

Specification

GCSE

# Music

Cambridge OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1)  
in Music

J536

For first assessment in 2018



## About our new name

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**As of September 2025, our name is Cambridge OCR.**

Students who sat an exam **in summer 2025** will receive a Cambridge OCR branded exam certificate (our new brand), which will be the same for all future exam series.

You'll continue to see the OCR or Oxford Cambridge and RSA Examinations name while we work to update our material to our new name, Cambridge OCR. This will take some time, and you can still access all up-to-date qualification resources and materials via [Teach Cambridge](#).

**Important:** We'll keep the OCR/Oxford Cambridge and RSA name on existing teaching resources while the content of these remains applicable to the specification being taught. **New and refreshed** resources will be produced using the Cambridge OCR name/logo.

## Are you using the latest version of this specification?

The latest version of our specifications will always be on [our website](#) and may differ from printed versions. We will inform centres about changes to specifications.

## Tell us what you think

Your feedback plays an important role in how we develop, market, support and resource qualifications now and into the future. We want you and your students to enjoy and get the best out of our qualifications and resources, but to do that we need your honest opinions to tell us whether we're on the right track or not.

You can email your thoughts to [support@ocr.org.uk](mailto:support@ocr.org.uk) or visit our [feedback page](#) to learn more about how you can help us improve our qualifications.



Designing and testing in [collaboration with teachers](#) and students



Helping young people develop an [ethical view of the world](#)



Equality, diversity, inclusion and belonging (EDIB) are [part of everything we do](#)

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## Support and Guidance

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Introducing a new specification brings challenges for implementation and teaching, but it also opens up new opportunities. Our aim is to help you at every stage. We are working hard with teachers and other experts to bring you a package of practical support, resources and training.

### Subject Advisors

OCR Subject Advisors provide information and support to centres including specification and non-exam assessment advice, updates on resource developments and a range of training opportunities.

Our Subject Advisors work with subject communities through a range of networks to ensure the sharing of ideas and expertise supporting teachers and students alike. They work with developers to help produce our specifications and the resources needed to support these qualifications during their development.

You can contact our Music Subject Advisors for specialist advice, guidance and support:

01223 553998

[music@ocr.org.uk](mailto:music@ocr.org.uk)

[@OCR\\_PerformArts](https://www.instagram.com/OCR_PerformArts)

### Teaching and learning resources

Our resources are designed to provide you with a range of teaching activities and suggestions that enable you to select the best activity, approach or context to support your teaching style and your particular students. The resources are a body of knowledge that

will grow throughout the lifetime of the specification, they include:

- Delivery Guides
- Transition Guides
- Topic Exploration Packs
- Lesson Elements.

We also work with a number of leading publishers who publish textbooks and resources for our specifications. For more information on our publishing partners and their resources visit: <https://ocr.org.uk/qualifications/resource-finder/publishing-partners/>

### Professional development

Our improved Professional Development Programme fulfils a range of needs through course selection, preparation for teaching, delivery and assessment. Whether you want to look at our new digital training or search for training materials, you can find what you're looking for all in one place at the CPD Hub: [cpdhub.ocr.org.uk](https://cpdhub.ocr.org.uk)

### An introduction to new specifications

We run training events throughout the academic year that are designed to help prepare you for first teaching and support every stage of your delivery of the new qualifications.

To receive the latest information about the training we offer on GCSE and A Level, please register for email updates at: [ocr.org.uk/updates](https://ocr.org.uk/updates)

## Assessment Preparation and Analysis Service

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Along with subject-specific resources and tools, you'll also have access to a selection of generic resources that

focus on skills development, professional guidance for teachers and results data analysis.



### Subject Advisor Support

Our Subject Advisors provide you with access to specifications, high-quality teaching resources and assessment materials.



### Skills Guides

These guides cover topics that could be relevant to a range of qualifications, for example communication, legislation and research. Download the guides at [ocr.org.uk/skillsguides](https://ocr.org.uk/skillsguides)



### Active Results

Our free online results analysis service helps you review the performance of individual students or your whole cohort. For more details, please refer to [ocr.org.uk/activeresults](https://ocr.org.uk/activeresults)



### Practice Papers

Assess students' progress under formal examination conditions with question papers downloaded from a secure location, well-presented, easy to interpret mark schemes and commentary on marking and sample answers.



# 1 Why choose an OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music?

## 1a. Why choose an OCR qualification?

Choose OCR and you've got the reassurance that you're working with one of the UK's leading exam boards. Our new OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music course has been developed in consultation with teachers, employers and Higher Education to provide learners with a qualification that's relevant to them and meets their needs.

We're part of the Cambridge Assessment Group, Europe's largest assessment agency and a department of the University of Cambridge. Cambridge Assessment plays a leading role in developing and delivering assessments throughout the world, operating in over 150 countries.

We work with teachers, employers, and universities to create qualifications that support the needs of all students and help them prepare for their future. We offer A Levels, GCSEs, vocational qualifications, and other academic options to schools, colleges, workplaces, and other organisations.

### Our Specifications

We believe in developing specifications that help you bring the subject to life and inspire your students to achieve more.

We've created teacher-friendly specifications based on extensive research and engagement with the teaching community. They're designed to be straightforward and accessible so that you can tailor the delivery of the course to suit your needs. We aim to encourage students to become responsible for their own learning, confident in discussing ideas, innovative and engaged.

We provide a range of support services designed to help you at every stage, from preparation through to the delivery of our specifications. This includes:

- A wide range of high-quality creative resources including:
  - Delivery Guides
  - Transition Guides
  - Topic Exploration Packs
  - Lesson Elements
  - . . . and much more.
- Access to Subject Advisors to support you through the transition and throughout the lifetime of the specifications.
- CPD/Training for teachers including face-to-face events to introduce the qualifications and prepare you for first teaching.
- Active Results – our free results analysis service to help you review the performance of individual learners or whole schools.

All GCSE (9–1) qualifications offered by OCR are accredited by Ofqual, the Regulator for qualifications offered in England. The accreditation number for OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music is QN601/8216/7

## 1b. Why choose an OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music?

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music will provide a contemporary, accessible and creative education in Music with an integrated approach to the three main elements – performing, composing and appraising.

Learners are encouraged to be creative and to broaden their musical horizons and understanding with Areas of Study that inspire and challenge.

This specification will enable learners to explore performance and composition with a focus on their own instrument and genre choices and offer opportunity to explore new instrumental skills.

Through the various genres, styles and eras contained in our Areas of Study they will explore musical context, musical language, and performance and composition skills.

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music is designed to appeal to, and cater for, a wide range of interests, instruments, personalities and directions. Learners will have the opportunity to explore instruments and Areas of Study depending on their personal preference and ability.

### Aims and learning outcomes

OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music will encourage learners to:

- engage actively in the process of music study
- develop performing skills individually and in groups to communicate musically with fluency and control of the resources used
- develop composing skills to organise musical ideas and make use of appropriate resources
- recognise links between the integrated activities of performing, composing and appraising and how this informs the development of music
- broaden musical experience and interests, develop imagination and foster creativity
- develop knowledge, understanding and skills needed to communicate effectively as musicians
- develop awareness of a variety of instruments, styles and approaches to performing and composing
- develop awareness of music technologies and their use in the creation and presentation of music
- recognise contrasting genres, styles and traditions of music, and develop some awareness of musical chronology
- develop as effective and independent learners with enquiring minds
- reflect upon and evaluate their own and others' music
- engage with and appreciate the diverse heritage of music, in order to promote personal, social, intellectual and cultural development.

## 1c. What are the key features of this specification?

The key features of OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music for you and your learners are:

- an integrated performance and composition component with learner choice of instrument – non-examined assessment completed during the course
- a practical portfolio that includes the board set composition task and an ensemble performance – non-examined assessment completed during the course
- the performance and composition components are internally assessed and externally moderated by OCR
- an examined listening and appraisal component sat at the end of the linear course
- the performance and composition components will enable learners to pursue their individual preference with a broad range of Areas of Study
- the three components of OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music allow an integrated approach to the teaching and learning of appraisal, performing and composing.

## 1d. How do I find out more information?

If you are already using OCR specifications you can contact us at: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

If you are not already a registered OCR centre then you can find out more information on the benefits of becoming one at: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

If you are not yet an approved centre and would like to become one go to: [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

Want to find out more?

Ask a Subject Advisor:

Phone: 01223 553998

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/by-subject/music-related/meet-the-team/>

Email: [music@ocr.org.uk](mailto:music@ocr.org.uk)

Teacher support: <http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/by-subject/music/>

News: twitter: [@OCR\\_PerformArts](https://twitter.com/OCR_PerformArts)

## 2 The specification overview

### 2a. OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music (J536)

Learners take components: 01 **OR** 02, 03 **OR** 04, and 05.

