

Course Handbook

Cambridge International AS & A Level Music 9483

For examination from 2019



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Introduction

About the handbook

This handbook should be used in conjunction with the syllabus and mark schemes. The syllabus remains the authoritative document giving details of what is required from centres and learners. The handbook discusses the syllabus requirements and in particular gives consideration to ways in which the coursework elements might be structured and supported. It also gives guidance about the marking of work.

How to use the handbook

Once you are familiar with the course content in the syllabus and the supporting guidance in this handbook, there are examples of assessed work at the end of each of the Performing and Composing sections. These should help to demonstrate the expected outcomes for each Component and therefore support you in developing your taught course.

Recordings accompany the examples in this handbook. You may want to listen to each and mark them before reading the Principal Moderators comments. If there is more than one teacher in the department, then listening to the recordings together, and discussing how the work meets each of the descriptors should help to support internal consistency. Do not worry if your marks vary slightly from the moderator, the key is consistency. If your marks are significantly different to the Principal Moderator's, try to work out which section is different – listen again to the recording and re-read the Principal Moderator's comments.

Section 1: Coursework general guidance

A love of music often presents itself as a significant part of a learner's motivation for choosing to study this subject. Building on a range of possible learner enthusiasms, the syllabus promotes the synthesis of practical and intellectual skills with an expectation that learners will develop a deep understanding of the connections between the areas of composing, performing and listening.

At the start of the course, learners may well have a strong sense of themselves as performers but the course encourages critical thinking that places listening at the centre of the various practical skills and abilities to be developed.

The way in which written evidence supports practical or academic presentations is made clear in the syllabus by references that include:

- independence in learning
- demonstration of deep understanding
- evidencing higher order thinking
- showing reflective practice
- presenting and engaging with innovative ideas

Written aspects of the coursework are explored more fully later in this document.

1.1 Benefits of coursework

Benefits of coursework for centres

Coursework:

- allows teachers to focus on individualised support best suited to the enthusiasm and curiosity of the learner rather than a tightly controlled curriculum
- provides the opportunity for centres to engage with the assessment of practical skills
- offers opportunities that potentially benefit the entire educational community through music performances in a range of contexts in which learners can engage as audience members, composers or performers.

Benefits of coursework for learners

Through coursework:

- learners take increasing responsibility for their own learning as they exercise control and manage their own work
- there are beneficial effects for time management, research and communication skills
- there are opportunities for less formal educational experiences where experimentation, creativity and innovation can be fostered and ideas questioned and developed
- learners are encouraged to understand connections between music in the classroom and music in the wider world

The learning community in music may extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom to incorporate instrumental lessons, ensemble participation and other performance and composition opportunities. These are all connections to value and encourage. During the coursework element of the course, if learners are engaging in these wider communities as part of their work, the designated teacher(s) for them must ensure they have a systematic overview of the learning experience so they can authenticate these elements.

1.2 The role of teachers in coursework

Although teachers sometimes feel uncertainty about their role in coursework, it is worth re-stating that teaching input is vital to success in this part of the course.

Teachers are expected to:

- provide teaching support and guidance for each part of the course based on the syllabus requirements
- prioritise ways of enabling learners to develop investigative and evaluative skills in order to develop individual strengths
- familiarise learners with the assessment criteria so that they understand how the marks are awarded
- monitor and review progress, ensuring learners work steadily towards the deadline for completion of the work
- support learners to work towards performance and / or recording dates
- promote a learning environment that enables learners to be confident in discussing problems and difficulties they may encounter and to work together towards possible solutions.

Teachers may:

- plan and deliver training for learners that they may consider helpful, for example, how to use and document references in written work
- actively encourage links between music activities and musicians outside the classroom based curriculum
- use their musical knowledge and expertise to suggest possibilities for relevant listening and to make recommendations that encourage a use of the widest range of printed and web-based materials
- read written work, listen to performances or composing in progress, to offer advice and encouragement

Teachers must not:

- re-work any sections of learners' composing or written work
- allow unacknowledged plagiarism in composing or written work

1.2 Links between Component 1 and Component 2

You can maximise the opportunity for learning by emphasising the composing and performing aspects of Component 1: Listening and the way they relate to the practical elements required in Component 2.

For example, learners can develop compositional techniques through the study of set works which they can adapt and make their own. The study of scores will allow for discussion on topics such as orchestration or the detail in accurate notational good practice. Learners should be asked to consider questions such as: How does a score inform a performer about what the composer asks of them? How does listening to different performances help build an understanding of interpretation? Are there specific practices that relate to particular time periods or traditions? Establishing a forum in which such questions can be explored, may allow learners to deal with some of the important practical aspects of music study.

Section 2: Component 2 – Practical Music

Learners must engage in both performance and composition must both be taken by learners in this Component. At this level the overall allocation of marks is weighted towards performance as detailed in the syllabus.

Practical music is teacher-assessed and externally moderated by Cambridge International and the syllabus gives clear details about administration.

2.1 Element 1 Performing

A selection of contrasting music is chosen by the learner and presented in a performance of 6-10 minutes.

If a programme of 6 minutes is offered learners should consider whether they will be able to show the range of skills and understanding required to access the higher marks bands.

Music learning environments and resources vary considerably between centres but all learners can be supported to access the full range of marks, whatever the context.

The following points are indicative of some of the good practice evidenced in centres. They are not prescriptive, but rather act as helpful prompts to provide a supportive framework for performing studies.

Some ways you can work with learners on this highly personalised element include:

- encouraging regular structured practice and reviews of progress
- developing conversations between all those involved in the performing world of learners about the potential range of music to draw upon for study across the course in addition to planning the final programme
- providing opportunities to perform throughout the course in preparation for the demands of their final choice of programme; using the assessment criteria with learners as a tool for self-evaluation of recordings
- inviting local musicians / teachers to present relevant seminars / workshops that build bridges between the learner's learning environment and a wider performance community.

Learners should perform on one instrument, giving thought to whether solo and / or ensemble performances will be best suited to their aims, interests and developing skills. They should carefully time the performance of the pieces they are considering for inclusion in the final programme. Learners should be encouraged to assess the technical and expressive demands of the music that they might select to perform. Their final choices should offer a contrasting programme and they should give careful consideration of how this could be achieved in a variety of ways. Learners can choose to include a piece of music that they are studying for external practical examinations such as those offered by music conservatoires. However, the timings or variety within a set of such music is unlikely to be entirely transferable from one occasion to another, nor is it fully within the spirit of this syllabus to do so. Throughout the preparation for their performance, learners should talk about their plans with others and reflect on the possibilities available to them.

Improvisation

Some performances will include elements of improvisation such as cadenza elaborations, improvisations within a jazz style or as part of traditions of performance from non-western musics. Fluency is a strong indicator of the success of improvised performance and this will be given

prominence under the assessment criteria 'Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm)'. Learners may wish to supply a brief written statement that outlines their intentions for the benefit of the teacher-assessor / moderator. This might include, for example, notation of a learner-written cadenza, description of a chord sequence or modal patterns used in a jazz improvisation or a description of the way in which a raga is intended to be used in an ensemble performance. Accuracy in performance can then be measured against intention.

Recording the performance

Learners may choose to perform their programme of music in front of an audience if they wish. Providing the opportunity to practice performing elements of the programme to an audience before the recording takes place will help the learner to make this decision. Singers, for example, often find it helpful to have an audience to communicate directly too.

All learners should have a sense of occasion about their performance. For some this can be enhanced by the presence of an audience, for others a sense of a 'studio recording of a live performance' is preferred. Again, open conversations and opportunities for experiencing a variety of performing contexts can be engineered as part of the course in preparation for the recording. In positioning the camera for recording the performance, the face and fingers of the performer should be fully visible. Recordings should be made in the best quality available and should be checked for accuracy and completeness.

2.2 Element 2 Composing (40 marks)

Learners submit two contrasting compositions, each 1-2 minutes long and with a total time of 2-4 minutes for the complete submission.

They may choose any tradition, Western or non-Western and any style or genre.

