



Australian Government

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

CUSMPF604A Extend improvisation techniques

Revision Number: 2

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Modification History

Release	Comments
Release 2	Created to fix formatting errors only. Released with CUS09 Music Training Package version 1.2

Unit Descriptor

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to develop high-level improvisation skills.

Application of the Unit

Superior improvisation skills are required by musicians in a range of musical genres and traditions, for example, jazz, blues, classical, folk and rock. Aural awareness and a thorough grounding in the practice of the chosen genre or musical tradition are required so that musicians are in a position to respond intuitively to musical elements as they seek to vary them spontaneously during performances.

The key to successful improvisation is the confidence to make musical decisions on the fly, to understand that improvisation is about spontaneous composition or variation, about performing music that is composed or varied 'in the moment' in response to musical stimuli.

Licensing/Regulatory Information

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.

Pre-Requisites

Not applicable

Employability Skills Information

Not applicable

Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.

Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.

Elements and Performance Criteria

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
1. Set professional development goals	<p>1.1 In consultation with <i>appropriate personnel</i>, listen to recordings of own improvisations in the context of setting professional development goals</p> <p>1.2 Discuss <i>factors</i> that contribute to excellence in improvisation and incorporate them into professional development goals as appropriate</p> <p>1.3 Listen to the work of master improvisers and consider <i>techniques</i> that could be applied to own practice</p> <p>1.4 Establish <i>criteria</i> for monitoring and evaluating the success of own skill development</p> <p>1.5 Develop a practice plan that incorporates realistic goals as a basis for refining improvisation techniques</p> <p>1.6 Identify <i>repertoire</i> that will help achieve technical and expressive development goals and incorporate them into practice plan</p>
2. Use personal practice time to refine techniques	<p>2.1 Experiment with and exploit repertoire to continuously refine improvisation techniques in both solo and group contexts</p> <p>2.2 Develop confidence in own ability to create 'in the moment' responses to musical stimuli</p> <p>2.3 Listen critically to own performance to assess strengths and weaknesses and adjust practice regime accordingly</p> <p>2.4 Ensure that practice is undertaken with due consideration to personal <i>health and safety</i></p>
3. Perform improvisation before an audience	<p>3.1 Support and enhance the contribution of others to achieve best performance outcomes</p> <p>3.2 Make improvisation sensitive to the needs of other performers to stimulate the whole ensemble</p> <p>3.3 Respond accurately to starting <i>cues</i> when performing solo improvisation</p> <p>3.4 Sustain musical impetus in improvisation through dynamic use of <i>musical elements</i></p> <p>3.5 Maintain stylistic cohesion in the realisation of harmony, melody, and/or rhythm and musical expression</p> <p>3.6 Listen carefully to other performers, respond aurally to their work and adjust own performance appropriately</p> <p>3.7 Provide a clear cue to the ensemble to finish the solo section as required</p> <p>3.8 Ensure that the duration of solo improvisations accord</p>

ELEMENT	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
	<p>with the custom and practice of the group and/or musical style</p> <p>3.9 Acknowledge applause according to the custom and practice of the group and/or musical style</p>
4. Evaluate own skill development	<p>4.1 View or listen to recordings of own performance to analyse technical and expressive aspects of own performance</p> <p>4.2 Evaluate level of improvement in own improvisation techniques against agreed criteria</p> <p>4.3 Seek feedback on performances from appropriate personnel and incorporate their feedback into own continuous improvement strategies</p>

Required Skills and Knowledge

This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.

Required skills

- communication, listening and teamwork skills in the context of:
 - responding appropriately to aural and written cues
 - using aural imagination to develop and embellish themes in performance
 - working collaboratively with other members of an ensemble
 - responding appropriately to constructive feedback on own performance
- technical skills in the context of:
 - rhythmically developing solos
 - using a range of improvisation techniques and styles in area of specialisation
 - playing improvised solos that contain advanced harmonic, structural, melodic and rhythmic concepts
 - applying techniques to create forward motion
- initiative and creativity in the context of:
 - demonstrating originality and innovative approaches in improvisation
 - developing musical themes and melodic motifs
 - listening critically to continuously evaluate and adjust the musical work
 - phrasing and shaping music appropriately
 - understanding and expressing appropriate musical nuance
 - applying appropriate styles or interpretation
 - working creatively with individual differences
 - responding appropriately to the unexpected in a live performance situation
- self-management and learning skills in the context of:
 - setting professional development goals
 - monitoring and evaluating own improvisations
 - improving performance through experimentation and practice
 - responding appropriately to the pressures of performing live