There are two submission options, postal submission or electronic upload via Submit for Assessment.

Moderated upload: Learners must take (01), (03) and (05).

Moderated postal: Learners must take (02), (04) and (05).

#### Content Overview

Performance on the learner's chosen instrument.

Composition to a brief set by the learner.

Ensemble performance.

Composition to an OCR set brief.

Listening and appraising.

A written paper, with audio recording.

Aural recognition and context unheard/unfamiliar music from within the Areas of Study 2, 3, 4 & 5.

#### Assessment Overview

**Integrated portfolio  
(01 or 02)**

60 Marks

Non-exam assessment

**30%**  
of total  
GCSE

**Practical component  
(03 or 04)**

60 Marks

Non-exam assessment

**30%**  
of total  
GCSE

**Listening and  
appraising (05)**

80 Marks

1 hour and 30 minutes  
written paper

**40%**  
of total  
GCSE

The total length of performance required in component 1 **or** 2 and component 3 **or** 4 combined is a minimum **four minutes** with at least **one minute** as part of an ensemble. Learners can perform several short pieces for either or both components.

The total length of Composing required in component 1 **or** 2 and component 3 **or** 4 combined is a **minimum of three minutes**.

## 2b. Content of OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music (J536)

The OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music requires learners to practically apply knowledge and understanding, including musical vocabulary and notation as appropriate to the context, through the skills of:

- performing
- composing
- appraising.

The OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music requires learners to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the musical elements, musical contexts and musical language listed below, and allow learners, where appropriate, to apply these to their own work when performing and composing.

<b>Musical elements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organisation of pitch (melodically and harmonically) including simple chord progressions e.g. perfect and imperfect cadences, and basic melodic devices e.g. sequence.</li> <li>• Tonality including major, minor and basic modulation e.g. tonic – dominant.</li> <li>• Structure; organisation of musical material including simple structure e.g. verse and chorus, call and response, binary and theme and variations.</li> <li>• Sonority including recognition of a range of instrumental and vocal timbres and articulation e.g. legato and staccato.</li> <li>• Texture; how musical lines (parts) fit together including simple textural combinations e.g. unison, chordal and solo.</li> <li>• Tempo, metre and rhythm including pulse, simple time, compound time, and basic rhythmic devices e.g. dotted rhythms.</li> <li>• Dynamics; basic dynamic devices e.g. crescendo and diminuendo.</li> </ul>
<b>Musical contexts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effect of purpose and intention (e.g. of the composer, performer, commissioner) on how music is created, developed and performed in different historical, social and cultural contexts.</li> <li>• The effect of audience, time and place (e.g. venue, occasion) on how music is created, developed and performed in different historical, social and cultural contexts.</li> </ul>
<b>Musical language</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading and writing of staff notation including treble-clef and bass-clef note names, rhythmic notation in simple time, key signatures to four sharps and four flats.</li> <li>• Major and minor chords and associated chord symbols including traditional and contemporary notation as appropriate e.g. IV or G7.</li> <li>• Recognising and accurately using appropriate musical vocabulary and terminology related to the Areas of Study e.g. slide, repeats and stepwise.</li> </ul>
<b>Perform</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make use of musical elements, techniques and resources to interpret and communicate musical ideas with technical control and expression. This must be achieved by one or more of the following means: playing or singing music, improvising, or realising music using music technology.</li> <li>• Perform music with control, making expressive use of phrasing and dynamics appropriate to the style and mood of the music.</li> </ul>

<b>Compose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make use of musical elements, techniques and resources to create and develop musical ideas with technical control and coherence; freely as the composer chooses, and responding to a brief or commission supplied by others.</li><li>• Compose music that develops musical ideas, uses conventions, and explores the potential of musical structures and resources.</li></ul>
<b>Appraise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Analyse and evaluate music in aural and/or written form, using knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts and musical language to make critical judgements about repertoire within the Areas of Study.</li><li>• Use knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts and musical language to analyse unfamiliar music (i.e. individual pieces of music that have not been stipulated within the specification).</li><li>• Make critical judgements about music, using appropriate musical vocabulary.</li><li>• Formulate critical judgements, which will be achieved by attentive listening (rather than just hearing) and aural perception.</li></ul>

## Areas of Study

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Learners will study five Areas of Study.

Through the investigation and in-depth study of the large variety of music contained in the five Areas of Study set for GCSE (9–1) in Music, learners will further develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- the musical elements and their interdependence
- musical contexts
- musical language.

The Areas of Study are intended to be approached in a way that allows learners to explore music in an integrated fashion – providing performance, composition and appraisal opportunities.

Across the Areas of Study, learners will study music from the past and present, from the western tradition

and other world cultures. The Areas of Study also provide opportunities for learners to further their understanding of musical styles of their own choosing.

The specification contains five Areas of Study, which define the subject content, through which learners develop their knowledge and understanding of:

- the use of musical elements, devices, tonalities and structures
- the use of resources, conventions, processes, music technology and relevant notations, including staff notation
- the contextual influences that affect the way music is created, performed and heard including the effect of different intentions, uses, venues, occasions, available resources and the cultural environment.

## Area of Study 1: My Music

<b>Outline</b>	Learners should study their instrument, which can be any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• any instrument</li><li>• voice – this can include styles such as rapping or beatboxing</li><li>• DJ-ing</li><li>• sequencing – realisation using ICT.</li></ul>
<b>Focus for learning</b>	Learners should study the capabilities and limitations of their instrument, voice or technology including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• its range and characteristic timbre</li><li>• the techniques required to play it and any techniques that are specific to it</li><li>• how it might be used in different genres</li><li>• what type of ensembles it might be used in</li><li>• how its use is influenced by context and culture.</li></ul> Learners will practise and learn to perform one or more piece(s) for their instrument of an appropriate level of difficulty. <p>The piece(s) should reflect the learner’s ability and allow them to demonstrate enough skill and technique to access the marking criteria.</p> <p>The part played by the learner should not generally be doubled by any other part. The piece can be a sequenced recording where the learner has programmed all the parts.</p> <p>The performance can be one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the learner performing alone</li><li>• the learner accompanied by a live or pre-recorded part</li><li>• a piece for a group in which the learner plays a significant part</li><li>• a multi-tracked recording in which the learner performs at least one part</li><li>• a sequenced recording where the learner programs all parts.</li></ul> Learners will compose a piece of their choice. This can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• instrument(s)/voice/technology of their choice</li><li>• an unaccompanied solo piece</li><li>• an accompanied solo piece</li><li>• an ensemble piece</li><li>• in a genre of the learner’s choosing.</li></ul>

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## Area of Study 2: The Concerto Through Time

<b>Outline</b>	<p>Learners should study The Concerto and its development from 1650 to 1910 through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Baroque Solo Concerto</li> <li>• the Baroque Concerto Grosso</li> <li>• the Classical Concerto</li> <li>• the Romantic Concerto.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for learning</b>	<p>Learners should study and develop an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• what a concerto is and the way it has developed through time</li> <li>• the instruments that have been used for the solo part in the concerto and how they have developed through time</li> <li>• the growth and development of the orchestra through time</li> <li>• the role of the soloist(s)</li> <li>• the relationship between the soloist(s) and the orchestral accompaniment</li> <li>• how the concerto has developed through time in terms of length, complexity and virtuosity</li> <li>• the characteristics of Baroque, Classical and Romantic music as reflected in The Concerto.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should study and understand how composers of concertos use musical elements and compositional devices in their concertos including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instruments and timbre</li> <li>• pitch and melody</li> <li>• rhythm and metre</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• dynamics, expression and articulation</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• structure, phrasing and cadences</li> <li>• harmony and tonality</li> <li>• repetition, sequence and imitation</li> <li>• ornamentation.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should have some knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the names and intentions of composers who wrote concertos in each period</li> <li>• the historical and social context of the concerto in each period</li> <li>• the need for a larger venue over time as the genre expanded and developed</li> <li>• the changing nature of commissioner and audience over time.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested repertoire</b>	<p>A list of suggested repertoire is provided (see section 5d), but these should not be considered as set works.</p>