The musical content can vary according to the pacing of a composition and so some flexibility can be shown in terms of the duration of the compositions. A longer slow moving piece may have less going on compositionally than a short but more quickly paced piece. The length of the composition and its sections are part of the judgement required in composing within a specific timeframe / coursework brief and learners should avoid submitting over lengthy pieces.

2.2.1 Preparation: the establishment of a music research culture and mind-set

The value of preparation in composing work cannot be over-estimated. Learners will benefit greatly from the study of the work of others to take their own compositions forward and establish their own direction.

Systematic documentation

During the course, it is important for learners to develop systems of documentation that track the listening that has informed the preparation stage of composing work, or the listening that has informed their work in progress.

Learners should be encouraged to develop their own systems. Keeping a journal or an on-line spreadsheet that is regularly updated are two possibilities. The sort of information that might be gathered could include:

- Details of listening: Title / composer / performers / artists / date of recording / performance / venue

- What was interesting about this music? Learners could use the checklist of musical features in the syllabus to prompt their analytical thinking
- What elements of the performance / techniques might be useful in the context of creative work?

Preparing for Component 1 will be an important, structured way for learners to develop understanding as they listen. As various options are explored, you can give invaluable support to your learners by suggesting appropriate composers / artists / music to listen to.

Getting started

Once a learner begins to consider the options for their own creative work it will become clear to them that composing involves a great many choices:

- Do I want to use a small number of instruments that I understand well or do I want to explore new resources that I am interested in?
- Am I happy with this melody or do I need to re-shape it to give it more rhythmic interest?
- Which mode will give me a good contrast to the one I have chosen for the first part of my piece?
- I have a dense, complex texture in the opening of my piece, where can I go from here?
- I want to write a song; who is going to sing it on the recording?
- What sort of harmonic language options can I choose from?

Sharing composing thoughts out loud in a supportive setting with both you and their peers can be very beneficial to learners.

Some important considerations

As the work gets underway learners should be encouraged to maintain flexibility and adaptability, being open to different directions and alternative possibilities. Unexpected potential or problems will be a natural part of the creative process.

Important points for learners to consider:

- pacing their work to allow time for adjustments and rehearsal if appropriate
- whether the pieces should be 'performed' using technology or live performances?
- whether a mixture of sequenced recording, e.g. backing track and live vocalist work well to represent the ideas?
- how can music technology skills be supported / developed if working with electro-acoustic ideas
- how they might use the expertise of other musicians – their knowledge and specialisms as well as their potential for assisting with performing in recordings.

Notation

The type of notation will vary according to the style and tradition of the music created but in all cases notation should be as comprehensive as possible. It should be viewed not only as a means for the piece to be accurately performed by others but as a gateway to gain full understanding of music that may be created for a different purpose. In electro-acoustic music, for example, graphic scores, screen shots of sequencer windows showing structure, automation or final mix-down settings can supplement a written explanation of the music.

In music from different cultures, alternative notation systems might be used. Learners should always use the form of notation associated with the style of music chosen. Staff notation should be

included, for example where an instrument-specific notation such as guitar-tab is used, particularly as many notation programmes facilitate this.

There is an option to include a written documentation in place of music notation but this should not be chosen to avoid using notation if this is within the usual convention of the genre / style / tradition of the composition.

Improvisation

Improvisation is not just a technique associated with performance in certain traditions and styles but it also an important means by which a learner can try out and experiment with initial ideas in the composing process.

In final recordings, learners should be aware that unattributed improvisation cannot be credited as composition. If the learner is performing the improvisation as part of the composition, for example, this must be clearly stated and can be appropriately credited.

If other performers contribute to a performance of a learner-created lead sheet interpretation, for example, learners must explain in detail how they explained the precise requirements to a drummer / guitarist etc.

In some cases, learners can successfully record all parts themselves using appropriate technology.

Constant reflection and reviewing

Learner-composers work in varied ways but reflecting and reviewing are important tools for successful creative work. You and others can be an important source of feedback as the creative process proceeds.

Section 3: Example learner outcomes for Component 2

The syllabus encourages the broadest possible interpretation of music suitable for performance across a range of possible styles, traditions and cultures. The two examples provided below are illustrative and should not be taken as prescriptive in any way.

3.1 Element 1 Performing (60 marks)

You can practice using the assessment criteria to mark the following examples or use the examples as guidance to help you understand the process of applying the assessment criteria.

You can watch the Learners performances by accessing the materials at [this link](#).

Using the mark scheme in the syllabus, try to align your marks and comments to those of the Principal Moderator given below.

Please be aware, due to copyright, we are unable to share the printed scores. Information linked to realisation of performance markings and / or performance conventions is shown for each learner.

3.1.1 Learner 1

Programme	
Piece 1	Mozart, <i>Voi che sapete</i>
Piece 2	Lloyd Webber, <i>Think of me</i>
Piece 3	Lauper, <i>The history of wrong guys</i>

General comments:

The learner chose to unify the programme using the theme of 'Love' and it is within the 6-10 minutes duration required. This learner confidently performed a wide range of songs, conveying their understanding of the chosen programme.

Criteria	Level awarded	Mark awarded
A Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm) The execution of the piece is not entirely accurate, but the learner performed with conviction warranting a mark at the top of Level 4.	4	12 marks out of 15
B Technical control The performance of the Mozart piece has intonation problems (perhaps because the learner had not fully warmed up) but this aspect of the performance improves. There are also some technical issues in the popular repertoire but the programme ensures an adequate range of techniques is presented.	3	9 marks out of 15
C Realisation of performance markings and / or performance conventions Most markings are convincingly realised	4	12 marks out of 15
D Interpretation and aural awareness This was a delightful performance on video, in which the learner recited the works from memory. This indicated a secure knowledge of the music. The interpretation was persuasive and aural awareness of the various demands of the programme as a whole merited a mark just in Level 5.	5	13 marks out of 15
Total		46 marks out of 60

3.1.2 Learner 2

Programme	
Piece 1	Tarrega, <i>Capricho arabe</i>
Piece 2	Anon, <i>Romanza</i>
Piece 3	Tarrega, <i>Adelita</i>

General comments:

The choice of programme showed some variety in terms of speed and style of performance with quasi-improvised figuration in the first piece contrasting with a more precise approach to tempo in the remaining items of the programme. The performance is under 10 minutes in total but several repeated sections did not add a great deal overall.

The first piece is really too difficult for the learner and too many breakdowns are avoided by adopting a cautious speed. This is also true of the final piece.

Criteria	Level awarded	Mark awarded
A Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm) Some loss of fluency in some parts of the performance due to the demanding nature of the music for the learner.	3	9 marks out of 15
B Technical control Technique is reasonable – a performance which just reaches Level 4	4	10 marks out of 15
C Realisation of performance markings and / or performance conventions There would be more expressive and dynamic variety if the notes were less of a challenge.	3	9 marks out of 15
D Interpretation and aural awareness There is good understanding of style conveyed in a committed performance. The teacher comments that the learner plays mainly by ear – which is mostly convincing.	4	12 marks out of 15
Total		40 marks out of 60

3.2 Element 2 Composing (40 marks)

You can practice using the assessment criteria to mark the following examples or use them as guidance to help you understand the process of applying the assessment criteria. The syllabus requirement is for two contrasting compositions of a combined duration of 2-4 minutes although a little flexibility is permitted if the length is musically justified.

You can listen to the compositions using [this link](#).

Using the mark scheme in the syllabus try to align your marks and comments to those of the Principal Moderator shown below.

3.2.1 Learner 3

Composition 1: *String Theory*

Composition 2: *Drums, Distortion and a Lot of Flute (DDF)*

Written statement: intention, decisions and listening influences

For both my compositions I wanted to write with electronic sounds but there are differences that make them contrasting pieces.

