEMONSTRATED

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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COMMENTS:

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## BSSE EXAMINATION 1258/02 MUSIC – INDIVIDUAL MARK SHEET

Circle the appropriate box

CENTRE NO						CENTRE NAME	
CANDIDATE NAME							

### ENSEMBLE

a) QUALITY OF IMPROVISATION

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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b) CHOICE AND CONTROL OF TEMPO IN AN ENSEMBLE COORDINATION

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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c) SENSITIVITY TO PHRASING AND EXPRESSION

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

d) TECHNICAL CONTROL OF THE INSTRUMENT OR VOICE

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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e) RANGE OF TECHNICAL AND MUSICAL SKILLS DEMONSTRATED

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
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COMMENTS:

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**BSSE EXAMINATION 1258/02 MUSIC – INDIVIDUAL MARK SHEET**

CENTRE NO							CENTRE NAME		
CANDIDATE NAME									

**Circle the appropriate of range and write the actual score in the box**

**(a) Musical content (15 marks)**

range	13-15	11-12	8-10	6-7	3-5	0-2
Actual score						
Comments:						

**(b) Lyrics (5 marks)**

range	4-5	2-3	0-1
Actual score			
Comments:			

**(c) Use of music technology (5marks)**

range	4-5	2-3	0-1
Actual score			
Comments:			

<b>TOTAL SCORE; a+b+c</b>	
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