## Area of Study 3: Rhythms of the World

<p><b>Outline</b></p>	<p>Learners should study the traditional rhythmic roots from four geographical regions of the world:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• India and Punjab</li> <li>• Eastern Mediterranean and Middle East</li> <li>• Africa</li> <li>• Central and South America.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should study and develop an understanding of the characteristic rhythmic features of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indian Classical Music and traditional Punjabi Bhangra</li> <li>• Traditional Eastern Mediterranean and Arabic folk rhythms, with particular focus on traditional Greek, Palestinian and Israeli music</li> <li>• Traditional African drumming</li> <li>• Traditional Calypso and Samba.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focus for learning</b></p>	<p>Learners should study and develop an understanding of the following for each geographical region including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• characteristic rhythms and metres</li> <li>• the origins and cultural context of the traditional music</li> <li>• the musical characteristics of the folk music</li> <li>• the impact of modern technology on traditional music</li> <li>• the names of performers and groups</li> <li>• ways in which performers work together.</li> </ul> <p>Learners will study and understand how a range of musical elements is combined in traditional music, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instruments and timbre</li> <li>• pitch and melody</li> <li>• rhythm and metre</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• dynamics, expression and articulation</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• structure and phrasing</li> <li>• harmony and tonality</li> <li>• repetition, ostinato</li> <li>• ornamentation.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should have some knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• techniques of performing traditional drums</li> <li>• traditional rhythm patterns (including regular and irregular metres, syncopation and cross rhythms)</li> <li>• how texture builds with added parts</li> <li>• improvised melodic lines based on traditional scales (including modal and microtonal melodic ideas).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggested repertoire</b></p>	<p>A list of suggested repertoire is provided (see section 5d), but these should not be considered as set works.</p>

## Area of Study 4: Film Music

<b>Outline</b>	<p>Learners should study a range of music used for films including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• music that has been composed specifically for a film</li> <li>• music from the Western Classical tradition that has been used within a film</li> <li>• music that has been composed as a soundtrack for a video game.</li> </ul>
<b>Focus for learning</b>	<p>Learners should study how composers create music to support, express, complement and enhance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a mood or emotion being conveyed on the screen</li> <li>• a significant character(s) or place</li> <li>• specific actions or dramatic effects.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should study and understand how composers use music dramatically and expressively through a variety of musical elements and compositional devices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instruments and timbre</li> <li>• pitch and melody</li> <li>• rhythm and metre</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• dynamics, expression and articulation</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• structure and phrasing</li> <li>• harmony and tonality</li> <li>• repetition, ostinato, sequence and imitation</li> <li>• ornamentation</li> <li>• motif, leitmotif.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should have some knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how music can develop and/or evolve during the course of a film or video game</li> <li>• the resources that are used to create and perform film and video soundtracks, including the use of technology</li> <li>• the names of composers of music for film and/or video games.</li> </ul>
<b>Suggested repertoire</b>	<p>A list of suggested repertoire is provided (see section 5d), but these should not be considered as set works.</p>

## Area of Study 5: Conventions of Pop

<p><b>Outline</b></p>	<p>Learners should study a range of popular music from the 1950s to the present day, focussing on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rock 'n' Roll of the 1950s and 1960s</li> <li>• Rock Anthems of the 1970s and 1980s</li> <li>• Pop Ballads of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s</li> <li>• Solo Artists from 1990 to the present day.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Focus for learning</b></p>	<p>Learners should study and demonstrate an understanding of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• vocal and instrumental techniques within popular music</li> <li>• how voices and instruments interact within popular music</li> <li>• the development of instruments in popular music over time</li> <li>• the development and impact of technology over time</li> <li>• the variety and development of styles within popular music over time</li> <li>• the origins and cultural context of the named genres of popular music</li> <li>• the typical musical characteristics, conventions and features of the specified genres.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should study and understand how composers of popular music use and develop musical elements and compositional devices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• instruments and timbre (acoustic and electric)</li> <li>• pitch and melody (including bass lines and riffs)</li> <li>• rhythm and metre</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• dynamics, expression and articulation</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• structure and phrasing</li> <li>• harmony and tonality</li> <li>• dynamics, expression and articulation</li> <li>• ornamentation</li> <li>• repetition, ostinato and sequence</li> <li>• technology including amplification and recording techniques.</li> </ul> <p>Learners should have some knowledge of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• names of solo artists and groups who composed and/or performed in each genre</li> <li>• the changing nature of song structure</li> <li>• the historical and social context of the named genres of popular music</li> <li>• the growth of the popular music industry.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Suggested repertoire</b></p>	<p>A list of suggested repertoire is provided (see section 5d), but these should not be considered as set works.</p>

## 2c. Content of Integrated portfolio (01 moderated upload or 02 moderated postal)

This component covers the content from Area of Study 1: My Music. It is designed to enable learners to develop an understanding of performance and composition through exploration of their own instrument and styles and genres of their own choosing.

Learners should develop their playing skills and abilities through regular practice in order to be able

to perform a piece musically, accurately and with appropriate interpretation. Their chosen piece(s) should be of a standard commensurate with the learner's level of ability.

Within a composing context, learners should demonstrate knowledge of composition techniques, use of musical elements and resources, including specific instrumental and technology techniques.

Key Idea	Learners should:
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• practice a variety of pieces that develop their skills</li> <li>• perform one or more pieces of music for their instrument/voice/technology under supervised conditions</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of performing with accuracy and fluency</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of performing with technical control</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of performing musically and with appropriate expression and interpretation</li> <li>• understand and be able to perform confidently and stylishly.</li> </ul>
Composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• develop their understanding of rhythm, melody, harmony, structure and compositional devices through a variety of individual composition exercises throughout the course</li> <li>• demonstrate an understanding of how to compose appropriately for a range of instruments/voices/technology</li> <li>• understand how to extend and manipulate musical ideas and devices in order to develop a composition</li> <li>• create a composition that shows an understanding of the techniques and capabilities of the chosen instrument(s)/voice(s) or technology</li> <li>• be able to combine and develop various musical elements successfully within the composition using an appropriate structure to create a coherent piece.</li> </ul>

## 2d. Content of Practical component (03 moderated upload or 04 moderated postal)

This component is designed to enable learners to further develop their skills and understanding of performance and composition.

For performance, the focus of the assessment is on the demands of performing within an ensemble.

For composition, learners are required to compose a piece of music in response to a brief set by OCR.

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Key Idea	Learners should be able to:
Ensemble performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>practice and a variety of pieces that develop their ensemble skills</li> <li>perform one or more pieces of music under supervised conditions</li> <li>demonstrate an understanding of performing with accuracy and fluency</li> <li>demonstrate an understanding of performing with technical control</li> <li>demonstrate an understanding of performing musically and with appropriate expression and interpretation</li> <li>demonstrate an understanding of interacting with other musicians and/or parts.</li> <li>understand and be able to perform confidently and stylishly with awareness of other performers in the ensemble.</li> </ul>
Composition to a set brief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop their understanding of rhythm, melody, harmony, structure and compositional devices through a variety of individual composition exercises throughout the course</li> <li>demonstrate an understanding of how to compose appropriately to a defined brief</li> <li>understand how to extend and manipulate musical ideas and devices in order to develop a composition</li> <li>be able to combine and develop various musical elements successfully within the composition using an appropriate structure to create a coherent piece</li> <li>compose a composition that shows an understanding of the style, audience and/or occasion dictated by the OCR set brief.</li> </ul>

The choice of set briefs will give learners the opportunity to specialise in an area of particular relevance to their skills and interest. Learners must

firstly choose an Area of Study and then choose a stimulus to use as starting point for their composition. The stimuli will be as follows:

<b>Stimuli:</b>
<b>A choice of two rhythmic phrases</b>
<b>A choice of two note patterns</b>
<b>A four line stanza of words</b>
<b>A chord sequence</b>
<b>A short story</b>
<b>An image</b>

## 2e. Content of Listening and appraising (05)

This component will assess learners' knowledge and understanding of the content of Area of Study 2: The Concerto Through Time, Area of Study 3:

Rhythms of the World, Area of Study 4: Film Music and Area of Study 5: Conventions of Pop.