The first composition is a piece of film music to accompany a film opening that I produced as part of some work I did in media studies. I listened to Brian Eno (early ambient albums) and Tangerine Dream who have been producing albums for decades. The way they use different colours and sounds to layer their music was very useful to me. Jeff Pearce's track 'Snowfall' is an example of using small patterns on guitar and all sorts of guitar finger techniques and pedals to generate certain effects. Film music that I researched included Blade Runner and Pandorum, a German-British film that is dark and full of bass sounds that I tried to replicate. Video music such as Michael Gordon's 'Doom' produces aggressive angry sounds with a lot of guitar effects. I learned a lot from some of the old RnB tracks such as Otis Reading 'Try a little tenderness' with high hat grooves as well as the faster RnB of today found in Usher and beat of DJ mixes.

My second composition is an electronic fusion of different Indian raga modes such as Natabhairavi and Keeravani. The piece is composed to showcase how traditional Indian musical can be connected with modern technology and it could be used in schools. In Carnatic music the Natabhairavi raga brings out feelings of grandeur and devotion in the audience. Keeravani bansuri (flute) music (e.g. the music recordings of Vijay Kannan) can be very meditative and peaceful.

Please listen to the recordings using good quality headphone so you can experience all the sounds and effects fully.

String Theory: Commentary in place of the score

String theory is my first composition, which is a fusion of ambient electronic music and psychedelically influenced music. The piece starts off to give a somewhat happy and joyful vibe but then modulates into a psychedelic guitar section which gives a more gloomy and unpredictable sensation. The piece is scored for 3 acoustic guitars (electronically synthesized), drums / percussion, 2 sustaining basses, 1 pad, 2 bass guitars, 2 electric guitars, 3 reverse crash cymbals, vocals taken from my film clip and a variety of sounds that were electronically synthesised using synths such as SYLENTH1 and Real Guitars. The piece is named string theory due to abundant use of guitars such as the acoustic strumming but more the use of the electric guitar delayed effect.

1. BARS 1-5

The piece is introduced in these 5 bars by a repetition of 3 simple notes (E, C#, D). This introduction is played by layers of different sounds with a delayed effect. The most distinctive sound is the pluck of the acoustic guitar which is layered with various electronically synthesised sounds playing the same three notes.

A sustaining bass playing the tonic note of the piece (E) is played alongside it to add more colour and thickness to the piece.

An uplifter (reverse cymbal) is used to create an effect or give the sensation that the piece is going to develop into something more. A pan effect is used when the piece starts where at first the music can only be heard on the on the left side but gradually pans to the right to distribute the sound evenly on both sides.

2. BARS 5-13

The piece begins to develop at bar 5 where drums are added to the three note melody. Alongside this at regular intervals a few random sounds such as pebbles plopping are used with a delayed effect to add more colour and give a more ominous feeling. At bar 12 the drums stop and the three note melody is played once again. The build-up once again repeats itself and the piece continues to develop in bar 13.

3. BARS 13-25

At bar 13 the drums pick up again and there is a repetition of what was played from bars 5-12 except after the three note melody is played it is followed by a small arpeggio section of notes in the same key playing to once again add more colour but to also create an ambient vibe. This is repeated till BAR 18. At bar 18 it is once again repeated except this time accompanied by accompanied by a light but colourful strumming of an acoustic guitar. This is played till bar 22 where the drums stop and only the arpeggio and the guitar play.

At bar 24 the guitar strumming sequence is repeated before breaking into a short flourish to modulate the piece and take it into the next section.

4. BARS 25-29

The psychedelic section begins at bar 25 where the first electric guitar plays the lead. It plays two sustaining notes (with a delayed effect) one after the other accompanied by the arpeggio used in the first section, drums and the acoustic strumming used in the first section. The electric guitar is also accompanied by a bass guitar playing a chromatic bass line which creates a psychedelic effect. This plays on till bar 29.

5. BARS 29-41

At bar 29 the two sustaining notes are once again repeated but this time instead of just sustaining the lead breaks into a solo of sorts which it continues till bar 41. The lead guitar is accompanied by the third acoustic guitar which plays the same melody as the lead to add more texture. The vocals continue to accompany the melody till bar 33 where it stops. At bar 33 as the guitar continues playing and developing its melody the drum sequence changes into a more RnB influenced drum sequence consisting of the use of fast high hats and the timed use of an 808 kick. This sequence plays on with the guitar till the 41st bar where the guitar solo also ends. The repeated tumbling patterns underline the uncertainty in the spoken voices – uncertainty, 'where are we?'

6. BARS 41-57

As the solo ends the last three notes of the solo are used and are consistently repeated till the end of the song. The last three notes continue playing alone and slowly start developing once again to bring the piece to an end. The notes are played alone repeatedly till about the 43rd bar where the RnB drums join to develop the piece and bring it to its end. At bar 45 the piece continues to develop again as the vocals and the psychedelic lead guitar starts to play as the three notes are slowly drowned out by the use of automations. The guitar solo is repeated till the 57th bar where a reverse crash cymbal is used to create the effect of the piece building up to its end. The piece ends at bar 57 with the use of a hard empty kick drum (with reverb effect on it).

Drums, Distortion and a Lot of Flute (DDF): Commentary in place of the score

This piece is a dark piece which gives a somewhat gloomy feeling and sensation. This is partly because the ragas used are like western minor scale patterns. The piece as a whole is scored for 3 ballad pianos, 1 flute, 1 distorted guitar, 1 guitar with a wah-wah effect, 1 bass guitar, 1 pad, drums and 3 reverse crash cymbals. This piece gets its name because it has a good mix of drums, distorted guitar and an abundance of flute. I decided to use changing sounds to give contrast but the melody ideas and their variations provide stability.

INTRO BARS 1-12

The song begins with a Ballad Piano which plays in the Natabhairavi (the 20th Melakarta ragam) mode with a delayed effect which plays an intro before the actual theme is

introduced. The piano plays the intro melody for about 12 bars before the main theme is introduced. From bars 9-12 the piano starts playing descending notes to create a smooth transition to the theme with deliberate cross rhythms to drive the music forward.

BARS 12-18

The main theme begins at bar 12 and is played by a flute in the Keeravani mode (the 21st Melakarta). Although the theme is played in a different mode it remains in the same key. The flute plays the main theme till bar 18. At bar 15 a light piano was added accompanied by a soft bass which played the same melody as the theme. This was done to add more colour and thickness to the texture. An uplifter (reverse cymbal effect) was then added at the beginning of bar 12 and I automated it so that the sound gradually ascends. This is meant to give a sensation of the piece building up to drop or break into a new section which brings in a new variation of the theme.

BARS 19-29

The build-up drops at bar 19 where a downlifter was used to indicate the break between the two sections. The 1st variation of the theme begins at bar 20 where the flute plays almost the same melody as the theme accompanied by a distorted guitar which plays a distinct variation of the theme. The guitar and the flute play the variation till bar 24. At bar 24 all the other instruments including the bass, drums, light guitar (with a wah-wah effect) and a soft layered piano playing the same melody. This heterophonic texture is a characteristic of Carnatic music.

BAR 29-33

At bar 29 all the instruments stop except for the guitar with the wah-wah which plays a small solo till about bar 33 alongside a flute which plays the same melody.

BAR 33-41

At bar 33 all the guitar stops; small drum improv accompanied by a simple bass line which follows the same key as the theme. At bar 36 the flute starts once again playing a completely different melody in a major key. It plays a very Arabian influenced melody until bar 40 where a distorted guitar accompanies it and once again starts to build up to break into the final section. An uplifter (reverse crash cymbal) was once again used to create more effect for the build-up.

BAR 41-51

At bar 41 there is a drum fill just before the build-up drops. A variation of the original theme is brought back accompanied by a distorted guitar playing a variation of the theme. Drums are introduced at bar 44 and play on with the melody till about bar 46 where the drums stop and the guitar and flute play alone. At bar 48 an automation was used to filter the melody before building it up again to the end of the piece. The automation then unfilters

the melody and brings it back to its original sound before the piece ends. An uplifter (reverse crash cymbal) again supports as the melody builds. After this building up the piece comes to an end at bar 51.

General comments:

The learner has presented two electronic fusion pieces, the first of which has been composed as film music. There is no score but a sectional, bar-by-bar commentary that is easy to follow. Whilst the first piece employs a wide variety of sounds including sampled voices, in contrast, the second composition combines Indian modes, Arabian melody and techno sounds. There is attention to rhythmic elements.

