

# Getting Started September 2007

## GCE Music

### Edexcel Advanced Subsidiary GCE in Music (8MU01)

First examination 2009

### Edexcel Advanced GCE in Music (9MU01)

First examination 2010



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## Introduction

The new GCE Music specification is simple in design, yet comprehensive. Simple because there are fewer assessments than with Curriculum 2000; comprehensive because there is good coverage of all three main musical disciplines (performing, composing and listening and understanding) both at AS and A2.

For many students, music is first and foremost about performing. The new specification gives them opportunities for solo and/or ensemble performance in any style they choose and provides incentives for singing or playing pieces that are more difficult than the set standard level. For Unit 1 (AS), students will generally perform for 5–6 minutes, all on the same occasion but not as a structured programme. Those who will benefit from playing or singing for longer are free to do so. For Unit 4 (A2), a planned programme (12–15 minutes or longer if necessary) is expected. The outcome may be a traditional solo recital or some other kind of extended performance, solo and/or ensemble.

Some Year 12 and 13 students say that they can't compose, even some who have done GCSE Music. It is hoped that the new specification will help convince them otherwise, as well as stretching the more confident. A new strategy involves set composition briefs, all of which provide direction and guidance, without being inflexible or unduly restrictive. The specification also indicates 'what students need to learn' because it is vital that young composers are given support and teaching rather being left to sink or swim.

For Unit 2 (AS), one three-minute composition is required. For Unit 5 (A2), students choose two tasks. There is great flexibility here: for they can offer two compositions, or one composition and one technical study (compositional techniques) exercise, or two exercises (and therefore no composition). There are three compositional techniques to choose from: chorale, two-part baroque counterpoint, popular song.

New and very important is 'understanding chords and lines', which is Section C of Unit 3 (AS). This offers all students a grounding in harmony, both in terms of simple analysis and basic harmonisation. It also provides a basis for further study in Unit 5 if required.

The contents of *The New Anthology of Music (NAM)* are now divided into three broad areas of study: instrumental music, vocal music and applied music. The first and second are used in Unit 3, the first and third in Unit 6 (A2). Every AS student will study the same works so in future everyone who has studied Edexcel AS or A2 in a particular year will share in a common repertoire.

Analysis is important for an understanding of music but it is hoped that the new specification will also encourage a holistic approach in which the integrity of a work is never lost in a concern for investigating detail. It is also hoped that each set work will be not just an exam requirement but a starting point for further investigation, perhaps long after the course has finished.

Students work on new selections of pieces at A2; there is no longer the need to revisit material from AS in search of extra hidden depths.

Aural perception is at the heart of the qualification. In the listening section of Unit 3, questions are on familiar music — set works from the anthology — and are answered with the help of recorded sound and skeleton scores. In Unit 6 unfamiliar pieces are the subject of comparison and contrast and aural analysis.

What follows in this guide is intended to help teachers and students tackle the new specification with confidence and enjoyment. In particular we hope that the examples of marked work (in Part 2 of this guide) will help everyone see clearly how marks are given.

## Unit 1: Performing Music

In many respects the assessment of performance continues as in Curriculum 2000, but there are important differences which it is worthwhile pointing out straight away, as the 'old' requirements have become so familiar over a period of almost ten years.

Unit 1 in Curriculum 2000 Music consisted of two performance papers: Paper 11 (Solo performance) and Paper 12 (Performing during the course). These have been replaced with a single examined activity, internally assessed by the centre and externally moderated by Edexcel.

The new Unit 1 consists of a 5–6 minute performance in which students can perform as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble.

### GCE 2008: Features of the new specification

#### Solo and/or ensemble performances

In GCE Music 2008 students may perform as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble. This change is intended to allow students the greatest possible flexibility and to credit ensemble performances where they are most appropriate to the style of music presented (eg rock group performances).

#### Difficulty levels

The expected difficulty of pieces offered is still taken to correspond to Grade 5 of the graded examinations of such bodies as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity Guildhall, Rockschoo and the London College of Music. Grade 5 represents Standard level (S).

Students who perform pieces above Grade 5 continue to be awarded additional credit. There are now two difficulty levels higher than S, in order to recognise the achievement of those students who technically exceed the set standard. The marks awarded to a Grade 6 piece will be scaled to More Difficult (MD) level and the marks awarded to a piece at Grade 7 or above will be scaled to Higher (H) level according to the scaling grid in the specification.

#### Complete performances

In the past, students were able to record and re-record individual pieces on a number of occasions, gradually compiling a submission lasting 5–6 minutes.

Students must now perform continuously and not piece together their submissions over a number of performance occasions. This is a requirement intended to help students gain the confidence and stamina necessary to meet the challenge of performing the 12–15 minute extended performance in Unit 4. The *whole* 5–6 minute submission may be performed and recorded (or re-performed and re-recorded) at any time during the course.

Please note that *there is no need for the pieces played or sung to be linked in any way*: Unit 1 is not a 'mini-recital'.

## Assessment criteria

For GCE Music 2008, each piece is marked out of 40 (not out of 25 as previously). There are two sets of assessment criteria — one for performances from a score, the other for improvised performances.

As indicated in the specification, begin marking by using the *holistic assessment criterion* (out of 40), to give an overall reflection of each piece. Then use the five detailed assessment criteria (each out of 8) to report on specific aspects of technique and expression, before reconciling the totals arrived at by these different routes.

## Simplification of assessment and administration

Detailed written commentaries are no longer required. You'll be free to write a short comment on each piece, but only if you think this is necessary. Otherwise, all you need to do is to enter the appropriate marks on the mark sheet.

In a nutshell, what happens is this. The mark sheet lists all the various criteria in full. For each piece, you simply select your preferred mark for each criterion. This is more straightforward than in the past, because each descriptor now carries only one mark. (If you think a piece is 'outstanding', you don't need to hesitate between a mark of 7 or 8, you just give it 8.)

## Choice of instrument

Throughout this Getting Started guide, the term 'instrument' should be taken to include the voice. Any instrument (including electronic instruments) may be used, but if there are doubts about the suitability of any instrument, centres should contact Edexcel.

Students may perform on one or more instruments if there is a good reason for doing so. Marks are not awarded for versatility as such. They are awarded for the quality of the performance(s) and playing a second or third instrument that you don't play as well as your first isn't likely to be advantageous. If a second instrument is chosen, it may be from the same family as the first, or from a different family (in other words, there's no ban on offering tuba and guitar).

## Choosing pieces for assessment

Students (with their teachers' guidance) choose the piece(s) they offer for assessment. They can play or sing a single complete piece or a complete movement from a longer work. Or they can perform two or more shorter pieces (either connected or unconnected). The latter option will be more suitable for singers and for instrumentalists of fairly limited technical ability. The music performed may be in any style or styles.

There must be no duplication of pieces in the music offered for Unit 1 and Unit 4.

## Scores

All performances need to be linked to notation, either a fully notated score or a notated stimulus upon which an improvisation is based. Where no printed staff notation exists (for example, where students offer their own compositions) centres must still supply a score in a format appropriate to the style of the music. Whatever format is chosen, the score must be sufficiently clear for the moderator to be able to make an assessment of the performance. Deviations from the score in jazz/rock and musical theatre numbers will generally be accepted where they are considered to be stylistically convincing.



Electric guitarists often learn pieces from recordings. However, original recordings (to be compared with student performances) will not be accepted in lieu of a notated score. Tab scores are also unacceptable. The current Rockscool syllabuses ([www.rockschool.co.uk](http://www.rockschool.co.uk)) contain notated pieces in a wide variety of rock styles including backing tracks and transcriptions are also available in some magazines. If students have learned a piece by ear and then downloaded a score, it is important to check that the notation reflects what is actually being played.

A significant amount of solo and ensemble material is now available in jazz styles, eg Associated Board Jazz syllabus material ([www.abrsm.org](http://www.abrsm.org)).

### **Students' compositions**

Students' own compositions can be performed, with or without an element of improvisation. However, compositions are not necessarily the most suitable pieces to submit if they are technically too simple, or if the score bears little resemblance to the performance submitted.

### **Choosing ensemble pieces**

Ensembles must have a maximum of five performers including the student. The student must have a clearly defined role and play a part that is not duplicated by any other member of the ensemble. More than one student may be assessed in the course of a single ensemble performance, in other words, in a piece for string quartet you can be assessing the first violinist and the cellist simultaneously.

Ensemble performances are the natural choice for rock and jazz musicians. However, it is really important to make sure that individual parts can be heard on the recording submitted. Individual parts should be compared to solo graded pieces to determine the level of difficulty, while taking into account the added difficulty of the ensemble playing of a particular piece.

Players of classical instruments and singers who lack confidence may feel more comfortable performing with others, rather than as a soloist.

### **Improvised performances**

Improvised solo or ensemble performances will be accepted only if a chord scheme or other stimulus is supplied, together with as much information as possible about the student's working methods. This information could take the form of a short paragraph or grid outlining the form of the improvisation.

Suitable charts on which improvisations can be based can be found in a variety of published books or may be downloaded from the internet. For instance, students may choose to perform an improvisation based on a jazz 'standard' or a folk song.

### **Length of piece(s)**

Students must perform for between five and six minutes. However, if a student wishes to play for longer than six minutes to demonstrate their performance skills more fully, they may do so. The piece(s) should be performed unabridged, except for any long repeats, or cuts in the accompaniment only.

Students should time their performances carefully. The minimum requirement in terms of length is five minutes' performance time. It is not fair to assess those students who fulfil the specification requirement and those who fall short of it in exactly the same way. Accordingly, for each half minute that any student falls short of the five-minute requirement, you must make a reduction of two marks. For example, a student who performs for three minutes 20 seconds in total has fallen short by three half minutes. If you have awarded a mark of 24/40 in terms of performance quality, you will need to reduce this by 6 ( $3 \times 2$ ) to 18–40.

### **Use of accompaniment**

Students may perform unaccompanied pieces. However, music that was written with an accompaniment must be performed with that accompaniment.

Students offering solo performances with accompaniment should be accompanied by only one other performer playing a contrasting instrument. For instance, a singer, flautist or trombonist may be accompanied by a pianist, or a jazz saxophonist may be accompanied by a double bass player. Ensure students have a good accompanist and plenty of time to practise with them. Students should be discouraged from accompanying one another unless they are fully competent and able to handle problems that may occur during the performance.

A pre-recorded, sequenced or backing track accompaniment is also acceptable and may be particularly appropriate for kit drummers and electric guitarists. In all these cases, however, the students must have a clear solo part throughout the chosen work and their part must be clearly audible in the recording which is submitted for examination.

### **Performance opportunities and the final assessment**

It is advisable to provide as many opportunities for students to perform throughout the academic year inside the classroom, in the school/college and where possible in the community — so that they can become as used to comfortable with, performing as possible.

The assessment is based, as stated above, on a single occasion. This could, for instance, take place as part of a longer class concert, during the school/college Christmas concert, or in outreach concerts within the local community. However, external events may not be ideal for the more nervous students. The more informal occasion within school/college may have the additional advantage of making it easier for you to record/re-record work.

Supervised practice sessions, where space is available, can offer the opportunity to monitor progress, advise on repertoire or instruct those who don't have tuition outside of the classroom.



Don't feel you have to leave the assessment of each student until the last few weeks (days or hours) before the coursework submission date. This leads to additional pressure and anxiety for all concerned. When a student is ready, let them perform their selected piece(s). This will probably be the end of the matter, but you will have time to do something about it if there's a disaster such as a recording that didn't work, or a clearly sub-standard performance. Remember that if you have to re-record a student's work, *you must re-record the whole performance, not just isolated piece(s) that went wrong.*

### **Integrating performance into the AS music courses**

There are many ways that performance can be integrated into the AS music course. As preparation for their assessment, students should be encouraged to discuss and mark each others' performances informally using the mark scheme. Students could be encouraged to aurally analyse each others' performances listening for modulations, cadences and other compositional devices. They might also like to suggest genre, periods of composition etc.

Students could sing or play through set works for Unit 3, or listen to and compare recordings of pieces being prepared for assessment. They can be encouraged to develop an understanding of historically informed performance by researching the capabilities of instruments/performance conventions of particular periods of music history in relation to the pieces that they are preparing for performance or studying. They may like to compare works in similar genres/periods to those being prepared for assessment.

In composition classes students can be encouraged to play through/perform each others' compositions, both as works-in progress and as finished pieces. Students may also gain a great deal from composing pieces specifically for members of the group to perform.

### **Difficulty levels**

As previously stated, the expected level of difficulty of pieces offered is taken to correspond to Grade 5 of the graded examinations of such bodies as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity Guildhall, Rockschoo and the London College of Music. A piece performed at Grade 5 would be considered to be at Standard level (S). The reference to graded examinations in establishing the difficulty level does not imply that only the repertoire set in these examinations is suitable.

The paragraph above refers only to the *level of difficulty* of pieces set by graded exam boards. It does not refer to the *qualitative standards of performance* expected in such exams (for each board has its own assessment criteria and each is different from those used in Unit 1). Although it is unlikely that a student will get full marks in one exam and a very low score in another, there is no fixed correspondence between (for example) a Merit in Grade 5 and any particular holistic mark band used for Unit 1. *It should be noted that recordings of graded public examinations or competitions must not be submitted for assessment for this unit.*

In GCE Music 2008 there are two difficulty levels higher than S, in order to award some additional credit to those students who significantly exceed the standard set for this paper. The marks awarded to a Grade 6 piece will be scaled to More Difficult (MD) level and the marks awarded to a piece of Grade 7 or above will be scaled to Higher (H) level.

However, students should be encouraged to choose music that can be performed with confidence under the pressure of assessment. Mark scaling does not make a large difference to the final mark, so a really convincing performance of a Standard level piece is likely to produce a better result than the scaled-up mark for a technically insecure attempt at a More Difficult piece. A piece currently being learned for a graded examination may be a less successful choice than a work that is already familiar and has been well tried and tested in performance.