Key Idea	Learners should be able to:
Musical elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and describe musical features</li> <li>• draw conclusions about a piece/extracts of music</li> <li>• draw comparisons between extracts of music</li> <li>• demonstrate aural perception and apply knowledge of musical elements in score-related questions using standard notation</li> <li>• appraise audio musical extracts related to the Areas of Study 2–5 and respond with evaluative and critical judgements which demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ rhythm</li> <li>◦ metre</li> <li>◦ tempo</li> <li>◦ pitch</li> <li>◦ melody</li> <li>◦ mode/scale</li> <li>◦ timbre</li> <li>◦ instruments</li> <li>◦ dynamics</li> <li>◦ articulation</li> <li>◦ texture</li> <li>◦ chords</li> <li>◦ tonality.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Musical contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• appraise and make evaluative and critical judgements which demonstrate knowledge and understanding of repertoire within the Areas of Study 2–5 in terms of:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ how music is created, developed and performed in different historical, social and cultural contexts</li> <li>◦ the effect of purpose and intention (eg. of the composer or performer)</li> <li>◦ the effect of audience, time and place (eg. venue, occasion)</li> <li>◦ performing conventions</li> <li>◦ stylistic detail</li> <li>◦ origins and cultural context of traditional music</li> <li>◦ ways in which styles and genres evolve and develop</li> <li>◦ the impact of modern technology</li> <li>◦ the names of performers and groups</li> </ul> </li> <li>• demonstrate and apply knowledge and understanding of contextual influences that affect the way music is created, performed and heard:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ recognising contrasting genres, styles and traditions</li> <li>◦ defining characteristics of genres, styles and traditions</li> <li>◦ demonstrating awareness of musical chronology and stylistic features.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Musical language**

- appraise audio musical extracts and make evaluative and critical judgements which demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the Areas of Study 2–5 in terms of:
  - instruments and voices
  - form and structure
  - compositional devices
  - expressive devices
  - ensemble
  - harmony
  - tonality and modulation
  - musical characteristics
  - how mood is created
  - phrasing
  - sonority
  - texture
  - ornamentation
- demonstrate and apply knowledge of musical language, involving:
  - reading and writing of staff notation
  - identifying compositional devices
  - recognising and using appropriate musical vocabulary and terminology related to each Area of Study
  - awareness of genre
  - comparing contrasting musical extracts
  - awareness of how performers work together.

## 2f. Prior knowledge, learning and progression

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No prior knowledge or learning of the subject is required. A background in music, for example, learning to play an instrument in an extra-curricular capacity would be beneficial.

Learners entering this course should have achieved a general educational level equivalent to at least National Curriculum Level 3, or a Distinction at Entry Level within the National Qualifications Framework.

GCSE qualifications are general qualifications which enable learners to progress either directly to employment, or to proceed to further qualifications.

Progression to further study from GCSE will depend upon the number and nature of the grades achieved. Broadly, learners who are awarded mainly grades 3–1 at GCSE could either strengthen their base through further study of qualifications at Level 1 within the National Qualifications Framework or could proceed to Level 2. Learners who are awarded mainly grades 9–4 at GCSE would be well prepared for study at Level 3 within the National Qualifications Framework.

There are a number of Music specifications at OCR. Find out more at [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

## 3 Assessment of OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music

### 3a. Forms of assessment

The OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music consists of two components (the Integrated portfolio and Practical component) that are assessed by

the centre and externally moderated by OCR and one component (Listening and appraising) that is externally assessed.

#### Integrated portfolio (01 or 02)

This component is worth 60 marks and represents 30% of the marks for GCSE. This component is internally assessed by the centre and externally moderated by OCR, assessing Assessment Objective 1 – perform with technical control, expression and interpretation, and Assessment Objective 2 – compose and develop musical ideas with technical control and coherence.

Learners' understanding will be assessed through:

- a performance
- a composition to a learner determined brief.

The learner should prepare and record a performance and a composition to a self-determined brief. This

must be assessed by the centre and submitted to OCR for moderation.

The performance must be completed in the academic year in which the qualification is awarded. The composition may be completed at any time during the course.

The performance repertoire should be selected by the learner following discussion with the centre. The performance should normally be a commercially available piece and a copy of the score or lead sheet should be supplied.

In Composing, the learner should prepare a composition of their own choice. This is to be assessed by the centre and submitted to OCR for moderation.

#### Practical component (03 or 04)

This component is worth 60 marks and represents 30% of the marks for GCSE. This component is internally assessed by the centre and externally moderated by OCR, assessing Assessment Objective 1 and Assessment Objective 2.

Learners' understanding will be assessed through:

- an ensemble performance
- a composition to a brief set by OCR.

The learner should prepare and record an ensemble performance and a composition to a brief set by OCR. This must be assessed by the centre and submitted to OCR for moderation.

The performance and composition must be completed in the academic year in which the qualification is awarded.

The performance repertoire should be selected by the learner following discussion with the centre. The performance should normally be a commercially available piece and a copy of the score or lead sheet should be supplied.

In Composing, learners are required to compose a piece of music in response to a brief set by OCR. Within this composition Learners are expected to use and develop their knowledge and understanding of rhythm, melody, harmony and compositional techniques.

There will be choice of set briefs based on the Areas of Study that will give learners some opportunity to specialise in an area of particular relevance to their skills and interest. The set briefs will be available to Centres on September 1st of the academic year in which Learners are to undertake their assessment. These will be available on the OCR website.

## Listening and appraising (05)

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This component will be externally assessed and contribute 40% of the overall qualification, assessing Assessment Objective 3 and Assessment Objective 3.

For Assessment Objective 3, learners will demonstrate and apply knowledge of:

- musical elements and/or features
- musical contexts
- musical language.

For Assessment Objective 4, learners will use appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements which demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of:

- musical elements
- musical contexts
- musical language.

Learners will be expected to answer questions based on extracts of music played during the examination. The following types of question will be asked:

- multiple choice questions
- single word or short answer questions
- questions that require extended response.

The examination will be **one hour and 30 minutes**. Learners will be given 2 minutes reading time at the start of the exam. Musical vocabulary used in the questions and expected in the learners' responses will be taken from the Language for Learning (see appendix 5e). Learners will also be able to use non-technical language to communicate responses.

The purpose of the examination is to assess aural perception and understanding of the content of the Areas of Study 2–5. A contrasting selection of musical extracts from the Areas of Study will be used. These extracts will be taken from both within and outside the suggested repertoire. Detailed specific knowledge of music in the suggested repertoire will not be expected.

### 3b. Assessment objectives (AO)

There are four Assessment Objectives in OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music. These are detailed in the table below.

Learners are expected to demonstrate their ability to:

Assessment Objective	
<b>AO1</b>	perform with technical control, expression and interpretation
<b>AO2</b>	compose and develop musical ideas with technical control and coherence
<b>AO3</b>	demonstrate and apply musical knowledge
<b>AO4</b>	use appraising skills to make evaluative and critical judgements about music.

### 3c. AO weightings in OCR GCSE (9–1) Music

The relationship between the Assessment Objectives and the components are shown in the following table:

Component	% of overall GCSE (9–1) in Music (J536)			
	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4
Integrated portfolio (J536/01 OR J536/02)	15	15	0	0
Practical component (J536/03 OR J536/04)	15	15	0	0
Listening and appraising (J536/05)	0	0	20	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

### 3d. Total qualification time

Total qualification time (TQT) is the total amount of time, in hours, expected to be spent by a learner to achieve a qualification. It includes both guided learning hours and hours spent in preparation, study,

and assessment. The total qualification time for GCSE Music is 140 hours. The total guided learning time is 120-140 hours.

### 3e. Qualification availability outside of England

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This qualification is available in England. For Wales and Northern Ireland please check the Qualifications in Wales Portal (QIW) or the Northern Ireland Department of Education Performance Measures /

Northern Ireland Entitlement Framework Qualifications Accreditation Number (NIEFQAN) list to see current availability.

### 3f. Language

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This qualification is available in English only. All assessment materials are available in English only and all candidate work must be in English.

### 3g. Assessment availability

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There will be one examination series available each year in May/June to **all** learners.

examination series at the end of the course.

The examined component must be taken in the

This specification will be certificated from the June 2018 examination series onwards.

### 3h. Retaking the qualification

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Learners can retake the qualification as many times as they wish. Learners must retake all examined components but they can choose to either retake one

or both of the non-exam assessment (NEA) components or carry forward (re-use) their most recent result(s) (see Section 4a).

### 3i. Assessment of extended response

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The assessment materials for this qualification provide learners with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to construct and develop a sustained and coherent line of reasoning and marks for extended

responses are integrated into the marking criteria. Extended response will be assessed in Listening and appraising (05).

### 3j. Non-exam assessment

Centres will assess all the work of their learners in the non-examined assessment components.

OCR will moderate these marks in accordance with standard policy relating to the standardisation and sampling of work.

Work submitted for the GCSE level components should reflect the standard expected for a learner after a full GCSE level course of study.

The amount of time given to learners for the preparation period should be determined by centres. All work must be completed by the designated finishing time set by the centre.

The performance and composition for all components must be completed under supervised conditions within the centre to ensure the authenticity of the learner's submission and completed in the academic year in which the learner expects to be awarded the qualification. Cover sheets will be provided to centres to be submitted with the learner's work to the moderator.

Dates and deadlines for preparatory work, must be set by centres in order to facilitate the completion of marking and internal standardisation by the OCR-set deadline.

