



AQA GCSE Music

Aims

A course based on this specification should encourage candidates to:

- a. Develop their understanding and appreciation of a range of different kinds of music, extending their own interests and increasing their ability to make judgements about musical quality.
- b. Acquire the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to:
 - make music, both individually and in groups;
 - develop a life-long interest in music, e.g. through community music making;
 - progress to further study, e.g. A/AS level and other equivalent qualifications, and/or to follow a music-related career, where appropriate.
- c. Develop broader life-skills and attributes including critical and creative thinking, aesthetic sensitivity and emotional and cultural development.

1. Coursework Composing 25% of total marks

A folio of **two** compositions, at least one of which is based on *Area of Study : Music for Special Events*

- Submissions will be by **either** recording, wherever possible, with score, **or** recording with detailed annotation.
- Internally-assessed and moderated by AQA

2. Coursework Performing 25% of total marks

- One **solo** and one **ensemble** performance
- Assessment may be conducted at any stage during the course and the recorded evidence retained for submission.
- Internally-assessed and moderated by AQA

3. Integrated Assignment 25% of total marks

- **One** composition, based on an AQA-set assignment, arising from one of four of the *Areas of Study* (excluding *Music for Special Events*).
- The assignment will be issued in the Spring term and the **composition**, submitted as a score and/or annotation, must also be accompanied by a recorded **realisation** and an **evaluation**.
- Externally-assessed as part of the Terminal Examination

4. Listening and Appraising Test 25% of total marks

- A listening and written paper of 1 hour 15 minutes
- All five *Areas of Study* will be included in the test
- Externally-assessed as part of the Terminal Examination

GCSE Musical Language

How sounds are organised/ musical elements

Melody and Harmony

- melodic step and leap
- diatonic intervals up to an octave, and the tritone
- major, minor, chromatic, pentatonic and blues scales
- phrasing and articulation
- ornamentation
- glissando
- unison and octave
- major and minor chords
- discords
- sevenths
- fifths/power chords
- inversions/slash chords
- note clusters
- dissonant/consonant
- harmonic rhythm
- cadence
- modulation

Rhythm and Metre

- pulse – regular/irregular/free
- syncopation
- cross rhythms
- tempo/speed
- simple and compound time
- accentuation

Instrumentation and Texture

- instruments/voices singly and in combination, synthesised and computer-generated sounds, sampling
- harmonic/homophonic, contrapuntal/polyphonic

Dynamics

- gradation of dynamics
- common signs, symbols and terms

Musical Devices

- sequence – melodic and harmonic
- ground bass, drone, pedal, ostinato, riff
- imitation, fugue, canon
- leitmotif

Tonalities

- major
- minor
- modal
- pentatonic
- atonal
- bitonal

Structures

- binary
- ternary
- rondo
- theme and variation
- call and response
- arch-shape
- strophic
- popular song forms

Notations

Staff

- treble clef from G I to C III including all accidentals
- bass clef from C II to F including all accidentals
- rhythm notation from semiquaver to semibreve including dotted notes and ties, triplets and all equivalent rests, including familiarity with American terminology, from sixteenth note to whole note
- key signatures up to 4 sharps and flats
- commonly used signs and symbols
- metronome marks
- quantizing and aligning

Graphic

- use of graphic notation to represent sounds

Chords

- use of letter names to represent major and minor chords (including sevenths)

Processes

- understanding of and engagement with the ways in which the listener, through aural perception, understands and appraises how music is composed and performed, its cultural and social context, enabling him/her to become critically aware of his/her own work and that of others.

Music in Context

Composer, Performer and Audience

Intention, use, purpose, stimulus, commission, patronage, technical/emotional demands, amateur/professional/connoisseur, performance practice, interpretation, improvisation, interactive media.

Occasion, Time and Place

Sacred/secular/utility, private/public, media, concert, live/recorded, internet, performing conventions and resources.