



JAZZ ENSEMBLE

Assessment Form

Updated 2026

Performance #: _____ MPA Date: _____ MPA Site: _____

School: _____ Ensemble Name: _____

SCORE	EVALUATION AREA	COMMENTS
SCORE = RATING with DESCRIPTORS 13-15 I Superior A+ Outstanding 10-12 II Excellent A Advanced 7-9 III Good B Proficient 4-6 IV Fair C Basic 1-3 V Unprepared U Below Basic	SPECIFIC ASPECTS + Area of strength; Noticeably strong within rating Blank Commensurate to rating - Area of concern; Noticeably needing attention within rating	Use the space below and on the back for specific written input focusing on identifying and enhancing areas of strength as well as identifying and addressing areas of concern.

SCORE	EVALUATION AREA	COMMENTS
	TONE/INTONATION ☐ Quality/Clarity/Characteristic Sound ☐ Consistency (throughout range of pitch & dynamics) ☐ Intonation within & between sections ☐ Intonation within the musical line (horizontal) & within the harmony & texture (vertical) ☐ Blend (within sections and the ensemble) ☐ Balance (within & between sections; within the harmony & texture)	
	ACCURACY ☐ Time & Meter; Rhythm Section Time (groove/feel) ☐ Notes & Rhythms ☐ Articulation (beginnings/slurs/releases)	
	TECHNIQUE ☐ Consistency/Facility/Dexterity ☐ Unity (vertical alignment)	
	STYLE/EXPRESSION ☐ Accuracy & Unity of Idiomatic Styles/Interpretation ☐ Within the Rhythm Section (role & communication) ☐ Through Articulation & Inflection (within the style) ☐ Through Tempo ☐ Through Dynamics ☐ Through Phrasing (shaping of notes & lines) ☐ Through Texture (reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout)	
	SOLOS/IMPROVISATION ☐ Performance of Solos: Written, Memorized or Improvised (stylistically appropriate) ☐ Content & Creativity of Improvised Solos ☐ Performing with Expression (within the style)	
TOTAL Add the five scores above	FINAL RATING Convert the Total Score to the Final Rating according to the table on the right using the Roman numeral only. Do not include a '-' or a '+'	TOTAL SCORE to FINAL RATING with DESCRIPTORS 63-75 I A+ (63-66 low I) (67-71 I) (72-75 high I) Superior/Outstanding 48-62 II A (48-52 low II) (53-57 II) (58-62 high II) Excellent/Advanced 33-47 III B (33-37 low III) (38-42 III) (43-47 high III) Good/Proficient 18-32 IV C (18-22 low IV) (23-27 IV) (28-32 high IV) Fair/Basic 5-17 V U Unprepared/Below Basic

OTHER FACTORS (+, Blank or -) (Not scored; does not affect Final Rating) ☐ Conduct, Approach & Appearance ☐ Choice of Repertoire	Adjudicator Signature _____
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School: _____
Ensemble Name: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS BY PIECE	
PIECE #1	
PIECE #2	
PIECE #3	
OVERALL	

PMEA MPA Assessment Form: Jazz Ensemble

ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS

Updated 2026

What Adjudicators are listening for within each Evaluation Area

EVALUATION AREA	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Specific Aspects	

TONE/INTONATION	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Quality/Clarity/Characteristic Sound	• Overall quality of the musical sound characteristic of the instruments Involved---winds and rhythm section • Breath support; Use, amount and speed of the air • Unified tone concepts • Consistency within sections and across the ensemble • Appropriate use of vibrato as an aspect of tone to color the sound
Consistency (throughout range of pitch & dynamics)	• Flexibility throughout range of pitch and dynamics • Posture, instrument and hand positions impacting tone
Intonation within & between sections	• Adjustments reflecting instrument tendencies • Adjustments reflecting listening within and across sections
Intonation within the musical line (horizontal) & within the harmony & texture (vertical)	• Within the melodic line within the tonality • Within intervals and role within the chord structure and overall texture as evident within the range of texture density from thin to thick
Blend (within parts/sections/family/ensemble)	• Unified concepts of tone quality and listening awareness
Balance (between sections, within the harmony & texture)	• Balance within parts of chords • Balance within the texture reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout the piece---melody vs. accompaniment; upper voices vs. lower voices) • Balance within types of accompaniments (countermelody, rhythmic, sustained, bass line, etc.) • Balance adjustments reflecting moving parts, melodic interjections, melodic 'fills', etc. • Balance within the rhythm section and between the winds and rhythm section