Guidance should be given to learners about availability and choice of materials, health and safety, avoidance of plagiarism and completion of work in accordance with specification requirements and procedures.

NB: the total length of performance required in both the Integrated portfolio and the Practical component **must** have a combined duration of at least **four minutes** (with the ensemble performance lasting a minimum of one minute). A penalty will be applied by OCR where the minimum duration is not met.

NB: the total length of composition required in both the Integrated portfolio and the Practical component **must** have a combined duration of at least **three minutes**. Students may not be able to access the full range of marks if they do not reach the minimum duration requirements.

For further guidance please also see section 4d – Admin of non-exam assessment.

### Use of “best fit” approach for marking criteria

The assessment task(s) for each component should be marked by teachers according to the given marking criteria within the relevant component using a ‘best fit’ approach. For each of the marking criteria, teachers select one of the band descriptors provided in the marking grid that most closely describes the quality of the work being marked.

Marking should be positive, rewarding achievement rather than penalising failure or omissions. The award of marks **must be** directly related to the marking criteria. Teachers use their professional judgement in selecting the band descriptor that best describes the work of the learner.

To select the most appropriate mark within the

band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

Teachers should use the full range of marks available to them and award *full* marks in any band for work which fully meets that descriptor. This is work which is ‘the best one could expect from learners working at that level’.

Where there are only two marks within a band the choice will be between work which, in most respects, meets the statement and work which just meets the statement.

For wider mark bands the marks on either side of the middle mark(s) for 'adequately met' should be used where the standard is lower or higher than 'adequate' but **not** the highest or lowest mark in the band.

## Integrated portfolio (01 or 02)

### Performance Requirements

The repertoire should be selected by the learner following discussion with the centre. The performance should normally be a commercially available piece and a copy of the score or lead sheet should be supplied. Where a written score or lead sheet is unavailable – because it does not exist – other means of referencing the performance intentions can be permitted. However, where a written score or lead sheet is available, it should still be used.

Alternative material will only be accepted where a written score or lead sheet is unavailable because it does not exist, and the only other types of evidence permissible are:

- the chord pattern used
- the note pattern/raga used
- a recording of the piece by the original commercial performer
- a recording by a commercial artist in the style of the learner's performance.

Candidates are awarded marks for the quality of the performance only. The score, lead sheet (or alternative reference material) is not awarded any marks.

The performance should not be the learners' composition; however for instruments where the style of performance is largely improvisatory, such as beatboxing, rapping and DJ-ing, substantial amounts of improvisation will be acceptable as performance.

The total length of performance required in the Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) and the Practical component (03 or 04) combined is a minimum of **four minutes** with at least **one minute** as part of an ensemble. Learners can perform several short pieces for either or both components.

The performance can be one of the following:

- the learner performing alone
- the learner accompanied by a live or pre-recorded part
- a piece for a group in which the learner plays a significant part
- a multi-tracked recording in which the learner performs at least one part
- a sequenced recording where the learner programs all parts.

## Composition Requirements

The total length of the Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) and the Practical component (03 or 04) combined is a **minimum of three minutes**.

In Composing, learners are required to compose a piece of music in response to a brief they have determined themselves. Within this composition Learners are expected to use and develop their knowledge and understanding of rhythm, melody, harmony and compositional techniques.

The composition should be submitted in a recorded form and accompanied by a score, lead sheet or written account of the composition which has been produced by the learner.

The composition must be completed under supervised conditions within the centre to ensure the authenticity of the learner's submission.

It is not necessary for the learner to perform their own composition. Where others have taken part in the performance of a learner's composition, this must be performed from a score that has been prepared by the learner. The performer should not add any stylistic enhancement to the written score.

The composition can also be recorded and assessed as a playback from an ICT software sequencing or notation package. Details of the software used should be supplied, and the use of any pre-recorded samples and loops declared.

## Performance Marking Criteria

The learner's performance in the recital as a whole is assessed and a mark given under each of the three headings: Technical control and fluency, expression and interpretation, and difficulty.

Three separate marks should be awarded and this will give the learners a total mark out of 30 for performance.

GCSE performances should demonstrate control, expressive use of phrasing and dynamics which are appropriate to the style and mood of the music

Where pieces do not have a consistent level of demand, the "difficulty" mark applicable to the piece with the lowest level of demand is to be awarded.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded

- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

### Technical control and fluency

Learners are assessed on their use of a range of appropriate techniques as they apply to the learner's instrument/voice (e.g. coordination and balance of RH/LH, bow/fingers, tongue/fingers; intonation; breath control; diction; pedalling; registration, use of appropriate tempi).

Where the learner presents a performance using music technology to realise music, their ability to use appropriate technique (e.g. appropriate software functions; production techniques; balance) is assessed.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The performance is confident, accurate and fluent with good technical control appropriate to the demand of the music. There may be minor blemishes but they do not significantly affect the overall performance. Intonation (where relevant) and tone production are good.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The performance is predominantly fluent, with technical control adequate to the demand of the music. There could be some errors but these do not disrupt the overall flow of the music. Intonation (where relevant) and tone production are generally secure.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The performance has some fluency with mostly correct rhythms and pitches. Hesitance and technical errors may sometimes disturb the flow of the music. Intonation (where relevant) is partially secure.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The performance has very limited accuracy and fluency. Intonation (where relevant) may be poor.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit.

### Expression and interpretation

Learners are assessed on their musical communication, expression and interpretation, including expressive use of phrase and

dynamics, appropriate to the style and mood of the music.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The performance is communicated musically and stylishly using conventions that are appropriate to the genre. A high level of musical detail is evident.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The performance communicates some appropriate dynamics and articulation and there is an attempt to shape the music.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The performance has limited attention to dynamics and articulation, although there may be some sense of direction.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The performance attempts to communicate the piece in a simple way but there is little success.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit.

### Difficulty

Where pieces do not have a consistent level of demand the mark applicable to the piece with the lowest level of demand is to be awarded.

<b>5–6 marks</b>	A more complex piece involving sustained control with more intricate technical demands in terms of an extended range and control of tempo, dynamics, articulation and phrasing.
<b>3–4 marks</b>	A piece which requires a range of rhythmic and/or melodic change with some technical demands in terms of phrasing, dynamics, articulation and key.
<b>1–2 marks</b>	A simple piece which uses a limited rhythmic and/or melodic range with easy movement between notes and where relevant, in an easy key.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit.

## Composition Marking Criteria

Each composition is awarded a mark out of 30 using the core criteria. The core criteria take into account the quality of ideas, the way that they are manipulated, and the structure. The overarching outcome statement should be used to define the band of marks into which the composition is placed. A mark should then be selected within the band to reflect the degree to which the piece meets the rest of the criteria.

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

### Core criteria

Learners are assessed on their ability to develop musical ideas, use conventions and techniques, explore the potential of musical structures and resources, use of musical elements.

<b>26–30 marks</b>	<p>The composer's intentions are wholly clear throughout the piece.</p> <p>A highly musical, stylish and effective piece.</p> <p>There is a wide variety and/or advanced use of musical elements which demonstrate a high level of musical understanding.</p> <p>Excellent development of ideas using compositional techniques applied in an entirely appropriate way.</p> <p>The piece demonstrates excellent understanding of stylistic and structural conventions.</p>
<b>21–25 marks</b>	<p>The composer's intentions are clear.</p> <p>Musically successful piece with a strong sense of style.</p> <p>There is a variety of musical elements that show a good level of musical understanding.</p> <p>There is development of ideas appropriate to the style showing understanding of several compositional techniques.</p> <p>The piece demonstrates good understanding of stylistic and structural conventions.</p>
<b>16–20 marks</b>	<p>The composer's intentions are mostly clear.</p> <p>Musically coherent with a sense of style.</p> <p>There is a range of musical elements which show musical understanding.</p> <p>There is development using a range of appropriate compositional techniques.</p> <p>The structure is well defined and appropriate to the musical style.</p>
<b>11–15 marks</b>	<p>The composer's intentions are clear in places.</p> <p>A mostly successful piece with some coherence and some sense of style.</p> <p>There is some success in the use and combination of a range of musical elements.</p> <p>There is some development using mostly appropriate compositional techniques.</p> <p>The piece is extended within a defined structure mostly appropriate to the style.</p>

<b>6–10 marks</b>	<p>Some intentions of the composer are evident in places. Musically simple with a little coherence. There is a small range of musical elements and these have limited musical impact. Simple development using some appropriate compositional techniques. The piece is extended within a simple structure mostly appropriate to the style.</p>
<b>1–5 marks</b>	<p>Lack of clear intention for the piece. Limited musical shape with little coherence. The use of musical elements is very basic. Basic use of a few compositional techniques. Limited structural consideration and limited understanding of style.</p>
<b>0 marks</b>	<p>There is nothing worthy of credit.</p>

## Practical component (03 or 04)

### Performance requirements

The performance must be an ensemble performance in which the learner plays a significant part.