When students perform a piece at a level below the required Standard difficulty level (corresponding to Grade 5), it is hardly fair that they should be judged in exactly the same terms as those who have satisfied the specification requirement. Accordingly they will not be able to achieve full credit under any of the assessment criteria. For a Grade 4 piece, the top band of marks under each criterion will not be available (for example, Quality of outcome can receive only 7/8 marks, however outstanding the performance). For a piece that is easier still, the top two mark bands are unavailable.

Centres are required to write an estimate of the difficulty level for each piece on the mark sheet supplied by Edexcel. This should normally be given in the form of S (Standard), MD (More Difficult) or H (Higher). If the chosen piece(s) is easier than Grade 5 then E (Easier) should be entered and the actual grade and examination board must be listed where possible. In all cases it is useful if the board and grade are listed as proof of the suggested level. Many students choose music prepared for their grades and such pieces may conveniently be looked up in the appropriate syllabuses or in the *Difficulty Level booklet for AS/A2 Music* as used by examiners, available on the Edexcel website ([www.edexcel.org.uk](http://www.edexcel.org.uk)). Where a work appears in different board syllabuses at different levels, such as Grade 5 and Grade 6, the higher of the two should be taken as representing the difficulty level.

Finding the difficulty level is easy enough when the piece appears in the booklet, but how do you decide in other cases? Your estimate of difficulty level should take into account technical, notational and expressive demands, comparing these with pieces whose grades are known. The difficulty level of unlisted songs should be assessed according to the following criteria: pitch range (not tessitura, as students are free to transpose any song into their best register), difficulty of intervals, chromaticism, amount of repetition, lengths of phrases (and the demands these make on breath control), dynamic range, rhythmic complexity and variety of articulation (syllabic/melismatic).

When determining the difficulty of an individual part within an ensemble piece, compare the part to solo graded pieces but also — and this is very important — take into account the demands in terms of ensemble performance.

With pieces in popular and jazz styles, the difficulty level is likely to be S where the pitches are technically straightforward and the rhythms are pattern based, even if individual patterns are tricky or the speed quite fast.

Improvisation stimuli based on chord patterns should go well beyond root position triads and should include inversions and seventh chords if they're to be judged to meet S level.



### Items for submission

1. *A recording of the piece(s)* on audio CD (finalised and playable on standard domestic equipment) or MiniDisc™ (but note that long-play MiniDisc™ recordings are not acceptable). Please remember that recordings on cassette tape will not be accepted for GCE Music 2008.

Each student's work should be on a separate audio CD or MiniDisc™, clearly labelled with their details. Centres are requested to use one recording format for all their students' submissions — audio CD or MiniDisc™.

2. *Photocopies of the music* must be submitted for moderation with the recording, but only the part performed needs to be submitted (eg just the clarinet part in a piece for clarinet with piano accompaniment). Photocopies will be destroyed by Edexcel at the end of the examination series. Original copies cannot be returned and must not be sent. No credit is given for performing from memory.

Where no printed staff notation exists (for example, where students offer their own compositions or where students perform from memory) centres must still supply a score in a format appropriate to the style of the music. The word 'score' refers to any of the following: a full score in conventional staff notation; a lead sheet or chord chart; tables or diagrams.

Whatever format is chosen, the presentation must be sufficiently clear for the moderator to be able to make an assessment of the performance.

3. *An authentication form* signed by both the teacher and the student, to verify that the submission represents the student's own unaided work.

### Recording quality

Producing a good quality recording is essential. A simple CD-RW with stereo microphone sockets is perfectly sufficient for examination purposes.

It is very important to use good quality microphones. Condenser microphones are ideal, as they are sensitive and have a wide dynamic range. Care should be taken when positioning the microphones — too close and you will pick up breaths/key tapping etc, too far off and the sound recorded will lack definition. It is wise to experiment with the equipment and test the recording quality before making final recordings. Microphones should be placed in a crossed pair (XY figuration) to capture a stereo sound.

Careful thought should be given to the venue for the recording. Dry acoustics can be unforgiving, particularly for singers. Some of the most unlikely places can provide the best acoustics for certain instruments. The dining hall may provide just the right amount of reverb for a trumpet player! Rock groups may prefer to perform in a large venue such as the school hall, rather than in a classroom. It is also important to use the best quality piano that you can and to ensure that the piano is in tune.

### Intonation

Accurate intonation is a vital component of any performance in any style. It is vital that students tune their instruments effectively before they record their work and that they maintain accurate intonation throughout their performances.

## Assessment

Before assessment, remember to check that the recording quality is good and the individual parts of each student can be heard. This is vital. It is recommended that centres reach their assessment based on the recording they intend to submit to Edexcel, rather than making an assessment of a 'live' performance.

### Choosing the correct assessment criteria

Students may present pieces played or sung from a score and/or improvised performances. Each piece should be marked according to the appropriate set of assessment criteria. There are two sets of criteria, one for performances from a score, the other for improvised performances.

Marks are awarded (out of 8) according to each of the following criterion.

### Assessment criteria for performances from a score

<b>Criterion 1: Quality of outcome</b>	Overall security and effectiveness of the performance. Interpretation and communication.
<b>Criterion 2: Pitch and rhythm</b>	Accuracy of pitch and rhythm. Intonation is not considered here but under Criterion 4.
<b>Criterion 3: Fluency and tempo</b>	Maintenance of continuity (fluency). Tempo (including any sectional tempo changes, ritenutos and rubato) in accordance with the composer's direction(s) and/or the stylistic demands of the piece.
<b>Criterion 4: Tone and technique</b>	Quality of instrumental or vocal sound ('tone quality'). Intonation and other aspects of instrumental or vocal technique (bowing, pedalling etc as appropriate).
<b>Criterion 5: Phrasing, articulation and dynamics</b>	Observance of performance directions for phrasing, articulation and dynamics — and the subtlety of their realisation — where the composer has indicated them. Appropriate and subtle use of phrasing, articulation and dynamics where an urtext edition is used.

### Assessment criteria for improvised performances

<b>Criterion 1: Quality of outcome</b>	Overall security and effectiveness of the performance. Interpretation and communication.
<b>Criterion 2: Using the stimulus</b>	Accuracy of playing or singing the stimulus material. Exploitation and development of the stimulus.
<b>Criterion 3: Coherence</b>	Structure: sense of wholeness (including relationship between component parts and the whole) and structure of individual sections. Balance of unity and variety.
<b>Criterion 4: Tone and technique</b>	Quality of instrumental or vocal sound ('tone quality'). Intonation and other aspects of instrumental or vocal technique (bowing, pedalling etc as appropriate).
<b>Criterion 5: Use of resources</b>	Handling of instrument or voice. Range of timbres (where appropriate). Choice and management of textures.

The assessment criteria must be applied separately for each piece. (Please note that if two or more movements from a sonata or suite are offered, each movement is a separate piece for marking purposes.)

It should be noted that a student does not always need to satisfy every aspect of a particular descriptor in order to achieve the associated mark. For instance, one of your students may have performed musically and with some sense of style. However, they may have missed out a couple of changes in dynamic and forced the tone on a high note.

When assessing the performance under **Criterion 5: Phrasing, articulation and dynamics**, you may decide that what you have heard matches statements in two different mark bands. It may help you to underline the statements that you feel apply.

6	Confident	<u>Some careful attention to phrasing and articulation.</u> <u>Dynamics are generally effective</u> , although occasionally missing, under- or over-played.
5	Competent	Phrasing is reasonably well shaped and there is some attention to articulation. Some effective use of dynamics, but <u>a few opportunities are missed or mishandled.</u>

In this instance, the higher mark of 6 will be awarded, as most descriptors are fulfilled.

### Marking procedure

For each piece, use the holistic assessment criterion (out of 40) to give an overall reflection of the performance of the piece and then use all five detailed assessment criteria (each out of 8) to report on specific aspects of technique and expression, before reconciling the totals arrived at by these different routes.

For example, you may choose a holistic mark of 25 out of 40. Then you will identify suitable marks for the five detailed assessment criteria, each out of 8.

If these add to 25 (eg 5 + 5 + 6 + 4 + 5), 25 is clearly the final mark out of 40 for the piece. If, however, there is a discrepancy (eg detailed marking gives 5 + 6 + 6 + 5 + 5 = 27 while holistic marking suggests 25, briefly revisit both the detailed and the holistic assessment criterion until a single mark (which need not be the average of 25 and 27) is selected. Perhaps 27 seems over-generous and the holistic 25 is the best verdict. If so, award the single mark of 25/40.

Once you have arrived at a mark out of 40, you should scale the mark according to the difficulty of the piece performed (see the performance scaling grid in the specification document). If a student performs a Grade 5 piece, the mark will stay the same. However, if a student is awarded 25 out of 40 and played a piece that was Grade 7 in terms of level of difficulty (H or Higher), the final scaled mark will be 28/40.

When you have marked and scaled each piece out of 40, calculate the average to produce a single mark out of 40. For example, if there are four pieces and they are awarded 30, 32, 38 and 28, the final mark is  $30 + 32 + 38 + 28 \div 4 = 32$ . Where decimals of .5 or greater exist, these must be rounded up to the next whole number. Any decimals smaller than .5 must be rounded down.

## Administration

### Internal standardisation

If more than one teacher in a centre is marking students' work, there must be a process of internal standardisation to ensure that there is consistent application of the assessment criteria. If two or more teachers share in the assessment of coursework, one teacher should be designated as the Teacher Examiner, responsible for internal standardisation of coursework.

All teachers involved should independently mark a number of pieces of coursework using the published assessment criteria. Any differences should be discussed at a consensus meeting at which all teachers involved in the marking should be present. Reference should be made to exemplar material from Edexcel (see *Getting Started, part 2*). Agreement should then be reached by all teachers involved on the mark to be awarded to each piece of coursework and the Teacher Examiner should make the final decision in determining standards.

### Authentication

All students must sign an authentication statement. Statements relating to work not sampled should be held securely in your centre. Those which relate to sampled students must be attached to the work and sent to the moderator. In accordance with a revision to the Code of Practice, any student unable to provide an authentication statement will receive zero credit for the component. Where credit has been awarded by a centre-assessor to sampled work without an accompanying authentication statement, the moderator will inform Edexcel and the mark will be adjusted to zero.

### Further information

A companion volume of performance exemplar material, *Getting Started, part 2* including mark sheets, scores and CD recordings is available from Edexcel. The exemplar material has been assessed by Edexcel's senior moderators. Edexcel would like to thank the schools, colleges, teachers and students who participated in the production of work for assessment.

## Unit 2: Composing

### Overview

Students are required to submit a three-minute piece based on a choice of briefs issued on the Edexcel website in the September of the examination's academic year. The piece must be produced under controlled conditions during 15 hours of supervised time.

The piece must be submitted as a score and as a recording on CD or MiniDisc™. Time taken recording the piece does not count as part of the 15 hours.

Students may prepare and print their score using computer software or they may provide a handwritten copy. Neither the presentation of the score nor the quality of the recording will be assessed but it is very much in the interests of the student to present the work neatly and clearly so that the examiner is able to arrive at a fully informed assessment. They should bear in mind, for example, that the inclusion in the score of phrasing, articulation, bowing marks and pedalling, when appropriately applied, can demonstrate a knowledge of the idiomatic characteristics of the instruments. The examiner may find such editorial markings helpful in assessing the student's handling of the forces, especially if the realisation on the recording is a fairly basic MIDI 'mock-up'.

The score may take a form appropriate to the style of music. This may be a full score in conventional staff notation (including guitar tablature) or — in the case of popular music — a lead sheet or chord chart based on the conventions of songbooks, buskers' books and 'real' books. A useful guidebook here is *Rock, Jazz and Pop Arranging* by Daryl Runswick (Faber, 1993).

A track sheet (or a printed screen dump of a computer window) is acceptable for electronic pop music — for example urban, rap and club dance — but should contain sufficient annotations for the examiner to assess the student's technological input including, for example, details of samples used and any effects and processes employed. Tables and diagrams should normally be submitted only in cases where no other notation is appropriate, for example graphically notated contemporary music and electronic compositions.

Recordings may be made live or they may employ computer software using general MIDI sounds, virtual instruments or samples. Some compositions will be conceived and recorded entirely at the computer while others, which are intended to be performed live, may be recorded as a MIDI 'mock-up'. As in the case of scores, the recording will not be assessed but it is important to produce it in as clear and balanced a form as possible as it will aid the examiner in arriving at an assessment. It is also important to make it clear in the score whether the forces being composed for are acoustic/orchestral or synthesised/electronic, an important point which is explained below under *Assessment*.

In addition to the above, the student is required to complete a written sleeve note using a pro forma. This will be written in one hour under controlled conditions but the written answers may be researched beforehand and notes may be taken into the examination room.

## Management of the coursework

The restrictions on students taking their work home or having access to online help while they are composing are clearly set out in the specification. The actual division of the 15 hours which every student is permitted to spend on their composition (eg into 15 one-hour segments, or 30 30-minute slots) will doubtless be determined by what is practical in the centre. The fifteen hours of supervised time are best understood as those when the student is engaged in the production and writing out of their composition. Teaching and feedback will fall outside this time, as will the recording of the piece which may be undertaken outside the 15 hours. In the case of live performances it would be wise not to leave this until the last minute and to keep a few hours of supervised time 'in hand' in case the recording shows up some significant misjudgement in the composition and the student needs time to make adjustments.

The composition briefs on which work for Unit 2 must be based will be published on the Edexcel website early in September (at the start of the AS course, and therefore some eight months in advance of the coursework completion date), rather than in January as originally intended. This is to assist centres in organising their workload, and particularly to help large centres plan for each student's 15-hour time allowance.