The learner's written statement includes details of relevant research and music examples and the purpose / occasion was clearly stated. More could have been said about the musical decisions made.

In the account of the composition that is submitted in place of the score, the music is described, but with only a little information about the process of composing. In particular, details about the technology programmes / software / processes used should be included to maximise the marks.

Criteria	Level awarded	Mark awarded
A Preparation; shaping of ideas and structure Evidence of preparation and aural familiarity with significant listening in the effective shaping of ideas.	4	8 marks out of 10
B Working with ideas; the use of compositional techniques The commentary is instructive here.	4	8 marks out of 10
C Use of medium and texture Confident selection, combining and layering of sounds with a good understanding of the possibilities for working in this medium. There is room for further imagination in the response.	4	8 marks out of 10
D Communication The recording is very well produced – a little stronger than the commentary.	4	8 marks out of 10
Total		32 marks out of 40

3.2.2 Learner 4

Composition 1: *September Breeze*

Composition 2: *Romance at Aditi's Bar*

Written statement: intention, decisions and listening influences

In *September Breeze* I was inspired to write a piece in the style of Rachmaninov's 'cello sonata op.19, particularly the slow movement. Both are in the key of E \flat major, a key that creates a lovely sound on the 'cello and I also prefer to play in that key. His use of large dramatic leaps and prominent bass notes in the piano part inspired me to try something similar. The lush romantic and rich chords of the piano part use extended chords, and make full use of the lower end of the piano. Rachmaninov's piano concerto no. 2 was also an influence and I therefore included chromaticism in the melodic line of the cello part.

In contrast, my song reflects the fact that I love to listen to Ella Fitzgerald and her rendition of songs. I have tried to recreate the laid-back jazz feeling of *Bewitched*, *Bothered* and *Bewilderment* by choosing a slow tempo and a relaxed melodic style. The chord progressions mostly consist of II, V, I progressions in various keys, though I have included some unexpected harmonic shifts. I have tried to keep the voice-leading fairly smooth when there are chromatic changes from chord to chord. The song *Misty* also sung by Fitzgerald, was an influence, for example in its use of II, V, I progressions to effect change to new keys and its ternary form. My piece also has the same structure.

Learner 4 Composition 1: *September Breeze*

September Breeze

Andante
Warmly

Violoncello

Andante
Warmly
mf

Piano

Red.

soft accent on the first beat of each bar

3. *cantabile*

Vc. *mf* *mf*

Pno. *mp*

Red.

7

Vc. *f* *mp* *mp*

Pno.

Red.

2

11

Vc. *p*

Pno. *subito p*
mp
espress.

Ped. _____

16

Vc. *f*

Pno. *mf*

LH
RH

Ped. _____

20

Vc.

Pno. *f espress.*
mf

Ped. _____

23 3

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *mf* *pp* *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

27

Vc. *pp*

Pno. *p*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

31

Vc. *mf*

Pno. *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

34

Vc.

Pno. *sim.*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for Violin (Vc.) and Piano (Pno.). The score is divided into four systems, each starting with a measure number (23, 27, 31, 34). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats). The time signature is 3/4. The Violin part (Vc.) is written in the bass clef. The Piano part (Pno.) is written in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo), *mf* (mezzo-forte), *p* (piano), and *mp* (mezzo-piano). Pedal markings (Ped.) are present at the end of several measures in the piano part. The first system ends with a repeat sign and a '3' indicating a triplet. The second system has a *pp* dynamic in the violin part. The third system has a *mf* dynamic in the violin part. The fourth system has a *sim.* (sforzando) dynamic in the piano part.

4

37

Vc. *f* *mp*

Pno. *mf* *subito pp*

41

Vc. *mp*

Pno. *warmly* *mp*

45

Vc.

Pno.

47

Vc.

Pno. *f*

Red.

49

Vc. *f* *ff*

Pno. Ped.

53

Vc. *f* *mp* *mf*

Pno. Ped.

57

Vc. *ff* *molto rit.* *a tempo*

Pno. *sf* *molto rit.* *a tempo* *espress.* *mf* Ped.

6

62

Vc.

Pno.

dim.

p

rit.

rit.

Ped.

Learner 4 Composition 2: Romance at Aditi's Bar

Romance at Aditi's Bar

Very slow

I'll look at you and I'll smile and I'll say he...

mp *p* *rit.*

espress. con un poco rit.

...llo you oh have we met before to-night I get the feeling we have

a tempo *mf* *dolce* *f*

I see the stars in your eyes and when you take me in your

sf *fp* *subito p*

2

Più mosso

12

arms I'll know

mf *sfz*

f

15

then we'll go home and then we'll

mp *mp*

softly *rfz* *p*

18

talk all evening. I'll know just by the look in your eyes. And I

mf

21

know it's a bar and no place to go looking for

cresc. *cresc.*

3

23

love but I can't help my - self scat

25 **Più mosso**

mf molto espress.
use swing rhythm different points

29

freely and
with expression

35

4

41 rit. A tempo

And I'll look at you and I'll smile—and I'll say good - bye

45

I'm sure we'll meet— a-gain I know it in my heart—

48

I will re - mem - ber your— eyes—

50 rit.

and when you'll leave me I will know it was true—

General comments:

A note about length: These compositions were submitted for the legacy syllabus, which had slightly different requirements in regard to total length. They are outside the timing parameters for 9483 but each of them is well balanced with care taken to present the material in a well-structured whole and for the purpose of illustration, marks have not been affected.

The learner has created two imaginative compositions, the first for cello and piano followed by an accompanied song. Both were both recorded as live performances. The relation of the text to musical notes in the song shows some awkwardness and there are no directions in the score to hint at the sort of scat sounds a performer might use in the middle section of the piece. The influences are clear (jazz, as the learner mentions in the commentary) with assured use of the piano.

The cello piece is similarly inventive, using the full range of the instrument. The harmonic language is fairly straightforward but with some interesting chromaticisms. The influence of Rachmaninov is evident and there is a clear connection made with the learner's performing experience. A little more specific comment in the written statement, on techniques and devices appropriated / adapted, would help maximise the marks.

Criteria	Level awarded	Mark awarded
A Preparation; shaping of ideas and structure Clear structure in both pieces. The ideas are strong and inventive but a little more detail to evidence the preparation needed.	5	9 marks out of 10
B Working with ideas; the use of compositional techniques The score demonstrates techniques of variation, development and contrast with slight weakness in text setting techniques in the song.	5	9 marks out of 10
C Use of medium and texture Many indications of comprehensive understanding of idiomatic writing for solo timbres and accompaniment and the relationship between the two.	5	10 marks out of 10
D Communication Some flaws in an otherwise vivid performance do not impact on the ability to achieve the highest marks. Scores are detailed with only the occasional blemish.	5	10 marks out of 10
Total		38 marks out of 40

Section 4: Coursework guidance for A Level

At A Level, learners must choose two coursework options from the choice of three shown below:

- Extended Performance (Component 3)
- Extended Composition (Component 4)
- Investigating Music (Component 5)

4.1 General overview

Building on the skills and approach of the AS Level, at A Level there is a significant emphasis on learners being able to independently plan and complete their work. However, the need for your support and guidance, cannot be over-stated. You can also play an important role in monitoring the progress of your learners, encouraging them to set and achieve interim goals as their coursework proceeds.

There is no 'set' content for each of the three Components at A Level, so that learners and their interests can inform the direction of the work. Although there is flexibility within each of the three Components, each must be underpinned by a rigorous approach that demands learner accountability throughout. It is important to achieve a balance between well-motivated research and explorative processes and establishing a clear way of documenting evidence so as to facilitate a strong final account in the production of written and practical submissions.

You must consult the syllabus for full details of the option requirements and documents to be submitted but the table below provides an overview of what learners need to complete and submit.