An ensemble performance is defined as:

- performing an individual part within a live ensemble consisting of two or more voices or instruments. Other performers in the ensemble should not consistently double the learner's part
- a multi-tracked performance consisting of two or more voices or instruments in which the learner has performed and recorded some or all of the parts
- a sequenced performance of a piece for two or more instruments using any appropriate sequencing software
- other performers to not have to be GCSE learners.

**The music performed is to be decided by the learner, following discussion with the centre.** Learners should be guided to select repertoire with a sustained level of demand.

It is expected that the piece performed will be a commercially published or recorded piece of music. Performances of learners' compositions are also accepted, provided that a detailed score of the part being performed is provided.

**The centre must provide a copy of the score or a lead sheet of the piece or pieces performed by the learner to the moderator.** Where the nature of the performance relies on an element of improvisation, it will be necessary to provide evidence of the basis of the learner's part within the ensemble. Where a written score or lead sheet does not exist, the following types of evidence can be submitted.

- the chord pattern used
- the note pattern/raga used
- a recording of the piece by the original commercial performer
- a recording by a commercial artist in the style of the learner's performance.

The duration of the ensemble piece should be **at least one minute**. However, centres should note that the total length of performance required in the Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) and the Practical component (03 or 04) **combined is four minutes**. It is possible therefore, where a learner chooses to play pieces that are quite short in length, to play several pieces for either or both components. A penalty will be applied by OCR where the minimum duration is not met.

**The centre should assess a complete and unedited recording of the supervised performance(s).**

Ensemble performances should be a balanced recording of the overall ensemble.

## Composition requirements

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The set briefs will provide a choice of eight stimuli to enable learners to specialise in an area of composition that is relevant to their personal skills and interests. It is expected that the stimulus will be used as the starting point from which the learner creates a composition that develops and extends the given stimulus, rather than simply repeating the same material for the duration of the piece.

The brief will also specify an audience and/or occasion for each composition.

The set briefs will be available to centres on 1 September of the academic year in which the learner certificates.

The total length of compositions required in the Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) and the Practical component (03 or 04) combined is a **minimum of three minutes**. Students may not be able to access the full range of marks if they do not reach the minimum duration requirements.

The composition is assessed in a recorded form and accompanied by a score, lead sheet or written account that has been produced by the learner.

The composition must be completed under supervised conditions within the centre to ensure the authenticity of the learner's submission.

Group compositions are not permitted. It is not necessary for the learner to perform their own composition. Where others have taken part in the performance of a learner's composition, this must be performed from a score that has been prepared by the learner. The other performer(s) must not add any stylistic enhancement to the written score.

The composition can be recorded and assessed as a playback from an ICT software sequencing or notation package. Details of the software used should be supplied, and the use of any pre-recorded samples and loops declared.

For compositions recorded over four or more tracks, an annotated screen shot(s) can be included in the written account. This should be printed in colour and of a sufficient scale to enable the detail of the individual tracks to be clearly visible.

The use of any template style worksheets used to directly assist learners on the assessed composition must also be declared by the centre – the materials used must be sent with the composition recording, lead sheet, score and written account.

## Performance Marking Criteria

The learner's performance in the recital as a whole is assessed and a mark given under each of the three headings: Technical control and fluency; expression, interpretation and ensemble awareness; and difficulty.

Three separate marks should be awarded and this will give the learners a total mark out of 30 for performance.

GCSE performances should demonstrate control, expressive use of phrasing and dynamics which are appropriate to the style and mood of the music.

Where pieces do not have a consistent level of demand the "difficulty" mark applicable to the piece with the lowest level of demand is to be awarded.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded

- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

### Technical control and fluency

Learners are assessed on their use of a range of appropriate techniques as they apply to the learner's instrument/voice (e.g. coordination and balance of RH/LH, bow/fingers, tongue/fingers; intonation; breath control; diction; pedalling; registration, use of appropriate tempi).

Where the learner presents a performance using music technology to realise music, their ability to use appropriate technique (e.g. appropriate software functions; production techniques; balance) is assessed.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The performance is confident, accurate and fluent with good technical control appropriate to the demand of the music. There may be minor blemishes but they do not significantly affect the overall performance. Intonation (where relevant) and tone production are good.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The performance is predominantly fluent, with technical control adequate to the demand of the music. There could be some errors but these do not disrupt the overall flow of the music. Intonation (where relevant) and tone production are generally secure.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The performance has some fluency with mostly correct rhythms and pitches. Hesitance and technical errors may sometimes disturb the flow of the music. Intonation (where relevant) is partially secure.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The performance has very limited accuracy and fluency. Intonation (where relevant) may be poor.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit

**Expression, interpretation and ensemble awareness**

Learners are assessed on their musical communication, expression and interpretation, including expressive use of phrase and dynamics, appropriate to the style and mood of the music.

Also their aural awareness in relation to the ensemble and their ability to blend and co-ordinate with other performer(s) is assessed.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The performance is communicated musically and stylishly using conventions that are appropriate to the genre. A high level of ensemble awareness is evident and is in keeping with the context of the music.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The performance communicates some appropriate dynamics and articulation and there is clear co-ordination with the other performers.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The performance has limited attention to dynamics and articulation. There is some awareness of the other performer(s) but little regard to the demands of balance and/or performing conventions.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The performance attempts to communicate the piece in a simple way but there is limited awareness of the other performer(s).
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit

**Difficulty**

Where pieces do not have a consistent level of demand the mark applicable to the piece with the lowest level of demand is to be awarded.

<b>5–6 marks</b>	A more complex piece involving sustained control with more intricate technical demands in terms of an extended range and control of tempo, dynamics, articulation and phrasing.
<b>3–4 marks</b>	A piece which requires a range of rhythmic and/or melodic change with some technical demands in terms of phrasing, dynamics, articulation and key.
<b>1–2 marks</b>	A simple piece which uses a limited rhythmic and/or melodic range with easy movement between notes and where relevant, in an easy key.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is nothing worthy of credit.

## Composition Marking Criteria

Each composition or arrangement is awarded a mark out of 24 using the core criteria and a mark out of 6 using the area of study criteria for relation to the set brief.

The core criteria take into account the quality of ideas, the way that they are manipulated, and the structure. The overarching outcome statement should be used to define the band of marks into which the composition is placed. A mark should then be selected within the band to reflect the degree to which the piece meets the rest of the criteria.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

### Core criteria

Learners are assessed on their ability to develop musical ideas, use conventions and techniques, explore the potential of musical structures and resources, use of musical elements.

<b>21–24 marks</b>	<p>A highly musical, stylish and effective piece.</p> <p>There is a wide variety and/or advanced use of musical elements which demonstrate a high level of musical understanding.</p> <p>Excellent development of ideas using compositional techniques applied in an entirely appropriate way.</p> <p>The piece demonstrates excellent understanding of stylistic and structural conventions.</p>
<b>17–20 marks</b>	<p>Musically successful piece with a strong sense of style.</p> <p>There is a variety of musical elements used in combinations that show a good level of musical understanding.</p> <p>There is development of ideas appropriate to the style showing understanding of several compositional techniques.</p> <p>The piece demonstrates good understanding of stylistic and structural conventions.</p>
<b>13–16 marks</b>	<p>Musically coherent with a sense of style.</p> <p>There is a range of musical elements used in combinations which show musical understanding.</p> <p>There is development using a range of appropriate compositional techniques.</p> <p>The structure is well defined and appropriate to the musical style.</p>
<b>9–12 marks</b>	<p>A mostly successful piece with some coherence and some sense of style.</p> <p>There is some success in the use and combination of a range of musical elements.</p> <p>There is some development using mostly appropriate compositional techniques.</p> <p>The piece is extended within a defined structure mostly appropriate to the style.</p>
<b>5–8 marks</b>	<p>Musically simple with a little coherence.</p> <p>There is a small range of musical elements used in simple combinations.</p> <p>Simple development using some appropriate compositional techniques.</p> <p>The piece is extended within a simple structure mostly appropriate to the style.</p>

<b>1–4 marks</b>	Limited musical shape with little coherence. The use of musical elements is very basic. Basic use of a few compositional techniques. Limited structural consideration and limited understanding of style.
<b>0 marks</b>	No work/no work worthy of credit.

### Relation to the set brief

Learners are assessed on their ability to respond to a brief or commission.