'Controlled conditions' require supervision, but that supervision need not always involve the physical presence of a music teacher at the student's elbow – so long as the teacher who will eventually sign the authentication statement is convinced that controlled conditions are in force. Where several practice rooms are closely adjacent to a main teaching room, for instance, students may work in these, provided always that they are reminded of the requirements of the controlled conditions. Where a music teacher is not available, teaching assistants and technicians may be entrusted with oversight, if their contracts and other duties permit. There may also be facilities for early-morning or late-afternoon cross-curricular coursework sessions, perhaps under the supervision of teacher(s) or teaching assistant(s) of subject(s) other than music.

While composition is not normally undertaken under artificial constraints such as those imposed by controlled conditions, in the 'real world' music has often to be written to exacting commissions. Students may also gain from having to concentrate their efforts within a finite number of relatively short periods rather than being able to spread themselves in an unfocused manner without any time constraints apart from a final deadline.

Composition involves many conscious and subconscious thought processes, and no one can stop interested musicians thinking about their work out of controlled time, playing it from memory, and so on. Ideas that spring up naturally at home, on the school bus, or while out shopping need not be ruled out of court. Indeed if something is committed to paper outside the controlled conditions, it may be brought into them provided that the music teacher who will eventually sign the authentication is aware of its implications. The music teacher must monitor the progress of each student's coursework as in the past, and will naturally take note of any remarkably sudden or out-of-character development that takes place between one controlled session and the next.

The restrictions do not mean that students are expected to work entirely without teacher guidance. It is anticipated that teachers will assist students in selecting their brief and will provide lessons and schemes of work designed to give them the technical means to approach the brief with confidence. This might include 'generic' sessions on, for example, writing for instruments, handling musical structures, or on harmony and counterpoint. Individual tutorial help may also be given although (as in the past) this must be confined to advice — similar to the tutoring of a university essay — and may not extend to making specific corrections.

The recording of the piece may be undertaken outside the 15 hours. In the case of live performances it would be wise not to leave this until the last minute and to keep a few hours of supervised time 'in hand' in case the recording shows up some significant misjudgement in the composition and the student needs time to make adjustments.

### The composition briefs

There is a choice of four briefs, based on the two areas of study prescribed for AS. Each area of study is divided into two topics, each with a brief.

**Instrumental Music** involves the study of music from the western classical tradition and the briefs will be based on this. There is no restriction on the harmonic language and style of the composition, which may be tonal (and based on the harmonic conventions of the main western classical periods), dissonant (as in the style of neo-classical works), non-functional (as in the style of minimalist composers) or employing an atonal system or electroacoustic procedures.

This area of study embraces instrumental styles and traditions and students will be expected to have an understanding of the capabilities and idiomatic features of instruments, combinations of instruments and ensembles and also of the various genres and forms that are associated with them, for example string quartets. It may also include the study of electronic instruments and music technology if appropriate.

### Topic 1: Composing expressively

The student will be required to compose a piece for any instrument or combination of instruments which tells a story, conveys a picture or a series of moods. This will involve the study of how moods and emotions are depicted in music and, to an extent, how musical elements can be employed to paint scenes, although students should be warned against being too literal and creating a mere succession of representational sound effects.

Useful models drawn from the *New Anthology of Music (NAM)* under this area of study might include:

- Berlioz — Harold in Italy: movement I
- Debussy — Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune
- 13. Holborne — Pavane 'The image of melancholy'
- 16. Haydn — String Quartet in E flat, Op. 33 No. 2, 'The Joke': movement IV
- 23. Schumann — Kinderszenen, Op. 15: Nos. 1, 3 and 11.

Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside NAM, for example:

- Beethoven — Symphony No 6 (The Pastoral)
- Berlioz — Symphonie Fantastique
- romantic miniatures by Schumann, Mendelssohn, Chopin and Liszt
- Debussy — Preludes, Nocturnes and La Mer
- Richard Strauss — orchestral tone poems
- Ives — The Fourth of July
- Vaughan Williams — The Lark Ascending
- Messiaen — Catalogue d'oiseaux.

Note: for a light introduction try a viewing of Walt Disney's *Fantasia*. This reverses the process by adding a story to a pre-existent piece of music and may prove a useful stimulus to classroom discussion.

**Study for this brief** should include the way musical elements are employed to create an emotional or pictorial effect. This might include the use of timbre and instrumental register, dynamics, rhythm and tempo, key, intervals, dissonance and modulation. It should also include the management of contrast, the structuring of musical climaxes and the timing of points of relaxation. A study of some of the works suggested above will provide ideas about how to 'set a scene' and evoke visual images.

Students should pay attention to form, bearing in mind that most of the evocative pieces in the suggested repertoire not only tell a story but are also musically coherent within a convincing structure.

### The sample brief: some hints

Compose a piece which depicts the idea of 'darkness into light'. The music may tell a story or convey a picture. It should employ instrumental timbres and textures as a means with which to create atmosphere alongside other musical elements like harmony, melody and rhythm.

This might best be approached by devising a structure or timeline of ideas. Begin by thinking of the 'big picture'. There are obvious connections to the weather, day and night, or winter and spring, but the idea could be more abstract: a move from minor to major (the transition into the finale of Beethoven's fifth symphony, for example) or from dissonant to consonant (as in the appearance of the Bach chorale in Berg's violin concerto). Then decide how the move from darkness into light will be accomplished — with a slow transition, for example, or a sudden blinding light?

Once a basic plan is in place, work inwards towards the details. How will each component (the dark and light) be depicted? The student will need to consider the instrumental treatment as required by the brief. Also encourage them to consider which of the other musical elements they feel most confident working with; timbre, rhythm, harmony and relate this to the mark scheme (see below).

## Topic 2: Composing idiomatically for instrument(s)

This topic is based on the principle of variation. Students should investigate examples of variations including theme and variations, fantasia-type pieces, passacaglias, chaconnes and other compositions featuring a ground bass. Students may write in any style and for any combination of acoustic instrumental forces involving any two, three or four instruments, or for solo piano, subject to the brief.

Useful models drawn from *NAM* under this area of study might include:

- Stravinsky — Pulcinella Suite: Gavotte
- Sweelinck — Pavana Lachrimae.

Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside *NAM*, for example:

- Bach — Goldberg Variations and Partita BWV 1004 (chaconne)
- Mozart — Piano sonatas K.205 in D major (third movement) and K.300 in A major (first movement)
- Haydn — String Quartet Op 9 No 5 (second movement) and the 'Emperor' Quartet Op 76 No 3 (second movement)
- Beethoven — Piano sonatas Op 14 No 2 in G major (second movement) and Op 26 in A flat (first movement) and the Diabelli Variations
- Brahms — Symphony No 4 (finale) and Variations on a Theme of Handel Op 24
- Webern — Variations for Piano Op 27
- Vaughan Williams — Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis
- Britten — Nocturnal.

Note: encourage students not to be too over-awed by the technical difficulty of some of these pieces. What they illustrate is the breadth of invention and the extent to which quite considerable liberties can be taken with an original (and often uninspiring) theme.

Study for this brief should include the way in which instrumental figurations and textures are employed to embellish an original theme. It should also cover the different ways in which a theme can be elaborated and transformed by altering the melody (with additional passing notes, arpeggios and inversions) and by altering the instrumentation (including the accompanying textures and figurations), rhythm, harmonisation and tonality.

### The sample brief: some hints

Compose a theme of up to 16 bars and use this as the basis for a short set of variations or a fantasia-type piece for at least two instruments in which the theme is varied or extended. Aim to exploit the playing techniques and ranges of the instruments you have used.

Less able students will often achieve more by elaborating a simple idea than by composing a complex melody. They might begin by trying different embellishments or rhythmic and motivic treatments and choosing which might best extend to form the various sections of the piece. Alternatively, they might decide on an overall structure (for example, a theme and variations in sections, or a through-composed piece) and then proceed to 'fill it in'.

Encourage students to avoid repetitive ground bass pieces which are constructed at the computer over a looped bass line. The following 'standard' theme and variations formula has served students well in the past, but stronger students may well try to break free from its obvious constraints — Theme, Variation 1 (in triplets), Variation 2 (in the tonic minor), Variation 3 (with a different time signature).

As with Topic 1, bear in mind that examiners will be looking for imaginative deployment of the instruments and evidence that their ranges and capabilities are understood.

**Vocal Music** involves the study of music for voices on their own and voices with instruments. As with the area of study Instrumental Music, there is no restriction on the style or harmonic language employed for the composition and for Topic 3 here this can include the various styles of popular music and jazz.

Students should have an understanding of the capabilities of the voice, of vocal ensembles and of the various vocal techniques which might include those of the 'classically' trained voice, speech, *sprechgesang* and other extended vocal techniques as well as the vocal techniques and styles of rock, pop and jazz including rap and scat.

They should also be aware of the techniques of setting words to music, their associated structures and the relationship between vocals and accompaniment/backing.

### Topic 3: Words and music — structure in vocal music

For this topic students should study the relationship between the structure of text and the structure of music. This may be based on standard forms, for example strophic or verse–chorus structures, or it may take a historical perspective, for example the madrigal, the cantata, lied or popular song.

Students may write in any style including popular music and jazz and they may write for voice(s) with or without accompaniment including live, amplified and electronic instruments and computer backings, subject to the brief.

There is a wealth of material in *NAM* which will support this study and which might include:

- J S Bach — Cantata No 48 'Ich elender Mensch'; movements 1-1V
- Tavener — The Lamb
- Dowland — Flow My Tears
- Weelkes — Sing we at pleasure
- Schubert — Der Doppelgänger
- Fauré — Après un rêve
- Gershwin — 'Summertime' from Porgy and Bess
- Howlin' Wolf — I'm leavin' you
- The Kinks — Waterloo Sunset
- Desmond Dekker and the Aces — You can get it if you really want
- Oasis — Don't look back in anger
- Familia Valera Miranda (Cuba) — Se quema la chumbambá.

Students might also explore the texts, structural devices and techniques employed in works outside *NAM*, for example:

- Strophic, ternary and through-composed forms in the songs and song cycles of Schubert (*Die Schöne Müllerin, Winterreise*), Schumann (*Frauenliebe und Leben, Dichterliebe*), Faure (*La Bonne Chanson*), Vaughan Williams (*Songs of Travel*)
- Sonata forms in the arias of Mozart, for example, *Figaro (Dove sono)*, Mass in C minor (*Laudamus te*)
- Popular songs with verse and chorus structures in the songs of Carole King, Burt Bacharach, The Beatles, Billy Joel, Elton John, ABBA, The Bee Gees, Elvis Costello, Morrissey, Coldplay
- The 32-bar show song by Gershwin and Cole Porter (also commonly employed by The Beatles in their earlier albums).

Note: the 12-bar blues, although a common structure, may not provide enough opportunities for structural and harmonic variety for a submission at this level. There are, however, examples of a more sophisticated 'take' on the form, for example Prince (*U got the look*), Michael Jackson (*Billy Jean* and *The way you make me feel*) and The Scissor Sisters (*Music is the victim* — but note that teachers may wish to review the lyrics of this particular song before playing it to the class).

Students who wish to compose a popular song based on riffs, for example in the style of urban R&B, The Red Hot Chili Peppers or Arctic Monkeys, should be made aware of the mark scheme. An important focus of this topic is structural interest and, if choosing to work within a narrow harmonic frame, they will have to devise other ways of providing this interest using other musical elements like melody, timbre and rhythm.

**Study for this brief** should include an analysis of appropriate song structures to learn how variety is introduced to add interest to strophic repetition and to articulate the middle sections of ternary forms (with modulations or changes of texture). In the case of popular songs, students should be aware of common structural devices: bridges, pre-choruses, middle eights, turnarounds, introductions and codas.

It will also be important to study techniques of word setting, perhaps starting with some simple exercises for unaccompanied solo voice, exploring melodic contour, accent and stress and syllabic and melismatic settings. If an accompaniment or backing is intended, then the relationship between the vocal(s) and the other instruments will need to be considered, as an awareness of the capabilities and characteristics of the accompanying instruments and the management of textures will be taken into account by the examiner.

### The sample brief: some hints

Choose a text and compose a song for voice and accompaniment (for any instrument(s)). The song must include verses and a contrasting section. If you choose to write a popular song it may also include a chorus.

The text may be taken from an existing song or from a volume of poems. Alternatively it may be the work of the student (or another student). Avoid spending too long on the text as there are no marks for literary merit, only for the setting. Composers of songs tend to work in one of two ways: starting with the melody or starting with the harmony/structure. Either way it is important to choose a text that will facilitate the rest of the brief, in this case with opportunities for verses and a contrasting section.

If the contrasting section is to be the middle part of a classical ternary form or popular song, study the ways in which composers handle this — usually with a change of harmony or a modulation (to the relative major/minor, tonic major/minor or subdominant). A convincing modulation usually has to be matched by a convincing return to the home key.

If choosing a popular song, remember that the chorus almost always contains the most memorable material and that the verses are usually melodically rather bland in comparison. The joins are important, too: approaching the chorus is an art in popular song writing and composers achieve this in different ways — often with a pre-chorus (there is an excellent one in *Don't look back in anger*) or with a change of harmony (for example Elton John's *I'm still standing*).

#### **Topic 4: Text, context and texture**

In this brief the emphasis will be on the ways in which the text is related to vocal performance and texture. Students should be aware of different vocal techniques including the choral and operatic 'head' voice, the 'chest' voice of actors performing a show song, the styles of popular song and jazz including rap and scat and extended vocal techniques including *sprechgesang*.

Students should also be aware of vocal textures — homophony and contrapuntal writing in general, as well as particular devices such as imitation and antiphony.

As with Topic 3, students may write in any style for any number of voices with or without instrumental accompaniment, subject to the brief.

*NAM* contains numerous examples of varied techniques and textures including:

- Berio — *Sequenza III* for female voice
- Taverner — *O Wilhelme, pastor bone*
- Gabrieli — *In Ecclesiis*
- Haydn — 'Quoniam tu solus' from *The Nelson Mass*
- Taverner — *The Lamb*
- Monteverdi — *Ohimè, se tanto amate*
- Schoenberg — 'Der kranke Mond' from *Pierrot Lunaire*
- Gershwin — 'Summertime' from *Porgy and Bess*
- Louis Armstrong — *West End Blues*.



