

Music composition Non-Examined Assessment (NEA)

Artificial intelligence (AI) guidance

In response to feedback from teachers, we would like to clarify the rules around the use of AI in Edexcel Music composition NEA at GCSE and A level. This guidance is supplementary to the [JCQ AI Use in Assessments](#) guidance.

Summary

All work submitted for qualification assessments must be the students' own and both teacher and student are required to sign a declaration to this effect. Students must be made aware that some uses of AI tools in the creation of composition NEA are in breach of this requirement, but that there are some, limited, uses of AI that may be acceptable. Students must reference any use of AI in the completion of composition NEA.

How is AI being used in music creation?

The use of AI tools is becoming more common in music creation and has attracted much publicity and discussion recently. The number and quality of available AI tools, both paid-for and free, is increasing rapidly; the examples of AI tools given below are not exhaustive. Uses of AI include:

- 1) **Text-based prompts with text-based, MIDI or notated outputs.** AI tools such as Chat GPT, Gemini and CoPilot are used for tasks such as:
 - a) Creating lists of key points about genres and styles
 - b) Creating an outline of a form and structure for a composition
 - c) Creating sequences of pitches for melodies
 - d) Creating chord progressions
 - e) Creating melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas in MIDI or notation
- 2) **Text-based prompts with audio or MIDI outputs** (also known as AI music generators). AI tools such as Suno, Loudly and Udio are used for tasks such as:
 - a) Creating audio files of complete pieces of music in a range of styles and genres
 - b) Creating initial compositional ideas
- 3) **Audio or MIDI prompts with audio or MIDI outputs.** AI tools often built into Desktop Audio Workstations (DAWs) such as Logic Pro, FL Studio and Studio One Pro, can be used for tasks such as:
 - a) Creating AI generated drums, keyboards and bass to match existing audio or MIDI
 - b) Creating "stems" by separating an existing audio track into separate tracks for different components, eg vocals, bass, drums

Acceptable use of AI

If students use AI tools for Music composition, it must be clearly referenced in their submissions. Students may use AI in the planning/research stages of composition and/or to create elements of a composition that are **not assessed**. Acceptable uses include:

- Research into the musical features of a genre/style
- Using AI to write a brief for a composition
- Using AI to write the lyrics or text for a song or vocal piece
- Using AI to generate visual images in the context of a composition

Referencing, authenticating and assessing acceptable use of AI

It is important for teachers and assessors to:

- Ensure they are familiar with the student's style and method of working so that they can confidently authenticate their work.
- Monitor students' work as it progresses through the initial and developmental phases.
- Ensure any use of AI is properly referenced, including details of how the tool was used and reflection on how the results impacted their own work. This must include but is not limited to:
 - Identification of the AI tool and the date the content was generated (eg ChatGPT 5, <https://chatgpt.com/>, accessed 16/10/2025)
 - Prompts used
 - Annotated screenshots of AI-based tools being used
 - Explanation of how AI generated content has been adapted and incorporated into independent outcomes

GCSE and A level Music teachers must ensure that any AI use is acceptable, appropriate and referenced before the work is authenticated and submitted.

Teachers must acknowledge and recognise acceptable and referenced use of AI when authenticating the work (GCSE and A level), and when applying the assessment criteria (GCSE). When assessing GCSE work, teachers must ensure that students are not rewarded if they have used AI tools such that they have not independently met the assessment criteria.

Inappropriate AI use

NEA composition submitted at GCSE and A level must be the student's own work; it must not be copied, paraphrased or heavily derived from another source, including content generated by AI.

AI **must not** be used for the creation of any elements of a submitted composition that **are rewardable in the Assessment criteria** for that qualification. Unacceptable uses include:

- AI generation of primary musical materials: melody, harmony, rhythm etc.
- AI generation of accompaniments or backings
- AI use to generate structural elements within a composition
- AI development of inputted material
- AI generation of audio files intended for submission
- AI generation of scores in standard or other formats

A student will have committed malpractice if they use AI tools without making appropriate references and in such a way that the work they submit is not their own. Where teachers have doubts about the authenticity of the work they must investigate and take appropriate action. Guidance for what centres should do in instances of candidate malpractice can be found [here](#).

NEA authentication sheet

Teachers are also reminded that the Composition Authentication Sheet (CAS) has now been updated to make clear reference to the use of AI tools. Students and teachers are required to sign this sheet to declare that the work submitted is their own.

Detecting misuse of AI tools

Potential indicators of AI misuse can be found in the [JCQ AI Use in Assessments](#) guidance.

For composition, indicators of misuse could include:

- Varying quality of musical content
- Sudden production of material at pace, which is at odds with the student's normal rate
- Use of musical techniques which are not consistent with the student's normal way of composing

Monitoring the production of student work

Teachers must take steps to ensure that they have appropriate arrangements in place which will allow them to authenticate the work submitted by students. Where appropriate, teachers should consider giving time for sufficient work to be done in class, under direct supervision, to allow the teacher to authenticate each candidate's work with confidence.

Teachers should monitor student work during its production, to assist in authentication decisions. Asking students to give a verbal presentation of work may be helpful in cases where a teacher suspects that some parts of work have been produced using more assistance than allowed by the specification (for example, if it is suspected that sections of a piece of work have been produced by an AI music generator).

Example A

A student wishes to create a Reggae song as part of a GCSE Music submission. After discussions with their teacher and much independent listening, the student prompts ChatGPT to summarise the main musical features of Reggae, which then inform the composing work that follows. Additionally, the student also prompts Chat GPT to create some suitable lyrics for the song, which are then added to the student's own musical ideas. All the prompts and responses from AI are referenced in detail on the documentation submitted, with copies of both the prompts to and responses from the AI tool. The teacher is completely satisfied that the submitted musical work is wholly the work of the student and is able to award the appropriate mark using the marking criteria.

This is an acceptable use of AI, as no assessable elements have been created by AI tools.

Example B

An A level student wishes to create three contrasting musical moods in response to a film music brief. The student writes a brief for each mood, specifying general features such as tempo, tonality and instrumentation, which is then input into an AI music generator. The student downloads the results from the AI tool and puts these into a Digital Audio Workstation (DAW), linking the three AI sections with some original material. The student then submits the audio, along with DAW screenshots, but does not reference the use of AI in any supporting documentation.

This is an unacceptable use of AI, as AI has been used to create assessable elements of the composition. Additionally, the use of AI itself is not credited meaning that the student may also have been guilty of malpractice, as they (and their teacher) have signed the authentication sheet to the effect that the work is wholly theirs.

Example C

A GCSE student wishes to create a free composition for a rock band. Using Logic Pro and a MIDI interface, the student records a guitar part and a bass guitar part. The student does not play the

drums, and uses the AI drummer in Logic Pro to research how an appropriate drum track could sound. They then sequence a MIDI drum track of their own and remove the music generated by the AI drummer. The student references the use of the AI drummer in the planning stages of the composition. They identify the software and settings used, and annotate screenshots of the AI tool being used. They give a written explanation of how the music they have written for the drums relates to the AI-generated drums. The teacher assessor, who has heard both the iteration with the AI drummer and the final composition, is satisfied that the final composition is entirely the student's own work, and that none of the work is heavily reliant on AI generated content.

This is an acceptable use of AI, as no assessable elements have been created by AI tools.