<b>6 marks</b>	The composition relates imaginatively to the given brief.
<b>5 marks</b>	The composition relates effectively to the given brief.
<b>4 marks</b>	There is success in relating the composition to the given brief.
<b>3 marks</b>	There is some success in relating the composition to the given brief.
<b>2 marks</b>	There is an attempt to relate the composition to the given brief.
<b>1 mark</b>	There is little or no evidence of the relationship to the given brief
<b>0 marks</b>	No work/no work worthy of credit.

### 3k. Sequencing criteria

Learners have the option of submitting a sequenced performance in place of a live performance for the Integrated portfolio (01 or 02) and the Practical component (03 or 04).

For the purposes of this specification, sequencing is defined as a computer controlled production in which the learner has created and manipulated a performance using sequencing software through a combination of step input and real time recording. These initial tracks are then manipulated using a range of MIDI controllers and software functions to create a musical outcome.

There must be an element of live control involved in the performance. It cannot simply be a playback of a sequenced realisation for example.

To select the most appropriate mark within the band descriptor, teachers should use the following guidance:

- where the learner's work convincingly meets the statement, the highest mark should be awarded
- where the learner's work adequately meets the statement, the most appropriate mark in the middle range should be awarded
- where the learner's work just meets the statement, the lowest mark should be awarded.

#### Technical Control and Fluency

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The production is accurate, and shows confident application of a range of appropriate MIDI controllers to reflect the demands of the music. Minor blemishes do not significantly affect the overall outcome.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The production is accurate, and there is adequate application and control of a small range of MIDI controllers to control the musical data.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The production has mainly accurate rhythms and pitches. There is little or no additional manipulation of the musical data and MIDI controllers.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The production has limited accuracy. There is some correct placement of notes in easier rhythmic passages.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is no work worthy of credit.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

### Expression and interpretation

<b>10–12 marks</b>	The production is communicated musically and stylishly using conventions that are appropriate to the genre. A high level of musical detail is evident.
<b>7–9 marks</b>	The production communicates some appropriate dynamics, articulation, and timbres. There is an attempt to shape the music and attention to the balance of parts.
<b>4–6 marks</b>	The production sounds mechanical, with limited attention to dynamics, articulation, balance and timbre.
<b>1–3 marks</b>	The production attempts to communicate the piece in a simple way but there is little success.
<b>0 marks</b>	There is no work worthy of credit.

If the difficulty mark does not exceed 2 then the top band of marks (10–12) is not accessible.

### Difficulty

<b>5–6 marks</b>	A more complex production with an extended structure that requires advanced application of the sequencing software. There will be significant technical demands in terms of the control of dynamics, articulation, phrasing and the stereo field.
<b>3–4 marks</b>	A longer production that provides a range of independent rhythmic demands between each of the four tracks (syncopation, drum fills, etc). There will be some technical demand in terms of the application of track balance, dynamics and articulation.
<b>0–2 marks</b>	A short rhythmically simple production. There will be a minimum of three separate tracks, but each will be rhythmically similar.

## 3l. Synoptic assessment

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OCR GCSE in Music is designed to encourage integration of the skills of listening/appraisal, performing and composing during the teaching and learning process.

The Areas of Study are intended to facilitate integrated teaching and learning through the exploration of a wide variety of genres and styles for practical exploration through listening, performing and composing.

## 3m. Calculating qualification results

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A learner's overall qualification grade for GCSE (9–1) Level in Music will be calculated by adding together their marks from the three components taken to give their total weighted mark.

This mark will then be compared to the qualification level grade boundaries for the entry option taken by the learner and for the relevant exam series to determine the learner's overall qualification grade.

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## 4 Admin: what you need to know

The information in this section is designed to give an overview of the processes involved in administering this qualification so that you can speak to your exams officer. All of the following processes require you to submit something to OCR by a specific deadline.

More information about the processes and deadlines involved at each stage of the assessment cycle can be found in the Administration area of the OCR website.

OCR's *Admin overview* is available on the OCR website at [www.ocr.org.uk/administration](http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration).

### 4a. Pre-assessment

#### Estimated entries

Estimated entries are your best projection of the number of learners who will be entered for a qualification in a particular series. Estimated entries

should be submitted to OCR by the specified deadline. They are free and do not commit your centre in any way.

#### Final entries

Final entries provide OCR with detailed data for each learner, showing each assessment to be taken. It is essential that you use the correct entry code, considering the relevant entry rules and ensuring that you choose the entry option for the submission method you intend to use.

Final entries must be submitted to OCR by the published deadlines or late entry fees will apply.

All learners taking the OCR GCSE (9–1) in Music must be entered for one of the following entry options:

Entry option		Components		
Entry code	Title	Code	Title	Assessment type
J536 A	Music option A	01	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Moderated upload)
		03	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Moderated upload)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment
J536 B	Music option B	02	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Moderated postal)
		04	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Moderated postal)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment
J536 C	Music option C	81	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		82	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment

Entry option		Components		
Entry code	Title	Code	Title	Assessment type
J536 D	Music option D	01	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Moderated upload)
		82	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment
J536 E	Music option E	81	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		03	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Moderated upload)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment
J356 F	Music option F	02	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Moderated postal)
		82	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment
J356 G	Music option G	81	Integrated portfolio	Non-exam assessment (Carry forward)
		04	Practical component	Non-exam assessment (Moderated postal)
		05	Listening and appraising	External assessment

### Collecting evidence of student performance to ensure resilience in the qualifications system

Regulators have published guidance on collecting evidence of student performance as part of long-term contingency arrangements to improve the resilience of the qualifications system. You should review and consider this guidance when delivering this qualification to students at your centre.

For more detailed information on collecting evidence of student performance please visit our website at: <https://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/general-qualifications/assessment/>

### 4b. Special consideration

Special consideration is a post-assessment adjustment to marks or grades to reflect temporary injury, illness or other indisposition at the time the assessment was taken.

Detailed information about eligibility for special consideration can be found in the JCQ publication *A guide to the special consideration process*.

### 4c. External assessment arrangements

Regulations governing examination arrangements are contained in the JCQ *Instructions for conducting examinations*.

## Head of Centre Annual Declaration

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The Head of Centre is required to provide a declaration to the JCQ as part of the annual NCN update, conducted in the autumn term, to confirm that the centre is meeting all of the requirements detailed in the specification.

Any failure by a centre to provide the Head of Centre Annual Declaration will result in your centre status being suspended and could lead to the withdrawal of our approval for you to operate as a centre.

## 4d. Admin of non-exam assessment

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Regulations governing arrangements for internal assessments are contained in the JCQ *Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments*.

### Private candidates

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Private candidates may enter for OCR assessments.

A private candidate is someone who pursues a course of study independently but takes an examination or assessment at an approved examination centre. A private candidate may be a part-time student, someone taking a distance learning course, or someone being tutored privately. They must be based in the UK.

OCR's GCSE in Music requires learners to complete non-examined assessment. This is an essential part of the course and will allow learners to develop skills for further study or employment.

Private candidates need to contact OCR approved centres to establish whether they are prepared to host them as a private candidate. The centre may charge for this facility and OCR recommends that the arrangement is made early in the course.

Further guidance for private candidates may be found on the OCR website: <http://www.ocr.org.uk>

### Authentication of learner's work

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Centres must declare that the work submitted for assessment is the learner's own by completing a centre authentication form (CCS160). This information must be retained at the centre and be available on request to either OCR or the JCQ centre inspection service.

It must be kept until the deadline has passed for centres to request a review of results. Once this deadline has passed and centres have not requested a review, this evidence can be destroyed.

Authenticity control: learners will complete all work for assessment under direct teacher supervision except as outlined below.

For OCR's GCSE (9–1) in Music most, but not necessarily all, work for assessment would be under

direct teacher supervision. For example, it is acceptable for some aspects of exploration to be outside the direct supervision of the teacher but the teacher must be able to authenticate the work and insist on acknowledgement and referencing of any sources used.

Some of the work, by its very nature, may be undertaken outside the centre, e.g. listening, practising, etc. but it is expected that using or applying these activities will be undertaken under direct teacher supervision. With all work submitted for assessment, the teacher must be satisfied that the work is the learner's own work and be able to authenticate it using the specified procedure.

Feedback to learners is encouraged within tightly defined parameters. Teachers should supervise and

guide learners who are undertaking non-examined assessment work. The degree of teacher guidance will vary according to the nature of the work being undertaken. It should be remembered, however, that learners must reach their own judgements and complete the work in its entirety themselves.