Additionally, students might investigate the following from outside *NAM*:

- the madrigals of Morley and Monteverdi
- the part-writing of Palestrina and Lassus
- the vocal fugues in Bach (*St John* and *St Matthew Passion*) and Handel (*Messiah*)
- the extended vocal techniques of Cathy Berberian and the popular artist Björk
- the jazz technique and scat singing of Ella Fitzgerald
- the Bach arrangements of The Swingle Singers
- the close harmony work of The Beach Boys, The Manhattan Transfer and the 1960 soul groups such as The Miracles
- the raps of Run-DMC, Kanye West and Eminem
- the miminialist vocal writing in Steve Reich's *Three Tales*.

**Study for this brief** should include the management of vocal techniques and textures, including the security of part writing and the ways in which the number of parts are varied and contrasted (since this brief will normally involve writing for more than one voice).

It should be noted during the course of listening to other works how a little text can go a long way, with a single word or phrase sometimes undergoing many varied treatments and repetitions.

Students may compose in any style. Those who find the technique of part writing within a tonal (or modal) idiom a challenge may opt for a more post-modern harmonic sound world, such as that employed by Tavener in 'The Lamb' (*NAM*). However, it is easy to slip into bar after bar of directionless counterpoint unless textural or motivic interest is maintained. Equally, those who opt for a piece in the manner of Berio's *Sequenza* (*NAM*) should avoid creating a medley of vocal effects.

### **The sample brief: some hints**

Compose a celebratory piece for unaccompanied voices choosing a suitable text and context for the performance. Include changes of texture and a range of vocal techniques, for example passages of recitative, speech or wordless singing, so as to create a sense of occasion.

Start with the context and the occasion, as that will dictate the choice of text.

How will the sense of occasion be conveyed? Study works which have been composed for celebrations, for example the seventeenth-century masque and fanfares. Or study music written for specific occasions — weddings, coronations, religious and cultural festivals.

Then decide what the vocal techniques will be and how they will form into a coherent structure.

It may be necessary to practise writing some vocal parts so as to gain confidence handling the requirement to include changes of texture. Students who prefer not to compose counterpoint might seek alternatives — homophonic passages contrasted with solos, perhaps.

Of all the topics this may prove the most problematic when it comes to mounting a performance for the purposes of recording the piece. A clear score will help here, with as much performance detail as possible and this could be accompanied by a recorded 'mock-up' using synthesised voices or melody instruments. If only a few capable singers are available it may be possible to overdub the different parts using a multi-track recording facility.

## The sleeve note

The sleeve note carries a third of the marks for this unit and therefore needs careful thought and preparation. It is written in one hour of supervised time but students are permitted to take their notes into the examination room and are therefore advised to keep a journal of their work as it progresses.

The quality of written English is taken into account, so students might benefit from practising writing the prose sections under timed conditions.

There are three sections.

*Explain and comment on form and structure, indicating in particular how repetition and contrast are balanced.*

This shows that the examiners are looking for pieces which have a coherent structure and are neither too repetitive nor contain too many diverse ideas. The mark scheme rewards detailed answers, so it is important to refer to specific examples of repetition and contrast and to identify locations with timings or bar numbers. Repetition and contrast can be a feature of any or all of these musical components: melody and motif, harmony, rhythm, instrumentation and texture.

*Mention **four** other features of interest. You can refer to any **two** or more of the following: rhythm, melodic development, texture, handling of instrument(s) and/or voice(s), harmony.*

Here is an opportunity to hint to the examiner which of the optional criteria might most appropriately be applied and to draw attention to the strengths of the piece. Remember to comment on four distinct features and to explain why they are of interest.

*Refer to pieces from the New Anthology of Music and/or elsewhere to explain how other pieces of music have influenced you in your composition.*

This section carries by far the most marks — 12. The more points that are successfully made, the more marks are awarded. The mark scheme states that full marks on this part of the question requires 17 valid observations. Although this seems like quite a lot, they can easily be accumulated if the advice above is followed and a journal kept. Remember to give locations (using bar numbers or timings) for any points made about other works, especially those from *NAM*, as this will give a sense of thoroughness to the writing.

## Assessment

Although the student will approach this unit via the published brief, the mark scheme is an important factor and might be considered as a 'second brief'. The mechanism of assessment is explained in the specification but reference to the individual criteria can form a useful teaching strategy.

In order to achieve high marks, students will need to score quite highly in most, if not all, the criteria; it is important to ensure that the piece satisfies the compulsory criteria (quality of ideas and outcome, coherence, forces and textures) as well as two of the optional ones (harmony, melody, rhythm). Tactics can be employed here. For example, a student with a small harmonic vocabulary might compensate by providing sufficient interest and invention in the other two areas.

### The criteria

From a teaching point of view, one of the most important parts of the descriptors for *Quality of ideas and outcome* are those that apply to the length of the piece. A short piece (less than the required three minutes) will result in a mark at the lower end of the scale. The 15 hours of supervised time need careful planning so that the students do not run out of ideas, confidence or time (or all three).

*Coherence* applies to the structure of the piece, the balance between unity and variety and, if appropriate, the extent to which ideas are extended and developed. Students should be given as many opportunities as possible to listen to works by other composers and to judge how structural interest and development are managed.

*Forces and textures* applies to the handling of voices, instruments and, where appropriate, technology — which means essentially the ability to write idiomatically and sympathetically for the chosen medium and to provide textural interest and contrast. A sound knowledge of instruments is essential here and would form a useful start to the AS course (the more so, as this would also help with work for Unit 3).

In addition the examiner will choose two of the following, Harmony, Melody and Rhythm.

It may prove helpful to devise a student-friendly version of the mark scheme — in effect a tick list of points that need to be considered in each of the criteria. This might take the following form.

Coherence	Tick
Check for repetition Are there any passages that feel too long or ideas that repeat too often?	
Check for regular four-bar phrases Endless four-bar phrases often result from over-dependence on computer sequencing	
Check for contrast Is there a contrasting melody anywhere, especially in the chorus of a song? Is there a contrasting section? Is there contrasting harmony or modulation? Is the rhythm unvaried throughout?	
Are there any special structural features — intro, coda, pre-chorus, links? Does the piece come to a satisfying end? Is interest lost at any point? Dull passages could be the result of other factors, like a wandering melody or harmony that fails to move forwards or which moves unconvincingly.	

Forces and textures	Tick
Are the parts within the instrumental ranges? Are any parts too difficult? Have you left breathing spaces for wind players and are the parts too high or too low? Have you used a MIDI keyboard and written 'piano-style music' which might be unsuitable for the intended instruments?	
Is there more than one playing style? Have you changed the fingering pattern, strum pattern, rhythm or figuration?	
Are there changes of texture? Could you add more/fewer parts, more/fewer notes, introduce legato/staccato? Could you introduce devices such as call-and-response or imitation?	
Is there a range of instruments/colours? Have you exploited different combinations, registers, loud/soft dynamics?	
Is there variety in the accompaniment or backing track? Could you vary the number of parts or, if a pop song, the drum pattern?	
Could you include an interesting solo or countermelody? Could you put the melody in a part other than the top one?	

You might consider devising such a list for other criteria. Here is an example for Harmony.

Have you used more than just chords I, IV and V? What about secondary chords?	
Are all the chords in root position? Could you add some inversions?	
If you have chosen a standard pop chord progression have you tried to vary it? Could you make the harmony more interesting by changing the rhythm/texture?	
Could you add interest by the use of added chords, suspended chords, slash chords, pedals?	
Is there dissonance and is it handled according to the grammar of the chosen style? Could you make the melody more interesting by adding dissonant notes?	
Is there a key change or modulation? If this is a style of music where you would expect to return to the home key, has this been done convincingly?	

## Unit 3: Developing Musical Understanding

### Overview

This unit concerns listening to music and understanding how it works. In Parts A and B, through the study of a varied selection of set works, students will gain:

- an understanding of the craft of composition
- an awareness of musical techniques that will enable them to perform with greater maturity
- a knowledge of the cultures and traditions that have informed a variety of musical styles.

The method of assessment for these parts acknowledges the importance of analytical listening as a starting point for developing musical understanding.

The skills assessed in Part C are designed to:

- reinforce the analytical skills developed in the study of set works
- develop an awareness of chords, harmony and harmonic progression
- develop an awareness of melodic construction and the creation of effective musical lines
- provide greater technical confidence in free composition.

The method of assessment for this part involves practical application of analytical and technical skills.

This unit is assessed by a single examination lasting two hours. The first five minutes are given as reading time and then the CD for Part A will be started. Part A will last approximately 25 minutes. When the announcement on the CD concludes Part A, students use the remaining time (approximately 90 minutes) to complete Parts B and C.

Although it is in three parts this is a single examination, completed in one examination room over a two-hour period. There are no breaks between the parts on the paper. The examination room will require a desk for each student, a good quality sound system to play the CD for Part A and keyboards with headphones available for the students for Part C. It is recommended that there should be one keyboard (with headphones) for the use of up to three students. Computers with headphones cannot be used for this examination. Once Part A is completed students can answer the rest of the paper in any order they wish so, for example, some may wish to answer Part C before Part B.

## Set works

The set works to be studied each year have been carefully selected to provide historical and stylistic variety, consistency and equality at each level. Each selection covers a variety of genres, historical periods and musical styles. They are grouped in two areas of study:

- Area of study 1: Instrumental Music  
This area of study contains only music from the Western classical tradition and includes an orchestral work.
- Area of study 2: Vocal Music  
This area of study combines songs from the Western classical tradition with other styles.

In Unit 3 students will not have access to *The New Anthology of Music (NAM)* other than the skeleton scores provided for Part A, placing the focus of assessment on information that has been learned and understood, particularly through listening to the music and discussing it. Students are encouraged to take a holistic approach to the set works, recognising the structural and stylistic devices they hear and developing an awareness of the range of approaches to composition in each area of study. At this level it is not anticipated that responses to questions will include detailed analysis, although the strongest students will be capable of this, but rather an awareness of the significant musical features of each piece studied. Credit will be given for citing musical examples where appropriate.

Students are assessed in Part A on both areas of study by listening to excerpts from pieces they have studied, with skeleton scores and responding to structured questions. There will be two compulsory questions, one from each area of study.

In Part B, students choose to extend one area of study and respond to a question with two sub-sections. The first sub-section will take one of the works studied and ask students to identify musical features which place it within a specific historical or cultural context. The second sub-section will require students to compare and contrast specific musical features in two further works from the area of study.

Responses to Part B can be in continuous prose, note form or bullet points, but whatever the format students should show their perceptive understanding of the music studied.

Set works heard in Part A will not be used in Part B, so the questions in Parts A and B will together cover four pieces in each area of study. This will ensure that most, if not all, music studied by students in their extended area of study will form part of the final assessment.



## Studying the set works

The best starting point when approaching the set works is listening to them to acquire some impression of the characteristic sound of each piece. After this the detailed study can begin and through this listening all students should develop an understanding of basic musical terminology so that they can discuss the pieces intelligently and coherently. Devices (imitation, sequence etc), textures (melody and accompaniment, two-part etc) and chords should be understood and most students will require some preliminary study of such basic musical concepts.

The set works are listed in the specification in the order in which they appear in *The New Anthology of Music*. This is not the prescribed order in which they should be taught, which should be adapted to suit the needs of each group of students. Here are some suggested approaches to the order of studying the set works.

- Chronologically — this can be applied to each area of study or by combining the two (for example, in 2009: Holborne, Weelkes, Haydn, Schubert etc).
- Complexity — in the order above it could be quite daunting for some students to be faced with a score in five parts, one of which uses the alto clef, in the first set work studied. It might be easier, for example, to start with Debussy's *Sarabande* which has just two staves per system.
- Familiarity — for some students it might be best to start with styles or genres with which they are more familiar, moving on to less familiar types of music as the course progresses.

## Part A

This part of the examination will last approximately 25 minutes and consists of two questions broken down into structured sub-sections. Students will answer both questions, one from each area of study. The music, which will usually last between 60 and 90 seconds, will be played five times, separated by pauses, the length of which will be announced on the CD. A single or two-stave skeleton score of each excerpt will be provided.

Preparation for this part of the examination will involve analysis of the set works each year. Given the nature of the assessment, teachers should consider initially approaching this analysis from an aural perspective, listening to the music and discussing what is heard before looking at the score. This could be done using the musical features listed in the specification. After the first hearing the resources (instruments and/or voices) used by the composer could be identified, moving on to the music's structure, texture, tonality, harmony and melodic and rhythmic features. With some pieces it may be possible for individuals or classes to perform them, gaining familiarity with the music in a practical way.

It will be possible for students to answer some of the examination questions from listening to the CD (identifying instruments or naming melodic devices, for example). However, other questions will require knowledge of the music beyond what is heard, including the location of the excerpt within the set work as a whole. It is important for students to develop their analytical skills through listening. It is enjoyable and helpful if such skills can be practised by sometimes listening outside and beyond the works set for the examination.

Questions in Part A will require knowledge of the music studied but not of its historical or cultural context.

### Part B

Students should be advised to spend around 45 minutes on this part of the examination, remembering that most of this time should be spent on the second sub-section of the question, when two pieces are compared and contrasted.

The first sub-section (a) will ask students to relate one set work to its historical or cultural context. Each set work in the chosen area of study should be placed in such context in lessons. For example, what musical features of Schubert's *Der Doppelgänger* indicate that it is a song in an early Romantic style? Points to explore could include:

- its genre
- its harmonic vocabulary
- its melodic style and construction
- its use of the piano
- its overall mood.