ACCURACY	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Time & Meter; Rhythm Section Time (groove/feel)	• Steady beat within initial tempo and tempo changes • Clear sense of meter (duple vs. triple vs. quadruple, simple vs. compound, etc.); Handling meter changes • Rhythm section maintains consistent and appropriate 'time' • Ensemble understanding of the nuances of time as applied to rhythmic figures
Notes & Rhythms	• Notes within the key and after key changes • Notes that aren't in the key signatures and applying written accidentals through the end of the measure • Throughout range of written notes • Length of notes and rests; execution of patterns and combinations, including syncopation and ties • Entrances (on beat and off beat) and releases
Articulation (beginnings/slurs/releases)	• Tonguing and slurring (ending slurs as written); not adding slurs where not written • Consistency and unity in the ensemble approach to articulations within and between sections

TECHNIQUE	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Consistency/Facility/Dexterity	• Fluency and evenness throughout the instrument ranges involved • Ease of execution of technical passages
Unity (vertical alignment)	• Unity of rhythms and technical passages in being vertically aligned within and between sections, and as an ensemble.

STYLE/EXPRESSION	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Accuracy & Unity of Idiomatic Styles/Interpretation	• Unity in applying musically appropriate style and stylistic nuance throughout the ensemble; clear sense of 'ensemble' • Unity in applying historical performance practice • Interpreting the musical intent of the composer and/or arranger • Appropriate use of vibrato in expression • Unity of unison passages & shout choruses throughout the ensemble
Within the Rhythm Section (role & communication)	• Drums appropriately set up and kick the hits and catch/punch • Understanding of their role within the rhythm section and ensemble • Understanding of their role within the style
Through Articulation & Inflection (within the style)	• Expressive use of articulation (•,>^,-, sfz, etc.) • Articulations & inflections as implied by and consistent with the style • Unity of ensemble approach to articulations within the given style • Unity in ensemble approach to attacks and releases
Through Tempo	• Expressive use and control of tempo and tempo alterations
Through Dynamics	• Expressive use of volume levels reflecting written dynamics and roles of parts within the texture throughout the piece • Expressive use and consistency within dynamic levels, changes and range
Through Phrasing (shaping of notes & lines)	• Expressive use of phrasing (breathing; playing 'musical sentences') • Expressive use of phrasing through shaping & contouring; inflection
Through Texture (reflecting the changing roles of parts throughout)	• Expressive reflecting of the changing roles of parts throughout the piece beyond balance, including bringing out counterlines, moving parts, melodic interjections, 'melodic fills' at the end of phrases, etc., within accompaniment roles.

SOLOS/IMPROVISATION	ADDITIONAL DESCRIPTORS
Performance of Solos: Written, Memorized or Improvised (stylistically appropriate)	• Quality as a solo reflecting through the performance of fundamental musical aspects such as tone quality & intonation, notes, tempo, rhythm, and basic articulations
Content & Creativity of Improvised Solos	• Musical line compatible with scale/chord; approach to playing over the chord changes • Playing a melody vs. 'playing lots of notes' • Possibly utilizing rhythmic motifs from the chart • Approach to form • Use and development of melodic and rhythm ideas/motives • Constructing personal and engaging improvisations through harmonic progressions • Development throughout the solo (beginning-middle-end) • Use of sequences • Extent of melodic and rhythmic variation; variety overall • Use of the range of the instrument • Use of special techniques/characteristics of the instrument
Performing with Expression (within the style)	• Quality as a solo reflecting through the performance of expressive musical aspects such as style articulations, dynamics, phrasing • Reflecting an understanding of style and jazz vocabulary • Quality and extent of interaction between rhythm section and soloist • Energy/spirit/confidence