	Preparation	Documentation and evidence submitted for assessment		Bibliography / discography referencing all source materials
Extended Performance (Component 3)	All learners must carry out sufficient research and record this in some way, for example a journal. This will inform their final outcomes.	1000 to 1500 word research report	15-20 minute performance	✓
Extended Composition (Component 4)		1000 to 1500 word research report	6-8 minute composition	✓
Investigating Music (Component 5)		Up to 500 word reflective statement	2500-3000 word essay	✓

4.2 Supporting learners

Independent work does not mean that learners should not get any help from you. Centres are free to organise the curriculum in such a way as best meets the needs of their learners. This might include seminars on helpful topics such as how to source academically reliable materials, referencing, avoiding plagiarism, online search tools, listening analytically, engaging with a wider music community. Individual tutorials might be arranged on a regular basis for learners to discuss their work and receive general feedback. Group sessions are useful to encourage peer responses to a learner's presentation and to provide practice in succinctly and clearly explaining their work to date.

Regular monitoring of your learners' progress allows you to confidently complete the cover sheet declaration, testifying to the authenticity of the work submitted. The syllabus is clear about the need to avoid plagiarism and it is your responsibility to ensure that learners understand how to legitimately present the specific statements or more generalised ideas of others within the context of their own work.

4.3 Referencing

Bibliographies should be kept meticulously updated throughout each stage of the work. All sources used in research, preparation and the final documents should be submitted. The widest range of resources is to be encouraged and this might include the use of books, scores, journals, Internet sources, programme notes, liner notes, recordings and interviews.

The use of Internet based sources alone is unlikely to produce work of high quality. Each Component requires the submission of edited recordings to support the findings in the report or essay. Full performance details together with a clear track list are required.

Learners are free to choose from a number of possible referencing styles. If footnotes are used for references a full bibliography at the end of the report is still required. Harvard referencing is one system conventionally used in academic work. The following examples illustrate the detail of the information required in comprehensive referencing.

Referencing a book:

In their report, a learner might make the following statement:

The cross over between performing and composing is an important point of connection as is the relationship between performer and audience. Yo-Yo Ma, speaking about Astor Piazzolla in Azzi and Collier, (2000. p.ix) says, 'In an ideal world, composers would also be performers, as Piazzolla was, living through the daily and nightly performances and seeing the evident flow of interaction between those on stage and those in the audience'.

In the bibliography the reference details could be presented as follows, giving details of the book that the quotation comes from:

Azzi, M.S. and Collier, S. (2000) *Le Grand Tango: The Life and Music of Astor Piazzolla* New York: OUP.

Referencing a YouTube master class:

In their report, a learner might write:

I found the Professional Training Workshop for composers and singers with Osvaldo Golijov and Dawn Upshaw really useful for a number of reasons (Carnegie Hall, 2013).

In the bibliography it could be referenced as follows:

Carnegie Hall (2010) *Osvaldo Golijov and Dawn Upshaw Workshop*. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3nmbZI4kGLg> (Accessed: 16 April 2018).

Learners may choose to provide the essential information in clear but less formal ways.

Discography

In these references all the essential detail should be clearly presented as shown below:

Shofukan / Album: We like it here / Artist: **Snarky Puppy** Producer: Michael League / Ground Up Music. Released: February 2014

Das Wandern / Die Schöne Müllerin / Performers: Christian Gerhaher / Gerold Huber / Sony Classical. Released: October 2017

Consistency of presentation format and inclusion of essential details is what matters most.

Section 5: Component 3 – Extended Performance

Conversations about the coursework options available at A Level can be on-going. In performance, these conversations could include discussions with instrumental teachers or other musicians connected with the learner's performing life. In all Components personal preferences and interests will be a relevant starting point.

At all stages of their work, learners should be able to show how independent thinking, on-going reflection and response to investigations and discoveries have informed their work.

5.1 Preparation and the use of a reflective journal

Preparation for performing, for example, might include:

- Researching the repertoire and possibilities.
- Thinking about personal skill levels and potential possibilities (both appropriately ambitious yet realistic) by the time of the performance.
- Consideration of resources – online, library, educational facilities etc. and investigating the availability of recordings in areas of interest.
- Researching performers including recordings and concert reviews, including consideration of performing 'legends' and more contemporary artists (websites such as prestoclassical.co.uk include links with BBC resources and respected publications such as *Gramophone Magazine* and the *New York Times*).
- Listening to, and comparing different performances, thinking about their own personal response as well as thinking analytically about technicalities, musical interpretation etc.
- Considering the contextual issues of performance – this may include thinking about performance practice relating to the historical context (ornamentation or jazz conventions, for example) and extend to thinking about accompaniment possibilities – forming a 'band' for a live performance, using a professionally produced 'backing track' or pre-recording a sequenced backing track themselves if the live resources are not available for the final performance / recording.
- All the experiences that contribute to the decision-making process leading to programme choice can be documented. This may include all kinds of 'live' music experiences, for example personal involvement playing in a Chinese orchestra, string quartet or electro-acoustic ensemble.

Tracking these experiences in a journal from the outset is important. In particular, all the references documented through this process will form part of the bibliography / discography of the final report.

Keeping a journal might include:

- brief notes about the relevance / relative importance of each source investigated
- reflection on a sense of transition from the broader investigation to a more tightly detailed focus across the documentation
- identifying sources that will demand a greater level of investigation with consideration of the features of the music itself, appreciating the demands of the music and the interpretive possibilities in the hands of a range of performers
- initial comparisons of performances / recordings promoting a developing sense of understanding of a range of issues.

5.2 The report

The syllabus should be consulted so that the precise requirements for the report are adhered to. In particular an accompanying selection of relevant edited recordings must be submitted. Selecting and presenting actual music 'quotations' to support the report provides important evidence of learners' aural skills of perception.

Although any sort of journal or research notes kept by your learners are not included in the submission, they should be in no doubt that the quality and thoroughness of the preparatory work will be fully evident to an assessor in the final report or essay.

Learners will face the task of working through their research material in order to make coherent, succinct statements and construct a logical, well-reasoned and persuasive piece of writing that fully addresses the task they have set themselves.

Learners should ensure that part of their report addresses the notion of reflection and in particular the way in which their work has impacted their own performance.

Some examples are given below in order to demonstrate how learners might approach this component and how their thinking might evolve. The examples are outlines in note form that show how the potential scope of preparation and organisational work will help them to identify suitable music for their performances. The bullet points are potential starting places that the learner would expand upon in their research.

The opportunity to present a focused performance programme resulting from the exploration of the widest range of musical possibilities is fundamental to the spirit of the component.

These examples are to illustrate the principal features of the requirement **but are not prescriptive**.

5.3 Example outlines for Component 3

5.3.1 Learner A

Starting point

- *Instrument: trumpet*
- *Some grade examinations taken, including a performance of Haydn Trumpet Concerto Movement 2.*
- *Played various Baroque trumpet pieces and some modern repertoire but view Haydn's concerto as a time when the developments in the instrument allow for more possibilities so this is the area I will explore*

Preparation and organisation

- *Start spread sheet to list all resources used including a column to rate level of relevance / importance and a column to give specific timings of recording extracts that may be useful for final evidence in the accompanying edited recordings.*
- *Hard copy note book to record conversations (e.g. with instrumental teacher) / things for further investigation / ideas as they come up / on-going reflection*
- *Listening: Hummel / Hertel / L Mozart / Stamitz / Haydn*
- *Investigation: what type of trumpet did Haydn / Hummel write for?*

- Performers: 'modern' interpretations (Balsom /Hardenberger) / classic performances (André) / Marsalis – a jazz performer on classical repertoire?
- Recordings on period instruments? Immer / Hogwood and Bennett / Pinnock
- Characteristics of the classical solo concerto
- What is the role of the cadenza? What are the issues in Haydn / Hummel?
- Unconventional cadenzas: Stockhausen / Penderecki. Should I / could I write my own?
- Articulation – performance practice and interpretation – selecting performances for comparison
- Audio recordings – edited musical examples that illustrate the specific points I am making

Report

- How the research lead to my programme choice to combine specific movements of the Haydn and Hummel under the focus of 'The Classical Trumpet Concerto'
- Construct a plan for the report that organises my principle findings that directly relate to the issues for my own performance
- Reflection – selective reflections from the on-going investigations together with thoughtfulness about the connection between the research and the personal performing outcomes.