The second sub-section (b) will require students to compare and contrast two musical features of two set works. To prepare for this question, students should study in detail each set work from the chosen area of study, bearing in mind that musical examples will be credited where appropriate. The list of musical features in the specification can provide a useful checklist when analysing the set works: resources, form, texture, tonality, harmony, melody and rhythm and metre.

When answering the questions in Part B, students will not be expected to draw formal conclusions in their responses, as would be required in an essay. They will be expected to outline relevant points and to discuss each set work in the second sub-section to roughly equal length.

### Part C

Students should be advised to spend around 45 minutes on this part of the examination, remembering that most of this time should be spent on Question 5. Students should have access to a keyboard to check their work in Part C. It is recommended that there should be one keyboard for the use of up to three students.

Question 4 is a practical exercise in harmonic analysis using a short unfamiliar passage of music on three staves: a vocal line (treble or bass clef) and a piano part. This music will not be played to the students.

Question 5 is a creative exercise. Students must select appropriate chords to harmonise a few notes from a given melodic line. They must then devise appropriate melodic lines to complete a satisfactory four-part SATB vocal texture. It is hoped that, as a result of practising this task, all students will have at least a basic grasp of the fundamental principles of harmonisation and part writing. These skills are invaluable to musicians in every genre and should form part of any musical education.



### Part C (Question 4)

Involving the students in the harmonic analysis of their set works when starting each piece will be one of the most effective ways of preparing for this question, but to achieve good responses students will need to have a thorough grasp of keys, chords and non-harmonic notes. This can be developed aurally alongside the visual study of scores. Short tasks in lessons looking at unfamiliar music and describing chord progressions will be useful preparation for this question once the basic information has been learned.

Students will not be given the key of the passage set for this question but will need to identify this for themselves and recognise modulations to closely related keys. Other issues to consider are:

- the relative minor/major
- the dominant and its relative minor/major
- the subdominant and its relative minor/major.

The passage set for analysis in the examination will be in a key with four or fewer sharps/flats.

The harmonic vocabulary students will be expected to recognise will include:

- chords I, V, V7 in root position and all inversions
- chords II and IV in root position and first inversion
- chord VI in root position
- chord II7 and diminished chords in first inversion
- diminished seventh chords.

Students will be expected to identify chords using Roman numerals because this gives a sense of the hierarchy of chords within a key and of chord progression, which cannot be achieved by simply identifying the chord using guitar symbols such as C, Dm and Fm7, for example. Inversions may be labelled b, c or d, or figured bass abbreviations may be used: for example, the first inversion of the tonic chord can be described as Ib or as I6.

Students will also be expected to recognise the following non-harmonic notes:

- passing notes (accented and unaccented)
- auxiliary notes
- anticipations
- suspensions
- appoggiaturas
- échappées (escape notes)
- commonly used ornaments (trill, mordent, turn etc).

### Part C (Question 5)

Only five chords need to be completed in this question but students will still need to work hard to acquire the secure understanding of harmony, harmonic progression and voice leading necessary to achieve a successful outcome.

The soprano part of the musical phrase will be given and the opening of the phrase will be harmonised already. Students will be required to complete this harmonisation. It is expected that each of the five notes to be harmonised will carry a separate chord. In other words, it will not be considered satisfactory for the purposes of this exercise to harmonise successive notes with the same chord. To achieve a good outcome, students will need to build a good cadence for the last two notes, to provide a suitable approach to the cadence and to link the first chord successfully to the given chords.

Each correctly used chord will be awarded two marks. An unsuitable chord will be awarded one mark and such a chord is likely to be a triad that includes the soprano note but does not work in the context of the harmonic progression. A wrong chord, which will achieve no mark, is one which neither works in progression nor is related to the soprano note. Failing to provide two satisfactory cadence chords at the end of the phrase will also be deemed to be wrong.

The basic chords students will be expected to be able to use confidently are:

- I, II, IV and V in root position and first inversion
- VI in root position.

It will be possible to harmonise the given phrase using other chords and this list should not be seen as a limitation on students' exploration of harmony. Students will not be required to label the chords used (I, Vb etc) but simply to complete the passage as a four-part SATB texture.

Students will be expected to use appropriate non-harmonic notes. For the purposes of assessment, 7ths that are correctly prepared and resolved will also be credited as non-harmonic notes. They are essentially a dissonance which does not affect the harmonic function of the other notes in the triad.

The passage set will be in a major or minor key with a key signature of three or fewer sharps/flats. The musical phrase will be expected to conclude with a cadence, but not necessarily a perfect or plagal cadence.

The harmonisation is not designed to be linked to a particular musical style but is designed to assess student understanding of the harmonic principles that have governed most Western tonal music for the past four centuries. For those students progressing to A2, the study of basic harmonisation in Unit 3 will provide them with a firm foundation for the completion of stylistic exercises and give them greater confidence when handling chords and melodic lines in free composition.



### **Part C (Question 5: Part writing)**

Once appropriate chords have been selected it is expected that students will be able to use them to create a satisfactory four-part SATB texture. This means that all parts must make melodic sense and be singable. Over centuries a series of rules and conventions have been accepted and taught to ensure that musical lines in such a four-part texture are satisfactory and it is expected that students will be aware of and observe them. These 'rules' have developed to accommodate the demands of chord progression, melodic logic (of each part) and the relationship of each part with the others. It is easy to find examples in many compositions where the 'rules' have been broken, but this makes them no less valid.

The first problem a student faces is which note in a triad to double to create a four-part texture. Guidance on this can be found in any standard harmony textbook.

In a satisfactory SATB texture, other than in contrapuntal music, it is likely that the outer parts will proceed by a mixture of steps and leaps while the inner-part movement is relatively static. Overlapping of parts between chords and parts crossing within a chord are unnecessary complications which rarely enhance the melodic nature of the inner parts and should be avoided. The part writing is meant to be unobtrusive, allowing the harmonic progression to be clear, so the melodic use of augmented and diminished intervals is to be discouraged since they add a dramatic tension that is inappropriate in this context.

Consecutive octaves should also be avoided, primarily because these reduce the four-part texture to three effective parts. Consecutive fifths should similarly be avoided because they draw attention to the bare sound of this interval, which weakens the overall sense of tonality. The bare sound of fifths and octaves is also the reason why exposed fifths and octaves should be avoided: that is the upper part leaping in similar motion with the bass part to the interval of an octave or fifth.



## Unit 4: Extended Performance

There were formerly two performance papers at A2 Level: Paper 41 (Solo recital) and Paper 52 (Performing during the course). These have been replaced with a single activity, internally assessed by the centre and externally moderated by Edexcel.

The new Unit 4 consists of one 12–15 minute extended performance. Students offer a balanced programme of music, performing as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble. Note that written programme notes are *not* required.

### What Units 1 and 4 have in common

There are many similarities between Units 1 and 4, not least the shared assessment criteria. Accordingly, much of the advice offered for students preparing for Unit 1 is relevant to Unit 4.

Please therefore re-read the following sections under Unit 1 in the specification:

- Performance from a score
- Improvised performance
- Ensemble performance
- Use of accompaniment
- Difficulty of pieces.

### Special features of Unit 4

- Students are expected to perform for 12–15 minutes, considerably longer than for Unit 1, presenting a balanced, coherent programme of music. A greater level of technical assurance and maturity of style, interpretation and communication is expected for Unit 4. (As mentioned above, written programme notes are not required.)
- Students are expected to perform continuously for 12–15 minutes and not piece together their submissions over a number of performance occasions. However, their whole 12–15 minute submission may be performed and recorded (or re-performed and re-recorded) at any time during the course.
- Students may perform as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble.
- The expected difficulty of pieces offered is taken to correspond to Grade 6 of the graded examinations of such bodies as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music, Trinity Guildhall, Rockschoo and the London College of Music. Grade 6 represents Standard level (S).

Students who perform pieces above Grade 6 are awarded additional credit. There are now two difficulty levels higher than S, in order to acknowledge the achievement of those students who technically exceed the set standard. The marks awarded for a Grade 7 piece will be scaled to More Difficult (MD) level and the marks awarded for a piece at Grade 8 or above will be scaled to Higher (H) level according to the scaling grid in the specification.

- The extended performance as a whole is awarded a mark out of 50.
- Individual pieces are marked out of 40 as they were for Unit 1, using the same two sets of assessment criteria, one for performances from a score, the other for improvised performances.
- As indicated in the specification, begin marking by using the *holistic assessment criterion* (out of 40) to give an overall reflection of each piece. Then use the five detailed assessment criteria (each out of 8) to report on specific aspects of technique and expression, before reconciling the totals arrived at by these different routes.
- Finally, you must assess the structure and planning of the programme and your overall musical impression of the extended performance using *Criterion 6: The performance as a whole*. You will then arrive at a final mark out of 50 for the recital as a whole.

### **Extended performance or recital?**

Simply for ease of reference, people will often refer to the extended performance for Unit 4 as a *recital* (even though this is not the word that springs to mind when a kit drummer plans to present a programme of ensemble music). In the end, if the word recital carries with it implications of public or semi-public performance, sense of occasion, extended, thoughtful preparation and sense of achievement for the performer, then it's appropriate for any kind of submission likely to be offered for Unit 4!

### **Simplification of assessment and administration**

Detailed written commentaries explaining your marking are no longer required. You'll be free to write a short comment on each piece, or the recital as a whole, but only if you think this is necessary. Otherwise, all you need to do is to enter the appropriate marks on the mark sheet. (It will be clear how this is done when you see the exemplar material in *Getting Started, part 2*.)

The mark sheet lists all the various criteria in full. For each piece, you simply select your preferred mark for each criterion. This is more straightforward than in the past, because each descriptor now carries only one mark. (If you think a piece is 'outstanding', you don't need to hesitate between a mark of 7 or 8, you just give it 8.)

### **Creating a balanced, coherent programme**

Your students need to prepare a balanced programme of music. This might consist of music from several different periods of music, works in different styles, or pieces of differing mood. Variety could also be achieved by playing pieces with contrasts of tempo or dynamic. The latter would be most important if the music was all in one style or from the same period of music. If a single work such as a concerto or sonata is chosen, students should make sure that there is sufficient variety and contrast in the various movements.

Students may choose to use graded examination pieces as part of a chronologically-based programme. Alternatively, pieces might relate to a theme (such as dance music through the ages) or be linked to a particular area of study. Rock groups may plan to present a programme of 'covers' in a variety of moods and tempo, or a jazz pianist may present a selection of improvisations in a variety of styles.

Here are some examples of well-balanced programmes.

Programme 1	Programme 2	Programme 3
<p>A recital using two instruments based on dance music throughout the ages.</p> <p><b>Bach: Sarabande from B minor suite</b> (<i>Flute</i>)</p> <p><b>Chopin: Waltz in A minor</b> (<i>Piano</i>)</p> <p><b>Debussy: Sarabande from 'Pour le Piano'</b> (<i>Piano</i>)</p> <p><b>Richard Rodney Bennett: Two country dances</b> (<i>Flute with piano accompaniment played by the teacher</i>)</p>	<p>A chronologically-based piano recital using mainly Grade 6 exam pieces. The student has inserted a baroque prelude to balance the classical, romantic and modern pieces.</p> <p><b>Bach: Prelude in C major</b></p> <p><b>Beethoven: Sonata in F minor WoO 47—First movement</b> (<i>Larghetto moderato &amp; Allegro assai</i>)</p> <p><b>Suk: Melodie</b> (<i>Andante</i>)</p> <p><b>Harvey: Rhumba toccata</b> (<i>Presto agitato</i>)</p>	<p>Four jazz ensemble improvisations on jazz standards inspired by the moon, in a variety of styles, moods and tempos.</p> <p>The candidate performs with piano, kit and double bass.</p> <p><b>Fly Me to the Moon</b> (<i>Medium swing tempo</i>)</p> <p><b>Moon River</b> (<i>Slow jazz waltz</i>)</p> <p><b>That Old Devil Moon</b> (<i>Up-tempo be-bop style</i>)</p>

Students may perform on one or more instruments if there is a good reason for doing so. Marks are not awarded for versatility as such. They are awarded for the quality of the performance(s) and the balance of the programme. The contrast achieved by merely playing a second instrument is minimal and no substitute for a balanced musical programme.

Students should consider the stamina required to perform for 12–15 minutes. It is advisable to start with a piece that they feel particularly confident with. The most substantial piece should not be left to the end but should be in the middle, when concentration is at its height and the performer has had a chance to 'warm up'. Ending a performance with a short, relatively easy and familiar piece is a good idea, particular as students may be tiring, their lip may be going etc.

### Length of Unit 4 extended performance

Each student must perform for between 12 and 15 minutes. However, if a student wishes to play for longer than 15 minutes to demonstrate their performance skills more fully, they may do so. The piece(s) should be performed unabridged, except for any long repeats, or cuts in the accompaniment only.

Students should time their performances carefully. The minimum requirement in terms of length is *12 minutes' actual playing time*. It is not fair to assess those students who fulfil the specification requirement and those who fall short of it in the same way. Accordingly, for each half minute that any student falls short of this requirement you must make a reduction of two marks. For example, a student who performs for 1 minute 20 seconds in total has fallen short by three half minutes. If you have awarded a final mark of 28/50, this will need to be reduced by 6 (3 x 2) to 22/50. If a reduction for a short submission has to be made, this is done at the end of the marking process after the averaging of marks for the various pieces and the addition of marks for Criterion 6.

No piece(s) offered for Unit 1 may be resubmitted for Unit 4.

### **Audience**

The music must be performed to the teacher and at least one other person; however, a larger audience may be present with the students' consent.

### **Items for submission**

Please see the list provided for Unit 1. The requirements for Unit 4 are the same.

### **Marking procedure**

The marking procedure is essentially the same as for Unit 1. For each piece, use the holistic assessment criterion (out of 40) to give an overall reflection of the performance of the piece and then use all five detailed assessment criteria (each out of 8) to report on specific aspects of technique and expression, before reconciling the totals arrived at by these different routes. When you have marked and scaled each piece out of 40, calculate the average to produce a single mark out of 40. Finally, consider Criterion 6: The performance as a whole and add a mark out of 10 to arrive at your final mark (out of 50) for this unit.