Required knowledge

- music knowledge, including:
 - well-developed understanding of chosen styles and genres and their musical forms and conventions for improvisation
 - historical conventions in relation to improvisation
 - chord schemes, rhythmic patterns and rhythmic conventions as they apply to improvisation
 - musical and performance protocols
 - issues and challenges that arise in the context of performing improvisations
- OHS principles relevant to particular performance contexts, such as:

- legislation
- policies and best practice
- hearing protection
- protection of body against overuse injury
- safe lifting practices
- performance anxiety

Evidence Guide

The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.

Overview of assessment	
Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit	<p>Evidence of the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidently perform improvisations using a range of advanced techniques • plan and monitor progress in own skill development • demonstrate an advanced level of musical decision making in an improvised context • respond positively to constructive feedback on own performance • collaborate effectively with other members of a performance ensemble.
Context of and specific resources for assessment	<p>Assessment must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • access to relevant instruments and equipment • performance opportunities as part of an ensemble • appropriate venue with adequate space and acoustic qualities • an audience • use of culturally appropriate processes, and techniques appropriate to the language and literacy capacity of the candidate and the work being performed.
Method of assessment	<p>The following assessment methods are appropriate for this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation of performance where the candidate is performing an improvisation • written or oral questioning to test knowledge as listed in the required knowledge section of this unit • process diary detailing practice planning, goals and strategies • written or oral questioning on technical development strategies, planning and career goals • relevant samples of artistic work with candidate's evaluation • authenticated details of relevant artistic and/or commercial achievements • video or audio recordings of performance or practice sessions where the candidate is performing an

	<p>improvisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• case studies and scenarios as a basis for discussing issues about refining improvisation techniques.
Guidance information for assessment	<p>Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• CUSMLT601A Analyse music• CUSMLT602A Analyse harmony• CUSMPF602A Manage stagecraft aspects of performances• CUSMPF603A Refine performance techniques and expand repertoire.

Range Statement

The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.

<i>Appropriate personnel</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mentor • coach • peer • ensemble member • musical director • conductor.
<i>Factors</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • concept that improvisation is spontaneous composition or variation, a creative discovery • ability to react to stimuli immediately to changes needed to the music • ability to focus in the moment • confidence level • audience response • whether improvisation is a solo or group performance • musical style.
<i>Techniques</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying advanced harmonic knowledge to improvised solos • playing arpeggios on chord sequences containing extended chord structures • using appropriate note placement for the harmonic structure of advanced chord sequences • applying advanced chord substitution in an improvised solo • creating forward motion • targeting upper extensions in an improvised solo • vocal and instrumental sound production • physical dexterity and coordination • playing an extensive range of rhythms and rhythm patterns • controlling rhythms, including syncopation, rhythmic contrast and simultaneous cross rhythms • controlling tone colour across a wide dynamic

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> range phrasing and shaping performance in style and nuance controlling dynamics controlling performance at the required speed integrating a range of elements in performance.
Criteria may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> development of advanced harmonic, melodic and rhythmic concepts increased range of improvisation techniques used increased level of confidence in performing improvisation audience response increased positive feedback from mentors and ensemble members.
Repertoire may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> complex pieces composed for the selected instrument complex pieces or works specially arranged for the instrument in area of specialisation diverse range of solo and ensemble pieces of varying levels of complexity and difficulty works from a range of genres and styles.
Health and safety considerations may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> correct posture to support facility and longevity in practice ensuring that practice sessions are of reasonable duration to avoid fatigue hearing protection protection of body against overuse injury safe lifting techniques strategies to overcome performance anxiety, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> focussing on a single element or action at a time relaxation techniques, such as meditation and deep breathing focussing on patterns rather than individual notes warm-up routines.
Cues may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> verbal physical gestures musical.

<i>Musical elements</i> may include:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• melody• chords and chord progressions• intervals• harmony• rhythm• notes• chord-scale relationships• expression• motifs• tone.
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Unit Sector(s)

Performing arts - music performance