Performance

- Thinking about what is a reasonable ambition to be able to achieve in terms of my own skills
- Thinking about accompaniment options – most likely a piano reduction of the orchestral score. Sourcing an accompanist.
- Rehearsal schedule with accompanist to get to know each other as musicians and perform together with mutual understanding
- Thinking about whether an audience is for me or not? Performing in front of others to get a feel for this.

5.3.2 Learner B

Starting point

- Electric lead guitar
- Interested in Blues/ Rock style
- Need to start a tracking log of all thinking right from the start
- Play in a band – thinking of using this as backing rather than using backing tracks for performing although I know that both are acceptable possibilities
- Issues of presenting vocal songs for assessment of instrumental part – can I do an instrumental version?

Preparation and organisation

- Gary Moore – *Still got the Blues* – described as the best guitar solo ever – why is Moore so under-rated?
- Context – research influences on Moore (Hendrix / Mayall) and the migration from rock to blues and his association with BB King.
- Availability of performances / recordings for comparison. Analysis of various ‘live’ renditions. Interpretation of Moore’s music / performance by others e.g. Joe Bonamassa.
- Some Moore performances are more than 20 years apart – what can I learn from this? Relationship with audience – playing to please the crowd or himself?
- Essence of Gary Moore’s style – (vibrato, demonstrating wide / narrow / subtle etc. – this could be submitted as edited recording clips to make the point)
- Pentatonic scale improvisation – learning from listening to tracks – how much improvisation will there be in my performance – can I absorb the style enough to be really authentic?
- Will theoretical understanding help me? e.g. Circle of 5ths (Santana uses this too in Europa) – or is it more about the emotion Moore wrings out of the instrument?
- Memorable riffs – investigate a range of repertoire and line up with my own skills / responses
- The Guitar Hardware
- Analysing the backing track options – studio or live version? Different instrument line – up.

Report

I think there is so much here I need to be careful to focus on what I have learned about performing this music and what has become important to me and why. This has mainly come about through comparing performances. Things I will definitely include in the report are:

- How I keep being drawn back to the faithfulness of the original music
- How I have become more connected with the music from the inside out as I have listened / researched etc.
- The importance of personal interpretation – going to concerts ... researching evolution of the guitar solo ... taking on board the sound ... the value of emulating a playing style
- Improvisation is a very ‘present’ thing – all to do with the moment ... how my research has contributed to stylish authentic unscripted improv.
- Reflections on how I decided to perform instrumental versions of the songs and how I learned that being too technical can alienate the listener

Performance

- My performance programme eventually settled to three songs:
- Gary Moore: *Still got the blues* / *Midnight Blues* / *Parisienne Walkways* as this gives me

the possibility to show my best skills.

- *Because I decided to use the studio backing track which is more reserved and 'lean' I can make sure the balance for performance is suitable for the performing space I will be using*

5.4 Further examples

The requirement to provide a focus for extended performing allows for the performance of a complete work such as a sonata.

Learners may, however, perform a selection of pieces under a common focus, such as Romantic period miniatures for piano (Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Grieg). A vocalist might research and plan a programme of Mozart arias, for example, within a focussed framework or in a completely different vocal style, a singer might investigate solo songs from the musicals of Rogers and Hammerstein (or Schwartz or Guettel). Performances that incorporate the instruments and traditions of non-European cultures are encouraged and learners may have the opportunity to conduct some first-hand ethnomusicology in respect of their local music customs and practices. In this context, recordings of live performances (with permission) may be used to analyse and make comparisons with a clear connection to the performing outcomes for the learner.

5.5 Recording the performance

The syllabus requires that the final performance is recorded on a single occasion but it may be useful to record partial performances at an earlier stage to both test the equipment to be used and provide footage that learners can use for self-evaluation. Centres may wish to use the criteria statements to consider how a performance might be assessed.

Above all, centres should aim to provide video recordings that show the learner clearly and with a sound quality that gives an accurate account as possible of the live situation.

5.6 Coursework assessment: application of the assessment criteria

You and your learners should develop an understanding of the scope of the assessment criteria early on in the course; this will help to ensure that the details examiners are looking for can be presented clearly and learners can gain a sense of how well their work meets the criteria.

The research report attracts 20% of the marks. Learners will note that credit is given for the level of detail, coherence and reflection in their writing. The term 'report' refers not only to the written portion of the document but also the edited recordings in support statements made and the supporting evidence of the preparatory work in the reference pages: Bibliography, discography etc.

Fluency and accuracy (of pitch and rhythm / technical control / realisation of performance conventions) make up 60% of the marks and focus on both technical and musical aspects of the performance itself.

Interpretation and aural awareness contributes 20% of the marks and is awarded for the way in which the learner demonstrates their understanding as part of their performance. This should show how the research has fed into and informed their interpretation of the music. Demonstrating aural awareness can be thought of as the ears and knowledgeable intellect working together through the performance.

Section 6: Component 4 – Extended Composition

6.1 General principles for preparatory work

The foundations laid down at AS Level are valuable for learners undertaking composition. Music is all around us and whether we are conscious of it or not, it flows through our minds via a range of media in addition to our own deliberate music making, and listening choices. In preparing for Component 1, learners should develop the ability to listen analytically and investigate the elements of musical construction that composers have used. Curiosity about the sounds of certain music can lead learners to explore timbres and their combinations in textures, helping them to learn valuable composing skills.

Composing is a highly individual activity but the ideas will start to flow from attentive immersion in the music of others. Received ideas can be genuinely made into their own original work, or provide a starting place to launch into new territory. Listening and research activities are at the heart of composition and will be present at all stages of learners' work. If they choose to work within a medium such as electro-acoustic or music of a non-western tradition, particular skills and understanding may need to be developed to support the realisation of the composing ideas.

This is also true for working within a specific musical language whether this is western tonal harmony or Carnatic raga and tala. Gaining a level of mastery of such systems in order to compose confidently and convincingly can all be part of the valuable preparation for composing work.

Composing requires thinking ahead and timing the work to allow for adjustments to be made in response to feedback from others, for example, from peers or performers in the rehearsal process. Presenting three songs linked by an 'album concept', requires planning in terms of production in addition to the practicalities of composing and performing.

It is important for learners to try out their ideas and to hear their composing in the context an audience would experience it. Using a computer to notate ideas can be useful but only a few styles of music would use the computer in performance. The music experienced 'on screen' does not always provide a realistic impression of the music intended.

For an A Level submission, the composing work needs to demonstrate that the reflective process has been a genuinely valuable part of the work-in-progress.

6.2 Notation, improvisation and authentication

Learners should always aim to notate their work in a way that is appropriate to the tradition in which they are working. Learners writing in popular or jazz styles should not avoid full notation of their work although sections of improvisation might have a suggested outline as guidance to the performer. In performance, an improvisation that is performed by a musician other than the learner cannot be credited. Group compositions are not allowed in this component.

In the report, the learner should always be clear about performing roles so as to make their work clear to an examiner.

If a learner composes in an electro-acoustic medium or using other technology dependent methods, full disclosure of any sampled materials and details of the manipulations made to sound sources etc. must be given in the report.

Some examples are given here in order to demonstrate how learners might approach this component and how their thinking might evolve through the year. They are outlines in note form that will show how the potential scope of preparation and organisational work helps learners. The bullet points are potential starting places that they would expand upon in their research.

These examples are to illustrate the principal features of the requirement **but are not prescriptive**. The opportunity to present a composition resulting from the exploration of the widest range of musical possibilities is fundamental to the spirit of the component.