*Criterion 6 is unique to Unit 4 and recognises the advanced interpretative and planning skills that are expected at A2 Level. It is used to assess the structure and planning of the programme and offers you the opportunity to give your musical impression of the performance as a whole.*

As previously stated, any deduction for a short submission should be made at the end of the marking process, after the averaging of marks for the various pieces and the addition of marks for Criterion 6.

## Unit 5: Composition and Technical Study

### Overview

Students opting for composition in Unit 5 may either:

- compose two pieces each based on a brief — one taken from the Instrumental Music area of study and one from Applied Music

or

- compose one piece based on any one of the area of study briefs (and of course also submit a technical study).

The requirements for the pieces themselves are broadly similar to those for Unit 2.

To summarise:

- students will compose a piece lasting three minutes (or two pieces lasting three minutes each) based on the briefs which will be issued in September
- fourteen hours of supervised time is allocated to the completion of each piece (note: not 15 as in Unit 2)
- work must be submitted as a score and as a recording on CD or MiniDisk™. Time taken recording the piece does not count as part of the 14 hours
- students may prepare and print their score using computer software or they may provide a handwritten copy. The score may take a form appropriate to the style of music
- recordings may be made live, or they may employ computer software using General MIDI sounds, virtual instruments or samples.

A written sleeve note is not required for this unit.

*Teachers are referred to the advice in Unit 2 on the management of composition coursework.*

But please note also when planning ahead for the A2 year that if a student decides to offer the two-composition option in Unit 5, they will require much more time under controlled conditions than if they offered one composition and one technical study (or two technical studies).

The controlled conditions time for each technical study is three hours. Not all this time may be necessary to complete a technical study, but students should be free to use the full allocation if they require it. The three hours may be divided into several sessions on different days, but if you and your students find it convenient to complete the exercise at a single sitting (in exam fashion if you wish) this is excellent, and will help avoid any risk of candidates' colluding. Whether or not the technical study is completed in exam fashion, students may have access to a score-writing package such as Sibelius and/or to an instrument on which to try out their work. One keyboard (with headphones) between two or three candidates should be quite adequate in most cases.

## The composition briefs

A greater level of sophistication and technical assurance will be expected for Unit 5 and the briefs reflect this by being more exacting. There is a choice of four briefs, based on the two areas of study prescribed for A2. Each area of study is divided into two topics, each with a brief.

Students are free to work in any compositional style of their choice and in any vocal and/or instrumental medium including technology.

The area of study Instrumental Music *is not confined to the western classical tradition for the purposes of Unit 5* but students working in a popular or jazz style should be made fully aware of the demands of the two topics and avoid offering just extended improvisations and recorded 'jam sessions'. In other words, work submitted for this unit needs to be more than a vehicle for performance, even a virtuoso one and students writing in popular styles should be directed towards the work of composers who have combined improvisation with compositional rigour, for example Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus, Thelonius Monk, Courtney Pine, Joe Satriani and Carlos Santana.

### Topic 1: Development and contrast

As the title implies, the emphasis here is on the development of musical ideas and the ways in which themes and motifs can be extended and manipulated within musical structures. This extends the scope of the variations which formed the basis of the topic at AS. Such structures might include variations as well as fugue, sonata and rondo form, the manipulation of note rows, the transformation of ideas in minimalism and the extension of melodies and chord progressions through the medium of jazz and rock improvisation.

In all of these cases the musical structure is dependent as much upon the management of texture and timbre as upon the processes of musical development. The ability to write effectively for the medium forms an important part of the task.

Useful models drawn from the *New Anthology of Music (NAM)* under this area of study might include:

- Wagner — Prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*
- Webern — Quartet Op. 22: movement I
- Shostakovich — String Quartet No. 8, Op. 110: movement I
- Reich — *New York Counterpoint*: movement II
- Brahms — Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34: movement III
- Mozart — Piano Sonata in B flat, K. 333: movement I
- Shostakovich — Prelude and Fugue in A, Op. 87 No. 7
- Miles Davis Quintet — *Four* (opening).



Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside the anthology, for example:

- Bach — 48 Preludes and Fugues and The Art of Fugue
- Beethoven — Sonata Op 13 (Pathétique) finale (rondo)
- Bartók — String quartets nos 4 and 5
- Stravinsky — *In memoriam Dylan Thomas*
- Steve Reich — *Different Trains and Drumming*
- Duke Ellington — *Black, Brown and Beige and Far East Suite*
- Charles Mingus — *Pithecanthropus Erectus*.

**Study for this brief** should include the techniques of developing melodic and motivic ideas through rhythmic means (variation, diminution and augmentation) and melodic transformations (modulation, extension, inversion and fragmentation). Students should also explore counter-melody, canon and fugal developments as well as larger-scale examples of melodic repetition and development, such as rondo and sonata. Those choosing to work within a pop or jazz idiom should study the techniques of chordal extensions and 'playing away from the chord'. Those approaching the topic through minimalism should study the techniques of phasing and permutation. Those employing serial techniques should explore rotations and other transformations of the row.

### **The sample brief: some hints**

Compose a piece using a conventional sonata structure or a form of your own devising in which thematic ideas are contrasted and developed.

Although preparatory exercises for this brief may legitimately be of a largely technical nature, the aim in the submission must be to produce an engaging piece of music. In most music which employs these developmental devices the transformations and processes, however complex, are rarely in the foreground of the listener's attention.

For many students this may be their first attempt at a movement of this sophistication and it might be helpful to adopt a model. This is not plagiarism because the aim is not to copy out the other composer's ideas but to analyse the work and learn from it. The analysis may reveal a basic structure, for example slow introduction, strident theme, transition, lyrical theme, rhythmic development in three sections, recapitulation with varied repeats, coda. Such a scheme could be re-used or adapted.

## Topic 2: Exploiting instruments

For this topic the student should compose a piece which exploits and develops the potential of the forces. It may involve a study or toccata, as in the example brief, or it may involve a piece with a written-out cadenza or other demanding improvisatory material, or it may involve extended instrumental techniques.

This is not a performance unit and students should be warned against over-reliance on technical display. They should aim to compose a structure in which the potential of the instruments can be developed, for example an étude with a bravura opening and a cantabile middle section.

This topic may well prove attractive to the confident performer able to write an effective piece to play themselves. In the absence of suitably skilled performers, a MIDI 'mock-up' will suffice but students need to be particularly wary of MIDI-entered parts — the music may be technically difficult but it must be playable and idiomatic.

Useful models drawn from the anthology under this area of study might include:

- Tippett — Concerto for Double String Orchestra: movement I
- Cage — Sonatas and Interludes for Prepared Piano: Sonatas I–III
- Brahms — Piano Quintet in F minor, Op. 34: movement III
- Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five — *West End Blues*
- Miles Davis Quintet — *Four* (opening).

Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside the anthology, for example;

- Bach — Chromatic Fantasia
- Czerny — studies for piano
- instrumental concerti of the 18th and 19th centuries.
- Chopin, Liszt, Debussy — Etudes
- Berio — *Sequenzas*
- the work of Miles Davis and John Coltrane, Joe Satriani and Carlos Santana.

It may also be helpful to study the structure and approach to instrumental writing in the pieces set for the graded examinations, including those of Rockschool, as these are designed to make specific performing demands.

**Study for this brief** should include an understanding of the capabilities of the forces beyond the mere functional. Works should be studied which exploit timbre, compass and range, articulation, melodic figurations (and chordal configurations if appropriate) and any special instrumental techniques such as pedalling, techniques for bowing strings and pizzicato, the use of mutes and different types of articulation for wind instruments. If amplified instruments are written for then the use of outboards and effects should be studied.

Students should be able to extend melodic ideas and their underlying harmonies by elaborating with arpeggios, scalar patterns and changes of register. They should be able to set these ideas within a convincing structure.



### The sample brief: some hints

Compose a study or toccata for one melody instrument plus piano or two/three melody instruments. It should exploit the potential of the chosen forces and include contrasting sections (for example a virtuoso opening and a cantabile middle section).

After choosing the instruments and researching their characteristics the most important consideration will be to devise a strong structure with a convincing and forward-moving harmonic scheme otherwise there is a danger that the piece will ramble from one flashy idea to the next. Having devised a scheme, it may prove relatively easy to 'fill in' the chords with melodic figurations and elaborations as suited to the instruments.

As with Topic 1, there is a possibility that the student will be handicapped by their own limited instrumental technique. However, they should be reassured by the fact that most composers write successfully for instruments they cannot play themselves. A secure knowledge of the forces is much more important than a secure technique.

**Applied Music** is the area of study introduced at A2 and covers music written for the stage, film, television, religious and cultural occasions and other social purposes, for example dance.

The two topics draw on two of these contexts:

- music for film and television
- music, dance and theatre.

### Topic 3: Music for film and television

Students opting for film and TV music may find the AS topic Composing expressively, a helpful preparation. They will not be required to work to specific timings, nor to work to, or produce, a video clip. The brief may involve composing a piece of underscore to follow a succession of scenes, or a title theme, or a library of extracts for a specific purpose, for example a documentary.

Some of the preparation for this topic might be covered by study for Units 3 and/or 6 and associated film score(s) from *NAM*. Students need to be aware of the conventions of music for the moving image and to produce pieces which have a convincing emotional impact. They should avoid sound effects and attempting to depict the narrative of the story by illustrating it with over-literal musical devices.

There is no requirement in this unit to produce a written commentary and it will therefore be helpful if the score can be annotated with cues and other information about the visual content.

Useful models drawn from the anthology under this area of study will of course include the six film extracts from *NAM*.

Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside the anthology, for example:

- CD anthologies of film and TV themes
- CDs of work by leading film composers, for example Ennio Morricone, Bernard Herrman, John Williams, Jerry Goldsmith
- DVDs of films across a range of genres including action, costume drama, suspense, fantasy, comedy, sci-fi.

There is a dearth of teaching material for this subject at this level and there are few scores available. The Curriculum 2000 GCE Music Technology specification included film music as an area of study and copies of past examination papers will provide a clue to the approach; a review of the set films with the examination papers and their mark schemes would constitute a useful scheme of work.

**Study for this brief** should include the devices employed by film and TV composers to generate an emotional effect. It is important to be able to make a transition from one mood to another (called a bridge). This might include the use of harmony, dissonance and modulation including tertiary modulations, of which film composers are fond and there are good examples in *Passport to Pimlico* (NAM) and *Titanic* (NAM). Examples of rhythmic elements used to generate a climax can be found in *Planet of the Apes* (NAM). Students might also study melody writing in film (the scores of John Williams would make a good start). Structural considerations will be different for this topic; the music will be expected to set a scene and follow the action as a convincing emotional journey rather than follow a standard musical form, such as ternary, although a title theme, if required in the brief, may have a more formalised structure.

Preparation for the brief should include a range of film composers and film genres as well as music for 'standard' dramatic situations: suspense, chases, fights and battles, romantic scenes, the beginnings and ends of journeys, landscapes (including sci-fi landscapes). It might also be worth studying the music of period and historical dramas. This is seldom truly authentic but manages to convey the general feel of the musical styles of the period concerned (but note: this approach would not be appropriate for the technical studies in this unit!).

### **The sample brief: some hints**

*Compose music to underscore a sequence from a wildlife film in which an arid desert is watered by a sudden storm, followed by the growth of plants into abundant life.*

First, devise a timeline for the composition. This does not need to include exact timings but the general proportions of the sequence should be worked out (that is, how much time will be allocated to each section). It might help to set up a template on the computer arrange window, or draw a blank score.

Secondly, decide on the musical content. With what type of music will the images be underscored? Decide on a style and then choose which of the musical elements of that style will be exploited: melody, harmony, texture and timbre, rhythm?

Think about the joins. Will the transition from one scene to another be gradual or sudden?

Remember that in film and TV music understatement can be more telling than over-dramatic gestures.



## Topic 4: Music, dance and theatre

Although this is potentially a very wide-ranging topic, the briefs will be fairly open-ended and allow the student to focus on a particular, limited 'specialist' area (for example a dance movement from a baroque suite, or a piece of contemporary electronic club dance). Nonetheless, study for this unit could cover a broad canvas and, so far as time permits, students should be aware of the breadth of the topic. This might cover opera, ballet and contemporary dance, musicals, instrumental dance music (the baroque suite, the minuet and trio and the romantic miniature) and social dance including ballroom styles and dance styles related to contemporary popular music, jazz and world music.

Students may work in any style and with any combination of forces. The brief might facilitate a composition based around an operatic aria or show song as easily as an instrumental or electronic piece.

Useful models drawn from *NAM* under this area of study might include:

- Wagner — Prelude to *Tristan und Isolde*
- Stravinsky — Pulcinella Suite: Sinfonia, Gavotta and Vivo
- J. S. Bach — Partita No. 4 in D, BWV 828: Sarabande and Gigue
- Purcell — 'Thy hand, Belinda' and 'When I am laid in earth' from *Dido and Aeneas*
- Gershwin — 'Summertime' from *Porgy and Bess*
- Duke Ellington and his Orchestra — *Black and Tan Fantasy*
- Niall Keegan — Tom McElvogue's (jig) and New Irish Barndance (reel)
- Mustapha Tettey Addy (Ghana) — Agbekor Dance.

Students might also explore the ideas, devices and techniques employed in works outside *NAM*. The scope here is huge and could take in opera, ballet and the stage musical. You will need to limit the field and concentrate on particular areas, for example:

- the ballet scores of Tchaikovsky and Stravinsky
- musicals with a strong element of song and dance (eg *West Side Story*, *Cabaret*, *A Chorus Line*, *Chicago*)
- operas in which there is an element of dance or a ballroom scene: Mozart (*Don Giovanni*), Verdi (*Il Trovatore*, *La Traviata*), Strauss (*Die Fledermaus*), Tchaikovsky (*Eugene Onegin*).