6.3 Example outlines for Component 4

6.3.1 Learner A

Starting point

- *Personal interests: musicals / music telling a story*
- *Instrumental music or vocal music?*
- *Suite as a structure to help sectionalise the music?*
- *Starting a listening / tracking journal from the very start of the process*

Preparing and organising

- *Listening: Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's dream – how the story line / characters are represented in the music. Evaluation of the score.*
- *Bizet's L'Arlésienne suite / Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite – looking at melodies, use of rhythms and instrumental textures*
- *Some really useful knowledge out of this mainly Romantic period repertoire but do I want something more contemporary?*
- *Possible stories / plays / books? E.g. 'Silas Marner Suite' / Japanese Folk Stories e.g. The Bamboo-Cutter and the Moon-Child / Grimms' Fairy Tales*
- *Reflection: In 6–8 minutes I mustn't try to cover too much of the narrative. Perhaps be selective with both the instruments / resources and select part of the story*
- *More Listening: Takemitsu / And then I knew 'twas Wind*
- *Philip Glass: La Belle et la Bête incidental music for opera based on Cocteau's film*
- *Thinking of the darker psychology of these fairy tales: Elfman rather than Disney.*
- *Settled on the idea of a short instrumental portrayal of a scene [Snow melts into spring] from Grimms' 'Ashputtel' followed by 2 short vocal pieces: Mother's Song and Song of Jealousy.*

Report

- *Selecting the materials that became musically important to my composition*
- *The edited recordings will help me make concise statements about the harmonic / instrumental / rhythmic / stylistic features I found interesting and useful when forming my composing ideas (track list needed!)*
- *Explaining purpose and context of the work*
- *Show how I came to choose certain pathways and reject others*

- Explaining the process of composition including independent thinking about instrumentation, harmonic language etc.

Composition

- I have a singer in mind for the two songs, as I believe this will be the best way to communicate the music fully.
- Although a 'live' performance may be possible due to choosing instruments I knew my friends played, the incidental music may need to be sequenced.

Starting point

- Wanting to write a piece of 'absolute' music in order to focus on musical ideas and materials and to work intensively without programmatic design or visuals
- Music that speaks for itself. What might be a suitable context for this? Learner composition concert?
- Need to keep a reflective diary from the outset, as this feels rather abstract.
- Possibilities for use of medium: piano and cello are my instruments.

Preparing and organising

- Talked to my teacher who suggested looking at Bartok's Mikrokosmos exercises for piano, specifically the composer's use of modes / bi-tonality / additive rhythms / focus on certain intervals / building harmony in different ways
- Also listened to / looked at the scores of some of the string quartets and was very excited by the range of sounds Bartok explores on the string instruments
- Used a music notebook to write down the notation of some of the ideas I liked
- The complexity of Bartok's harmony was difficult for me but I liked the idea of tonal centres to work with
- Further listening: the rhythmic movements of the quartets of Debussy and Ravel
- Listening: Shostakovich - String Quartet No. 8 use of fugato, pedal and motifs.

Report

- Clearly explaining how the preparation contributed to the formulation of my basic plan for a single quartet movement
- Explaining how the suggestion of my teacher (that I set myself some small composing tasks - max. 12 bars on the piano) helped me really understand the techniques I was identifying and analysing. Some of these exercises could be used in conjunction with edited recordings from my listening as part of the report presentation
- Explain the process of composition with cross-references to the listening where relevant but also reflecting on what I had learned and then used in an independent way.
- Reflecting on how the decisions I made in the light of the preparation work enabled me to pace the actual writing of the composition

- *Ensure that the references include all the materials accessed in the journal stage of the work*

Composition

- *As a string player I know how important it is to give full performance instructions on the score as well as being accurate in basic notation.*
- *Taking time to rehearse for recording or edit the sequenced recording to sound as convincing as possible with all expression marks 'sounding'.*

6.4 Further examples

The possibilities for composers in this component are very broad. Learners with a strong interest in music technology may wish to explore the medium of Videogame music, for example, using a Digital Audio Workstation with a range of software.

Learners may use instruments from different cultures and traditions, particularly if they have performing experience with these.

Some learners may feel attracted to the idea of writing for large orchestral forces. The depth of study needed to acquire the necessary orchestration skills to be successful should not be underestimated. Demonstration of composing skills at the highest level can be fully achieved through writing for smaller groups of instruments.

6.5 Recording the composition

The syllabus makes it clear that a sensitively edited sequenced realisation of a composition is fully acceptable for the final recording. Many learners will not be able to access resources for a completely 'live' performance but often a combination of live performance and music technology can be highly effective. Recordings should aim to convey the expressiveness of the musical intentions of the learner-composer.

6.6 Coursework assessment: application of the assessment criteria

You and your learners should develop an understanding of the scope of the assessment criteria early on in the course; this will help to ensure that the details examiners are looking for can be presented clearly and learners can gain a sense of how well their work meets the criteria.

The research report attracts 20% of the marks. Learners will note that credit is given for the level of detail, coherence and reflection in their writing. The term 'report' refers not only to the written portion of the document but also the edited recordings in support statements made and the supporting evidence of the preparatory work in the reference pages: Bibliography, discography etc.

Shaping of ideas; structure / working with ideas; the use of compositional techniques / use of Medium and texture make up 60% of the marks and focus on the technical skills and understanding of the processes involved in successful composing. The language of the assessment criteria also makes clear the need to demonstrate creativity, imagination and sensitivity as part of the craft of composing.

Communication contributes 20% of the marks. These are split so that 10% is allocated for the recording and 10% for the score / detailed notes. If the nature of the composition means

conventional notation is not appropriate a concise description acting as a substitute for a score must be included. This should be considered as a separate document to the report even though it may contain some of the same information. The recording is assessed on the extent to which the learner's intentions are expressively communicated. Precision of performance is important but not the priority here.

Section 7: Component 5 – Investigating Music

7.1 General guidance

Musicians use resources and tools to engage in their own craft in a very practical way. These activities need skills and knowledge in a theoretical sense but the investigation of the act of making music or using music is as practical as a composer working with ideas, or a performer interpreting the ideas of a composer. Thoughtful listening is the investigator's most valuable tool. It is an active, practical, music-focussed activity – investigating and responding to the object that is 'made' – the musical artefact.

It is in this spirit that learners should approach Component 5 – Investigating Music. During the preparation and investigation they will observe the many ways in which music is full of overlapping and connecting concepts, rich with opportunity for exploring the evaluative observations of others whilst engaging in personalised response, personalised evaluation and reflective practice.

It is important to be clear about the various parts of Component 5 that are required for preparation and for final submission:

Preparation

- Learners should keep a journal, established from the outset, outlining all preparatory work and investigations

For final submission

- Throughout the work, details of the sources of all reading / listening / viewing / internet-based research etc. referenced in the journal should be documented in the form of a comprehensive bibliography / discography. This forms a vital part of the final submission for assessment but is not part of the word-count for the essay.
- A 500-word outline proposal of the Investigation to be undertaken
- An essay of 2500-3000 words
- A reflective statement

7.2 Before writing a proposal – where to start

Learners should be thinking about possibilities early on and listening and reading widely. It may take a number of weeks of being open to the different directions the investigation journey may lead before a firm proposal begins to develop.

Researching the context of music and musicians is an important part of the investigation and a valuable aid to understanding. However, this should be a supportive element, rather than the focus of the work.

Learners should keep in mind that the 'essay' does not necessarily have to be presented entirely in connected prose. Visualising thoughts through mind mapping, for example, may be a useful tool in this preliminary phase and may provide them with experience, ideas and confidence about how they might use diagrams and tables to present some of their findings in the main report.

Learners will invariably start from a point of personal interest but quickly find that reading and listening may broaden their horizons and provide additional options to consider. Your support and guidance, and others will be invaluable at this stage.

Some examples of starting points are shown below.

Starting point	Initial listening	The first investigatory steps
A genre	'Hamilton' (Lin-Manuel Miranda)	A very popular work of contemporary music theatre, winning many prestigious awards: why? How does this musical compare to other hit musicals? (Overview the historic context but listen to music from other times) Is rapping a completely new idea in vocal music theatre?
A piece of music	Messiaen: <i>Quatuor pour la fin du temps</i>	The complex story behind this composition and performance of this piece by prisoners in Stalag VIII-A, during World War 2. Understanding the piece – instrumentation / structure / musical language Possible wider context: Musicians in extreme circumstances – e.g. Stalinist Russia / Germany during the war / the effect of modern warfare on music traditions, e.g. Afghanistan
An instrument	The Guzheng	Some historical context and technical research Regional styles and schools – characteristics Modern repertoire from 1950 including jazz, experimental and electroacoustic Traditional and modern approaches – 'global' music
Voice	World vocal traditions (investigating the sacred and / or secular?)	Expressing mystical Islam. Listening, e.g. Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan The Oratorio and the Passions: the Christian tradition of Handel and Bach Le Mystère Des Voix Bulgaires – mixing traditional and modern Throat singing traditions: Tuva and Inuit
An ensemble	String Quartet	Student 'I have played some early Haydn with my quartet and would like to investigate the quartet in later periods'. Teacher suggests Beethoven / Schubert and for the mid-period and Bartok or Debussy for 20 th century Student: 'I might also look at some of the famous quartets of the recording era – <i>Takács</i> , <i>Chilingirian</i> , <i>Kronos</i> and the diversification of the modern quartet repertoire'
A performer	Jaco Pastorius – bass player	A controversial figure who died too young Innovations and techniques Musical collaborations – 3 pieces, e.g. Teen Town / Heavy Weather Album / Weather Report (techniques) Birdland / Pastorius the composer: 3 Views Of A Secret Influence on future bassists e.g. Esperanza Spalding, Victor Wooten Reflecting on the wider legacy
A composer	Stravinsky	A long life of composing – did Stravinsky change with the times? Why is he thought of as such a 'giant' of early 20 th century music? How do I identify a body of work to listen to? How can I narrow this down to ensure and in-depth study?

Of course, there are many possibilities but the important thing is for your learners to start listening carefully to appropriate music as soon as they have the beginnings of an idea. They will need to exercise careful judgement about which pathways to pursue and those to turn away from. A careful balance between breadth and depth of study needs to be achieved and open dialogue / discussion with peers, family members, teachers and others can be a valuable way of 'thinking out loud'.

7.3 Completing the outline proposal form

Location of the forms and instructions for completion can be found in the syllabus.

Learners should describe, in no more than 500 words, the proposed area of study. An evaluative title is to be given although it is understood that modification to this may be made as the investigation progresses. An evaluative title is one that provides clues about the nature of the work and may take the form of a question to be addressed.

For example, an investigation centred on the Musical 'Hamilton' might be given the following evaluative title:

Is rapping the new recitative? An evaluation of the music of Lin-Manuel Miranda's Hamilton in the context of music theatre and operatic tradition.

Providing a preliminary list of source material to be consulted at this stage should include accurately referenced listening and reading material together with some on-line resources if appropriate. Learners should state if interviews, workshops or fieldwork forms part of the investigation. They must also explain how overlap between components will be avoided if such a possibility presents itself.

7.4 The Reflective statement

Learners will keep a journal of their unfolding research in both the broad areas of investigation and the more detailed focus. By organising and documenting their journey towards the shaping of the essay concept, they will accumulate evidence of the thinking process that shaped their decisions.

The reflective statement should reference the insights exercised during the course of the investigation as well as document the course of the work. It must include an explanation of why pieces and sources investigated may not have become part of the final essay.

7.5 A detailed outline of a complete task for Component 5

The following outline illustrates the potential parameters of a complete task. The content of each section is not exhaustive but gives an overview of the shaping of the project. As has already been shown, with music at the heart of any investigation, the possibilities are vast. This example is not to be taken as prescriptive in any way but represents something of the learner 'voice' as the Investigation gets underway and finds a clear sense of direction.

Initial Working title: *Is it possible for today's music to be original?***Starting point and ideas / listening to be explored**

Reading the following statement on the liner notes of an album of DJ remixing of some of Steve Reich's iconic compositions encouraged me to think about how music gets changed and transformed and can take on a new life in someone else's hands. I wanted to investigate the original music and see how it relates to the idea of mixing and to analyse what exactly has been done to Reich's original ideas.

'It's a gift of our rapid communications system and lightning fast dissemination of information that the kind of cosmic justice that this album brings is now possible. Here a new generation of British, Japanese and American djs, all of whom weren't born when Reich started working, some of whom have only the faintest idea of how much the world of mixing and re-mixing has to do with this man, have come together to re-mix music by the original re-mixer. Reich's music has now become the source material for a new generation of creative musicians who are using methods he started experimenting with four decades ago.

*Awesome.'*¹

Michael Gordon, New York City. 1998

Starting the journal and bibliography / discography spread sheet

1. Reich: *Remixed* [CD] New York: Nonesuch Records 1999
2. Reich, S. *'Early Works: Piano Phase / Clapping Music / It's Gonna Rain* [CD] New York: Nonesuch Records (1987)
3. *'It's gonna rain'* see above
4. Reich, S. *'Proverbs / Nagoya Marimbas / City Life* [CD] New York: Nonesuch Records (1996)
5. Reich, S. *'Music for 18 Musicians'* [CD] New York: Nonesuch Records (1997)

[to be continued....]

Preliminary Listening and Analysis

- *Early Reich and the concept of using tape recorders to explore the idea of phasing*
- *Listening: 'Come Out'*² and *'It's Gonna Rain'*³
- *Comparing DJ Spooky version of City Life: Open Circuit with the original City Life*⁴
- *Comparing Coldcut remix version of Music for 18 Musicians with the original*⁵
- *Resources: READING: Steve Reich: Writings on Music 1965-2000 OUP 2002*
- *Chris Cutler on 'Plunderphonia' and the section on 'DJ Culture' in 'Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music (pub. Continuum)*

NOTE – Add these to the bibliography with all the correct details

NOTE – Make a note of my own responses as well as taking on board the ideas of others

Interim Reflection

This is a big topic and I know I could go into a lot of detail on this. After talking to my teacher, she explained that 'borrowing' other people's music is not a new idea and has been going on for centuries.

Whilst I feel really at home with the Reich and DJ re-mixing investigation I think I want to give myself a broader historic perspective on all this and look at an example of how composers 'borrow' from themselves and how in the past composers borrowed from each other.

Proposal Plan

After further reading I have settled on:

- *Introduction: explain my focus of 'Recycled music' and devise a new title*
- *the idea of Reich as a starting place with a careful selection of listening examples to outline the 'minimalist' techniques he developed*
- *using analysis of remixed tracks to outline the techniques djs use to make the music 'their own'*
- *Historical perspective I: Bach reworking Vivaldi / Bach reworking Bach (with single example of each)*
- *Historical perspective II: George Crumb 'borrows' Schubert's 'Death and the Maiden' in his composition 'Black Angels'.*

I will put this into a 500-word proposal with some examples of my resources accessed so far, to provide a clear outline of my intentions.

Internet resources:

Bach in business: Why Johan Sebastian is ripe for remixing- Guardian newspaper article by Suzi Klein. <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/jul/29/js-bach-remixed-reworked>

<https://www.whosampled.com> Exploring the DNA of music

NOTE TO SELF: Add these to the bibliography with all the correct details

[to be continued...]

The Essay

I am going to use the Assessment Criteria as a guide to what is important in my essay. The Listening has to be backed up by a CD of edited highlights to support my analytic / investigative writing and this should be easier if I have kept a careful log of things as I have gone along.

Contextual understanding and evidence of Analytic and investigative techniques (with appropriate use of technical vocabulary), although given a separate mark, in practice will overlap to some extent in the course of the essay.

I must resist the need to talk about all the work I have done in the essay itself. None of the preparation is wasted – especially if what I want to say becomes clearer and more tightly focused by the time I start to write.

I will aim to write in a convincing way that draws on good scholarship but I hope also to demonstrate that through my investigation I have learned to form judgments of my own and can support these with fully appropriate examples.

The reflective statement

Being organised, keeping records of everything including my own thinking will enable this part of the process to be relatively straightforward.

NOTE: Leave enough time to do a good job of the reflection

If learners start from a place of motivated curiosity they are likely to grow in commitment to the chosen subject as the work progresses. Above all, readers of the final essay should be provided with clear answers to the questions:

- What has the writer listened to and what have they heard?
- What have they made of it?
- Have I been convinced by the discussion?

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