Or students might study instrumental dance pieces:

- Bach — The French and English suites
- minuets and trios from Mozart and Haydn symphonies
- dance miniatures for piano by Chopin.

Popular music, jazz and world music would provide a source of study for many social dance styles including Latin (tango, salsa and Latino), flamenco, bhangra, swing jazz, rock n roll and jive, disco, traditional Scottish and Irish dance (including Riverdance) and the many styles of electronic club dance.

**Study for this brief** should include the characteristics of dance music, in particular its rhythmic structures and how these are adapted according to context, whether theatrical, social or for concert performance.

Many dance forms are based on the idiomatic features of the instruments involved, for example Latin percussion, the Irish fiddle, the computer-looped sample, the left hand part of a Chopin mazurka.

Structure should also be explored. Many dance forms rely on repetition and some effort will need to be made to create a strong, varied form for the piece. If this cannot be achieved harmonically, then melodic, textural or rhythmic contrast should be aimed for.

### **The sample brief: some hints**

Compose a piece of dance music influenced by non-Western-classical tradition(s) (eg Latin American). The dance may be for social purposes (eg a tango) or for the stage or it may be a piece of club dance music using technology.

The crucial element in this brief is the inclusion of ideas drawn from a non-Western tradition and this would need to be decided upon first. Research and make a list of dance styles and genres influenced by non-Western cultures.

Alternatively, the student might decide on a musical style and an instrumental or vocal medium — those with which the student feels most comfortable — and work backwards from there.

Pinpointing the chief characteristics of the style and developing its influences will form an important part of this brief. In much non-Western music the interest tends to be on timbre, melody and rhythm rather than on harmony (which is often quite simple) and structure (which is often quite repetitive), but students should be reminded of the compulsory assessment criteria and the importance of meeting them.

## **Assessment**

Most of what was written for Unit 2 applies again here in particular the advice that in order to achieve high marks students will need to score quite highly in most, if not all, the criteria, and that it is important to ensure that the piece satisfies the compulsory criteria (quality of ideas and outcome, coherence, forces and textures) as well as two of the optional ones (harmony, melody, rhythm).

The mark for this unit is 80 (40 marks for each piece). No sleeve note is required for Unit 5.

A student-friendly mark scheme should be devised along the lines of those suggested for Unit 2. Expectations will be higher at A2 than for AS. Indeed, teachers might make a checklist of their own in order to prepare students for the increased demands of this unit.

*Quality of ideas and outcome* implies a generally wider technical vocabulary across all the criteria: the ability to extend and develop ideas, to manage textural devices (such as imitation and antiphony) with security, to handle more sophisticated modulations and other harmonic procedures (such as dissonance) and to employ a wider range of structural devices. Overall, the piece should have a sense of wholeness rather than being a succession of connected ideas. As with AS compositions, pieces at this level will lose marks if they are under length. Students should aim at two three-minute pieces, not a six-minute package made up of two unequal ones.



*Coherence:* Students should be encouraged to develop more complex formal structures in place of the formulae that might have been adopted for their AS composition, for example a basic ABA ternary. A confident start and a satisfying ending will help but check that the piece doesn't get lost in the middle. Be wary of over-reliance on cut-and-paste as a means of extending the composition on a computer.

*Forces and texture:* The students' knowledge of the forces should be wider at this level and they should ensure both that their capabilities are exploited and that the writing is sympathetic to the instrument and the intended player. Textures should be varied and interesting and this may involve more sophisticated counterpoint with more parts or the inclusion of countermelodies. In a popular style, make sure there is adequate variety in the backing.

*Harmony* should be more sophisticated at this level. This means a wider vocabulary of chords and inversions than those they employed for AS. The ability to handle more complex instances of dissonance might be developed. In a jazz or pop idiom this might include more complex added chords and chordal substitutions. Modulations may be more sophisticated in terms of the way each is approached and exited. Modulations may be to more remote keys.

*Melody* at AS level can sometimes be stiff and formulaic, especially in the hands of less able students. Here it should have greater flow and also contrast. Take time to work melodic exercises and analyse the melodies of other composers (all of which can be done outside the 14 hours' supervised time) and sing or play melodies.

*Rhythm:* Interest here can be a saving grace at GCSE or AS Level in pieces where the harmony and structure are rather basic. Rhythmic unity plays a far more important role in the structure of music than is often given credit. Unity is achieved through the repetition of rhythmic ideas. It gives interest and life to baroque 'florid' counterpoint. It is constantly varied in the backings of popular songs. It is a prime element of most world music. It may be helpful to widen the students' rhythmic vocabulary to include devices such as changes of metre, greater syncopation or polyrhythm, but the most important lesson to be learned is the need for variety. One way of achieving this is to perform a Bach fugue, a Beethoven sonata or a popular song by just clapping the rhythms.

## Unit 5b

Students can, if they wish, offer any one or two technical studies from a range of three topics. (A 'technical study' is an exercise in stylistic harmony, or what was termed in Curriculum 2000 a 'compositional technique'.)

Two of these topics have a long history in Music GCE: two-part baroque counterpoint and chorale harmonisation. Experience of them is welcomed by some higher education institutions but not every teacher of Music GCE feels drawn to teaching them. If such teaching falls to you, but you feel unprepared or ill at ease, see page **xx** for some suggested resources.

### The nature of the tasks

*Topic 1: Baroque counterpoint* has much in common with Option A(i) from the Curriculum 2000 Paper 51 but students will now have to supply a bass with figuring to a given melody in part(s) of the exercise as well as adding elsewhere a melody part above a given bass and figuring. So the new type of test quite deliberately probes the ability to recognise harmonic implications and make chord choices in a way that Option A(i) did not.

Those who know Option B(i) in the Curriculum 2000 Paper 51 will be on familiar ground when tackling the post-2008 *Topic 2: Chorale* — in fact, the new specimen question comes straight from the 2005 Paper 51. Topic 2 exercises will normally require between 8 and 10 bars of soprano part to be harmonised, just as in Paper 51. Modal chorales and chorales in 3/4 time are now explicitly excluded from the assessment.

*Topic 3: Popular song* is more directly comparable with Topic 1 than the old Paper 51 Option B(ii) (the 32-bar pop song) was with Option A(i). In one or more passages, students will add a melody part (without words) to a given bass with chord symbols and elsewhere supply a bass part with chord symbols to a given melody.

### Administration and supervision

As the specification indicates, work for Unit 5b must be done under 'controlled conditions'. The allowance of 3 hours per technical study is a maximum: any student who is really sure that they have finished the study in less time than the full 3 hours is free to submit it when it is ready. Each technical study task is based on material set by Edexcel, issued in September of the examination's academic year. The document for the Unit 5 will be kept securely until required for use on the specified day(s) in April or May.

Students must be able to try out their technical studies as they work on them. If desired, students can sit at desks in examination fashion as for Section C of Unit 3 and try out their work on keyboards, using headphones (in which case it is recommended that one keyboard is provided for each three or four students). If computers are to be used (with score-writing packages such as Sibelius), each student must have access to a separate computer and headphones must be used.

## Working on Topic 1: Baroque counterpoint

### Approaching the topic through sound

Students should listen to (play if possible) and absorb appropriate music in early 18th-century style. Appropriate music includes two-part writing for melody instrument and bass by Handel (for example his Opus 1 sonatas), Vivaldi and Corelli (even though, strictly speaking, some of Corelli's works are pre-18th century). Less well known composers, such as Barsanti and Schickhardt (the composer of the specimen question), are well worth exploring. It's not expected that music by JS Bach, which is often peculiarly complex, will be used in assessing Topic 1.

Look mainly at suites and sonatas. The simpler dance movements are excellent to begin with but more complex writing, as you can see from the specimen question, will feature in Unit 5 assessments.

### Figuring and harmony

In Unit 3 students learn about basic harmony largely in terms of Roman numeral names (I, V etc). Figuring, on the other hand, works in terms of intervals from the bass — for example, C major chord Ib — or any other triad in first inversion — is described as a six-three, because such a chord (E G C, for example) has a sixth above the bass (E–C) and a third above the bass (E–G).

But adding a part above a figured bass is not just a matter of counting. To do the job intelligently and musically students need to be aware of what harmonies and keys are implied by the given figures. This will also help when they come to add a figured bass below a given melody.

If you haven't already done so in teaching the anthology, explain the origin and significance of the figured bass system in baroque music and how it showed a keyboard or lute player what chords to play to complete the musical texture. Make sure they realise from the outset that figuring was a form of shorthand. It told players what chords to play but not the exact arrangement of the parts. If they were required to play a six-three chord over an E, for example, they knew that they should play the notes E, G and C but not which was at the top of the texture, whether any note should be doubled and so on.

Figuring was generally abbreviated: for instance, a six-three was generally indicated by the single numeral 6 and a five-three chord was not normally figured at all unless a note needed chromatic alteration. Sometimes things were left vague or incomplete (on the assumption that players were likely to have plenty of knowledge and experience). Modern editions often clarify 18th-century figuring with additional numerals; similarly, exercises set for Unit 5 will be comprehensively figured (as were those set for Curriculum 2000 Paper 51).

When working with figuring, students don't always realise the full implication of the baroque system of abbreviation. For example, where the bass is figured just 6, they can if they wish write a 3rd above the bass in their melody part rather than a 6th (after all, the figuring 6 is short for six-three). Similarly, if the bass has A and the figuring is 4 3, the added melody might play D C (the D, a suspension, having been prepared!) but an E (the 5 missing from the abbreviated figuring) is possible, or even another A to double the bass.

In short, when you add a melody above a given figured bass you have to choose at each moment between several possible notes implied by the stated figuring.

### **Intervals and lines**

Completing an exercise in baroque counterpoint involves much more than choosing a succession of notes to fit the figuring.

Students must always think about the harmonic intervals between the two parts. As a general principle, thirds and sixths sound better than 'bare' fifths and octaves but the latter, especially octaves, work well at beginnings and endings of phrases and sometimes on weaker beats.

Above all, completing a baroque counterpoint exercise is about writing a coherent, stylish line. Most students need much guidance with this. It often helps if they begin by adding just one or two notes per bar, to establish a melodic framework that can then be elaborated. Often it's effective to link two 'fixed points' with scalar movement. A little experience of old-fashioned species counterpoint can sometimes help students learn how to build a line (here they begin by adding one note against one, then two against one, four against one and so on).

### **How work will be marked**

Examiners will use the assessment criteria printed in Section 5.7 of the specification, specifically the holistic criterion and criteria 1 to 6. They will also be provided with additional guidance specific to each year's baroque counterpoint question.

A marked working of the specimen question for Topic 1 will be included in *Getting Started, part 2*.

## **Working on Topic 2: Chorale**

### **Approaching the topic through sound**

Students should listen to and sing (if possible) some of Bach's harmonisations of chorales and try to absorb the characteristic sound. It's useful to listen to or play chorales on the piano but the style is captured best of all by listening to chorale-based movements from cantatas and through singing.

Begin, perhaps, with the fourth movement of Bach's Cantata No. 48 (*NAM*) or the final movement of Bach's Cantata No. 80, 'Ein feste Burg'. You could also play a recording of 'Jesu, joy of man's desiring', the well-known movement from Cantata No. 147, or of an organ chorale prelude, to show how Bach loved elaborate treatment of chorales as well as more straightforward four-part harmonisations.

If at all possible, each student should have access to a copy of Riemenschneider's collection of 371 chorales.

### **Building on Unit 3**

Students should understand the basic principles of harmonisation and part writing after having studied Unit 3, Section C. Their work on chorales will essentially be extension and refinement of this. They will need a wider vocabulary of chords although Bach often works chords I and V(7) and their inversions surprisingly hard. They must know how to identify the key of a chorale, not just at its beginning and end but elsewhere and therefore they must be able to modulate to closely related keys. They must try to imitate Bach's style, notably by using characteristic chord progressions and effective quaver movement with passing notes and if possible some suspensions.

### From cadences to complete phrases

Begin with cadences and their immediate approaches. The majority of phrases end with perfect cadences; most of the rest have imperfect cadences. Once students can write such cadences reliably in a variety of major and minor keys, consider characteristic approaches and build up three- and four-chord successions such as Ib–V–I and Ib–II7b–V–I. Students may not realise that Bach didn't just think of Ib–II7b–V–I 'vertically' as four chords, however, but regarded as essential the 'horizontal' element (the part writing or voice leading). So, for example, in Ib–II7b–V–I the seventh of II7b must be sounded beforehand in the same voice part ('prepared') and then resolved by step downwards.

When working complete phrases, students must identify key(s) first. Does the phrase begin and end in the same key? If there's a modulation, this often comes quite early on.

After the keys have been identified, a bass part should be added to define suitable harmonic progressions. (Incidentally, any consecutive fifths or octaves with the soprano, which should be easy to see and hear, are sure signs that the harmonic progression is faulty.) The bass part must be shapely and stylish, normally with some quaver movement. The alto and tenor should be added as a single operation. Although it's not always easy to achieve pleasing melodic lines in inner parts, this must be each student's aim, as it was Bach's.

### How work will be marked

Examiners will use the assessment criteria printed in Section 5.7 of the specification, specifically the holistic criterion and criteria 1 to 6. They will also be provided with additional guidance specific to each year's chorale question.

A marked working of the specimen question for Topic 2 will be included in *Getting Started, part 2*.

## Working on Topic 3: Popular song

### Approaching the topic through sound

Students should listen to and if possible sing and/or play popular music in ballad song style, with a lyrical melody, regular chord changes of one or more per bar and modulation(s). Pieces with a limited vocabulary based largely on chords I, V and IV (notably music based on the 12-bar blues) will be valuable practice material in the early stages, but lack the harmonic variety required for Unit 5. More useful material includes songs by Elton John, Billy Joel and Carol King, for example.

### Chord symbols and their realisation

Chord symbols such as C, G7 and Em7 are used chiefly as a kind of shorthand for guitarists and keyboard players, to show what chords they should play. Right from the start students must know how to identify what notes belong to each chord (for example Em7 = E G B and D).

Most commonly the note named at the start of a chord symbol is the most important (the 'root'). When completing a bass part in accordance with given chord symbols, students should as a rule begin with and emphasise the root of each chord — for example, where the symbols C, Em7 and F are given, the notes C, E and F, as the roots, deserve emphasis.

Things are different with 'slash' chords, however. Here it is the note following the slash that is of principal importance: where you see Em/G, for instance, G will generally appear prominently in the bass; with Em7/D, D will be the main bass note. (This is all because 'slash chords' are chords where the root is not in the bass — many are first inversions, for example.)

Students needn't use just one bass note per chord symbol; in fact, where the harmonic rhythm is moderately slow or slower, it's a very good idea to be more ambitious. (The bars given complete at the start of an exercise will help to suggest an appropriate degree of elaboration.) Where the bass has more than one note per chord symbol, the 'added' note(s) may belong to the chord, or may be non-chord notes, especially passing notes. For instance, where the chord symbol is Dm, you might use the notes D A, D F, D F A, or D E F.

When completing a melody part above a bass with chord symbols, students can select from the notes belonging to the prevailing chord. So, for example, a bass E with the symbol Em7 might have one or more of the notes E, G, B or D above it (and/or one or more non-chord notes).

## Harmony

Chord progressions important in traditional harmony are sometimes used in popular songs (as where the chord C7 at the end of a turnaround moves to F at a D.C. in V7–I fashion). It's quite legitimate therefore to relate chords to keys through use of Roman numerals rather than working in an harmonic and tonal vacuum or simply hoping for the best. For example, Em7 can be heard as chord I with added minor seventh if we're in the key of E minor, as a III7 (perhaps giving a slightly modal feel to the music) if we're in C.

Nevertheless, the harmony of much popular music isn't functional in the baroque and classical sense. There's a great deal of freedom and moves between chords which are 'unrelated' in classical terms can be effective in giving colour and atmosphere. When completing exercises for Unit 5, students should observe the character of the harmony given and take this into account when adding their own chords.

## Intervals and lines

In popular music, dissonant (non-triadic) notes — for example the D in Em7 — are not always prepared and resolved as such notes are in baroque and classical styles. But students should always aim to treat dissonant notes logically, rather than moving to or from them haphazardly. 'Logically' tends to mean much what it means in classical styles — for instance, a dissonant note can often be sounded as a consonance before it is heard as dissonances (ie prepared) or it can be approached by step from above or by ascending leap in appoggiatura fashion.

Completing a popular song exercise involves more than choosing a succession of notes to fit the chord symbols or working blindly from note to note when a melody is being added. Thought must be given to the harmonic intervals between the two parts. Octaves, 5ths, 3rds and 6ths often sound well, except where dissonant non-chord notes occur (passing notes, appoggiaturas and so on).

Above all, completing an exercise is about writing two coherent, stylish lines which interact well together. Most students are likely to need much guidance with this. It often helps if they begin by adding just one or two notes per bar, to establish a framework for future elaboration. Sometimes it's effective to link two 'fixed points' with scalar movement. A little experience of old-fashioned species counterpoint, however unlikely this may sound on the face of it, may help students learn how to build a line (they begin by adding one note against one, then two against one, four against one and so on).

### **How work will be marked**

Examiners will use the assessment criteria printed in Section 5.7 of the specification, specifically the holistic criterion and criteria 1 to 6. They will also be provided with additional guidance specific to each year's popular song question.

A marked working of the specimen question for Topic 3 will be included in *Getting Started, part 2*.





## Unit 6: Further Musical Understanding

### Overview

This unit is designed to extend the skills developed in Unit 3. It concerns listening to familiar and unfamiliar music and understanding how this music works.

In Part A, students will be expected to use the skills of aural analysis they have developed to answer questions based on unfamiliar music which is related to set works they have studied. They will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the music they hear, which will involve comparing and contrasting two excerpts, placing the music in a historical, social or cultural context and identifying significant harmonic and tonal features. They will also be expected to notate a short passage from one excerpt.

In Part B, students will be expected to demonstrate detailed knowledge of set works from the Applied Music area of study, showing how elements of the music relate to the historical, social or cultural context for which they were composed.

In Part C, students will be expected to demonstrate detailed knowledge of set works from the Instrumental Music area of study, showing elements of continuity and change within the pieces they have studied. In addition, students will be expected to demonstrate in this part of the examination that they can write about music confidently, coherently and accurately.

In studying for this unit students will gain:

- a deeper understanding of the craft of musical composition
- an increased awareness of musical techniques that will enable them to perform with greater maturity
- further knowledge of the cultures and traditions that have informed a variety of musical styles
- a range of practical skills for aural analysis.

As Unit 3, this unit is assessed by a single examination lasting two hours. The first five minutes are given as reading time and then the CD for Part A will be started. When the announcement on the CD concludes Part A, students use the remaining time (approximately 90 minutes) to complete Parts B and C.

### Set works (1)

New groups of set works are studied for this unit and they will change each year. They have been carefully selected to provide historical and stylistic variety, consistency and equality. Each selection covers a variety of genres, historical periods and musical styles and has been designed to complement the set works studied for Unit 3 the previous year. They are grouped in two areas of study:

- Area of study 1: Instrumental Music  
This area of study is carried forward from Unit 3 (a requirement of the national criteria for GCE Music). New set works are studied, which are no longer restricted to the Western classical tradition but will still include an orchestral work.
- Area of study 3: Applied Music  
This area of study includes pieces where music has a particularly clear function (for example, in the liturgy or the theatre) and is less abstract than much concert music.

In Unit 6 students will have access to a clean, unmarked copy of *The New Anthology of Music* in the examination, so it is expected that responses will be supported by examples from the score, where appropriate and will contain more detailed analysis than was required for Unit 3.

### Set works (2)

In Part B, students respond to two questions from a choice of three based on set works from the Applied Music area of study. These questions will require students to relate elements of the individual pieces they have studied to the context of their composition. Five works are studied in this area of study but only three of these will form part of this final assessment.

Responses in Part B can be in continuous prose, note form or bullet points but, whatever the format students should show their perceptive understanding of the music studied and use examples from the score where appropriate.

In Part C, students are required to write a structured essay comparing and contrasting elements of the pieces studied in the Instrumental Music area of study, demonstrating and understanding of continuity and change in this music. Students will complete one essay from a choice of two titles. Seven works are set for this area of study but each essay will involve discussion of only three specific pieces.

### Studying the set works

Building on the skills developed in preparation for Unit 3, the length and number of set works studied for Unit 6 increases, because it is anticipated that students will now be able to analyse the music in class with confidence at a faster rate. This is particularly true when some of the preparation for Unit 3 will have been to consolidate a secure understanding of fundamental musical concepts and associated vocabulary.

The set works are again listed in the specification in the order in which they appear in *The New Anthology of Music* but this will not normally be the most effective order in which to teach them. The needs of the individual students and their musical background need to be considered when planning a scheme of work. The suggested approaches to studying the set works outlined in the section on Unit 3 could be applied to Unit 6 with equal success, but the different methods of assessment required for each area of study should also be borne in mind.



There are strong arguments for suggesting that the works in Area of study 1 should be tackled before those in Area of study 3.

- This area of study links directly to music studied in Unit 3.
- The assessment of this area of study requires students to compare three pieces and students cannot even begin to practise comparative skills until a number of pieces have been covered in class.
- The assessment of this area of study also introduces an expectation that the quality of written communication will be high, with accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar, as well as a coherent and logical development of the material presented within the essay. Practising this new skill needs to begin as early as possible.

The analysis of set works in Area of study 1 is all about comparing and contrasting the musical elements of each piece. The focus of analysis in Area of study 3 is slightly different. Single works are placed in their historical, social and cultural context, relating all musical elements to the original purpose of the composition.

### **Part A (Aural Analysis)**

The unfamiliar music used in the two compulsory questions in Part A will be related in some way to the two areas of study. These questions will be structured and divided into sub-sections.

Question 1 (Comparison) will require students to compare and contrast two excerpts of unfamiliar music. They will be asked to comment on the musical features of each excerpt, which could include resources, form, texture, tonality, harmony, melody and rhythm and metre. In addition, they will be required to place one or both excerpts into an appropriate context which will normally include identifying the genre, composer and date of composition. The excerpts for Question 1 will be played three times each, in the order A, B, A, B, A, B and no skeleton score will be provided.

Question 2 (Aural Awareness) will require students to respond to a single excerpt of music played five times separated by pauses, the length of which will be announced on the CD. A single or two, stave skeleton score of this music will be provided. Students will be required to notate a short passage of the music (aural dictation), to describe aspects of tonality and harmony and to place the music in appropriate context.

Students will be expected to aurally recognise modulations to closely related keys, which will be:

- the relative minor/major
- the dominant and its relative minor/major
- the subdominant and its relative minor/major.

Students will also be expected to aurally recognise:

- all diatonic chords in root position and inversion
- standard chromatic chords (like diminished sevenths, augmented sixths and Neapolitan sixths)
- standard chord progressions (cadences and other standard progressions, like circle of fifths).

The music will be in a key with four sharps/flats or fewer.

### Part A (Aural Analysis: Unfamiliar Music)

Part A will last approximately 25 minutes and will consist of two questions divided into structured sub-sections. Students will answer both questions. The excerpts used will last between 60 and 90 seconds and will be separated by pauses which will be announced on the CD.

The unfamiliar music used in the questions for Part A will be related by style and/or genre to set works studied for Unit 6. Examples of the relationships that might occur are shown below using the questions given in the Sample Assessment Material:

Question	Music set	Link to set works
1	Comparison of two arias from Mozart's <i>Die Zauberflöte</i>	Area of study 1: The classical style is seen in the Haydn Quartet movement Area of study 3: The genre of opera and the aria are covered in the excerpt from Purcell's <i>Dido and Aeneas</i>
2	Movement from a trio sonata by Corelli	Area of study 1: A movement from a trio sonata by Corelli.

This is designed to encourage students to listen perceptively to music other than their set works. Such related listening should form part of the teaching for this unit but should also be supported by a programme of listening outside the classroom for homework. Cross-referencing styles and genres with all the set works for Unit 6 should lead to a varied diet. Some students may find it useful to keep a listening log or diary in which they detail pieces they have heard and their significant features. Remember also that students will have *The New Anthology of Music* in the examination and they will be able to refer to this to check details which may support their responses to the unfamiliar music in this part of the examination.

### Part A (Aural Analysis: New skills)

The specific new skills that need to be developed are:

- placing unfamiliar music in context. This can, in large part, be done through the study of the set works in Unit 3 and Unit 6, but should be supported by a programme of extended and informed listening, which could be directed by the teacher;
- recognising musical features, such as resources but also chords, progressions and modulations, aurally. This can also be developed through the study of set works and extended listening, but additionally requires a confident grasp of musical vocabulary and a secure understanding of key concepts (like tonality) and devices (like sequence, imitation etc). It can be useful to teach some of these features out of context before applying them to a continuous piece, for example focusing on cadence recognition or modulation, alone and developing confidence in short exercises before attempting to recognise the cadences or modulations aurally in an unfamiliar piece;
- musical dictation. For all but the most able this is a skill that will need to be taught and practised over an extended period, perhaps beginning in the AS year by notating rhythms and then pitches outside a musical context. Given time it is a valuable skill which can be taught.

The acquisition and development of these skills by the students should be encouraged and nurtured as soon as work begins on this specification.

### **Part B (Music in Context)**

Students should be advised to spend around 40 minutes on this part of the examination, divided equally between the two questions.

There will be three questions in Part B of which students will answer two. Each question will refer to one piece from Area of study 3: Applied Music and will specifically ask students to relate the detail of the music to the historical, social and/or cultural context of its composition.

In responding to the questions, students will be expected to support their answers by reference to the score, where appropriate. Musical examples should not be written out but given as appropriate detailed locations (part, bar, beat number).

In preparation for these questions, students should familiarise themselves with the compositional context of each of the set works and with each piece as a whole. They should then relate the specific elements of the music to its context. These will include resources, form, texture, tonality, harmony, melody and rhythm and metre. Students will not be required to draw comparisons between the works in this area of study.

When answering questions in Part B, students will not be expected to draw formal conclusions in their responses, as will be required in the essay in Part C.

### **Part C (Continuity and Change in Instrumental Music)**

Students should be advised to spend around 50 minutes on this part of the examination.

Students will be required to write an essay from a choice of two titles. Each title will require them to write perceptively about three selected set works they have studied from Area of study 1: Instrumental Music. Such writing will involve comparing, contrasting, assessing, evaluating and commenting on the music.

As in Part B, responding to the questions students are expected to support their answers by reference to the score, where appropriate. Musical examples should not be written out but given as appropriate detailed locations (part, bar, beat number).

When answering their chosen question in Part C, students will also be assessed on their quality of written communication. In addition to an expectation that spelling, punctuation and grammar are acceptable, this means that the points made will be presented in a logical, coherent manner and that they will be drawn together in a satisfactory conclusion.

Preparation for this part of the examination will require detailed knowledge of the set works and the ability to compare and contrast their composers' use of the various musical elements at their disposal.

The questions in this section relate to continuity and change but students should be wary of imposing subjective value judgements on the works they have studied. It should not imply that change is necessarily for better or worse, or that music written more recently is more 'advanced' than music written some centuries ago. Unlike scientific discovery, the development of music cannot be traced as a progressive timeline. The conclusions that can be drawn from their study of the set works will vary but should shine some light on the way composers decide to handle the resources available to them.

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Authorised by Roger Beard  
Prepared by Jane Tilbury

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