When supervising tasks, teachers are expected to:

- exercise continuing supervision of work in order to monitor progress and to prevent plagiarism (teachers must not allow learners to help each other nor to work at home, where the authenticity of the work cannot be verified)

- ensure that the work is completed in accordance with the specification requirements and can be assessed in accordance with the specified marking criteria and procedures.

Centres must confirm to OCR that the evidence produced by learners is authentic using the Centre Authentication Form which is available from the OCR website and will confirm that the learners' work was conducted under the required conditions as laid down by the specification and OCR guidance on non-examined components.

### Minimum Duration Statement

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If any candidates in your cohort do not meet the minimum duration requirements, you must also complete the Minimum Duration Statement form (CCS437) and send it together with a copy of their work at the same time as the requested sample. Any resulting penalty will be applied as part of the moderation process.

By submitting this form you are confirming that any candidates who have not reached the minimum requirements have been added to the requested sample, and all other candidates in the cohort have met the minimum duration requirements as outlined in the specification.

This form only needs to be submitted if you have candidates in your cohort who have not met the minimum time requirement.

### Carrying forward non-exam assessment (NEA)

Learners who are retaking the qualification can choose to either retake the non-exam assessment (NEA) or carry forward their most recent result for that component.

To carry forward the NEA component result, you must use the correct carry forward entry option (see table in Section 4a).

Learners must decide at the point of entry whether they are going to carry forward the NEA result or not.

The result for the NEA component may be carried forward for the lifetime of the specification and there is no restriction on the number of times the result may be carried forward. However, only the most recent non-absent result may be carried forward.

When the result is carried forward, the grade boundaries from the previous year of entry will be used to calculate a new weighted mark for the carried forward component, so the value of the original mark is preserved.

## Internal standardisation

Centres must carry out internal standardisation to ensure that marks awarded by different teachers are accurate and consistent across all learners entered for each component. In order to help set the standard of marking, centres should use exemplar material provided by OCR, or, where available, work in the centre from the previous year. Prior to marking, teachers should mark the same small sample of work to allow for the comparison of marking standards.

Where work for a component has been marked by more than one teacher in a centre, standardisation of marking should normally be carried out according to one of the following procedures:

- either a sample of work which has been marked by each teacher is re-marked by the teacher who is in charge of internal standardisation

- or all the teachers responsible for marking a component exchange some marked work (preferably at a meeting led by the teacher in charge of internal standardisation) and compare their marking standards. Where standards are found to be inconsistent, the relevant teacher(s) should make adjustment to their marks or reconsider the marks of all learners for whom they were responsible.

Centres should retain evidence that internal standardisation has been carried out. A clear distinction must be drawn between any interim review of coursework and final assessment for the intended examination series.

## Moderation

The purpose of moderation is to bring the marking of internally-assessed components in all participating centres to an agreed standard. This is achieved by checking a sample of each centre's marking of learner's work.

Following internal standardisation, centres submit marks to OCR and the moderator. If there are fewer than 10 learners, all the work should be submitted for moderation at the same time as marks are submitted.

Once marks have been submitted to OCR and your moderator, centres will receive a moderation sample request. Samples will include work from across the range of attainment of the learners' work.

There are two ways to submit a sample:

**Moderated upload** – Where you upload electronic copies of the work included in the sample using our Submit for Assessment service and your moderator accesses the work from there.

**Moderated postal** – Where you post the sample of work to the moderator.

The method that will be used to submit the moderation sample must be specified when making entries. The relevant entry codes are given in Section 4a.

All learners' work must be submitted using the same entry option. It is not possible for centres to offer both options (moderated upload or moderated postal) within the same series.

Centres will receive the outcome of moderation when the provisional results are issued. This will include:

**Moderation Adjustments Report** – Listing any scaling that has been applied to internally assessed components.

**Moderator Report to Centres** – A brief report by the moderator on the internal assessment of learners' work.

## 4e. AI use in the NEA

Teachers delivering NEA components **must** follow the JCQ guidelines: [\*AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications\*](#).

Teachers are responsible for monitoring students' progress to ensure that:

- work meets the NEA marking criteria
- work can be confidently authenticated as the student's own
- the student is **not** rewarded if they have used AI tools in such a way that mean they have not **independently** met the marking criteria.

Teachers must provide sufficient supervision to be able to confidently authenticate that the work submitted is the student's independent work.

You can access the forms here on our [Assessment](#) page or from our Forms finder tool when selecting a qualification and subject with moderated units or components. They are also available in the Assessment > Forms section on Teach Cambridge.

For further information on AI, please see the following guidance on our website: [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) support](#).

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## 4f. Results and certificates

### Grade Scale

GCSE (9–1) qualifications are graded on the scale: 9–1, where 9 is the highest.

Learners who fail to reach the minimum standard of 1 will be Unclassified (U). Only subjects in which grades 9 to 1 are attained will be recorded on certificates.

### Results

Results are released to centres and learners for information and to allow any queries to be resolved before certificates are issued.

Centres will have access to the following results' information for each learner:

- the grade for the qualification
- the raw mark for each component
- the total weighted mark for the qualification.

The following supporting information will be available:

- raw mark grade boundaries for each component
- weighted mark grade boundaries for each entry option.

Until certificates are issued, results are deemed to be provisional and may be subject to amendment.

## 4g. Post-results services

A number of post-results services are available:

- **Review of results** – If you are not happy with the outcome of a learner's results, centres may request a review of their moderation and/or marking.

- **Missing and incomplete results** – This service should be used if an individual subject result for a learner is missing, or the learner has been omitted entirely from the results supplied.
- **Access to scripts** – Centres can request access to marked scripts.

## 4h. Malpractice

Any breach of the regulations for the conduct of examinations and non-exam assessment may constitute malpractice (which includes maladministration) and must be reported to

OCR as soon as it is detected. Detailed information on malpractice can be found in the JCQ publication *Suspected Malpractice in Examinations and Assessments: Policies and Procedures*.

# 5 Appendices

## 5a. Grade descriptors

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### Grade 8

To achieve Grade 8 candidates will be able to:

- perform challenging music with a high degree of fluency and sensitivity
- compose using a wide range of musical elements with sophistication, creating effective musical ideas and sustaining interest through their development
- demonstrate, through aural identification, accurate knowledge of a wide range of musical elements, contexts and language
- evaluate music to make convincing judgements using musical terminology accurately and effectively

### Grade 5

To achieve Grade 5 candidates will be able to:

- perform music with some technical challenges broadly fluently with some sensitivity
- compose using a range of musical elements with coherence, creating musical ideas and developing interest with some success
- demonstrate, through aural identification, mostly accurate knowledge of a range of musical elements, contexts and language
- evaluate music to make clear judgements using musical terminology appropriately

### Grade 2

To achieve Grade 2 candidates will be able to:

- perform simple pieces with limited fluency and sensitivity
- compose using a range of musical elements, creating musical ideas with some appeal and limited development
- demonstrate, through aural identification, some knowledge of musical elements, contexts and language
- evaluate music to produce simple reflections with inconsistent use of musical terminology

## 5b. Overlap with other qualifications

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There is no significant overlap between the content of this specification and those for other GCSE (9–1) qualifications.

## 5c. Accessibility

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Reasonable adjustments and access arrangements allow learners with special educational needs, disabilities or temporary injuries to access the assessment and show what they know and can do, without changing the demands of the assessment. Applications for these should be made before the examination series. Detailed information about eligibility for access arrangements can be found

in the JCQ *Access Arrangements and Reasonable Adjustments*.

The GCSE (9–1) qualification and subject criteria have been reviewed in order to identify any feature which could disadvantage learners who share a protected Characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010. All reasonable steps have been taken to minimise any such disadvantage.

## 5d. Suggested repertoire

Please note that these do not constitute set works and teachers should feel free to look at a variety of

composers and styles of their choice to cover the required content.

Area of Study	Suggested repertoire
Area of Study 2: The Concerto Through Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vivaldi: <i>The Four Seasons</i></li> <li>• Bach: <i>Brandenburg No 4</i></li> <li>• Mozart: <i>Flute Concerto in D Major</i></li> <li>• Haydn: <i>Trumpet Concerto in Eb Major</i></li> <li>• Beethoven: <i>Piano Concerto No 1 in C Major</i></li> <li>• Brahms: <i>Violin Concerto in D Major</i></li> <li>• Rachmaninov: <i>Piano Concerto No 2 in C Minor</i></li> <li>• Corelli: <i>Concerto Grosso Op 6</i></li> </ul>
Area of Study 3: Rhythms of the World	<p>Punjabi Bhangra:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio CD: Bhangra Beatz Naxos World label</li> </ul> <p>Traditional Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Folk Rhythms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palestinian folk music:</li> <li>• Audio CD: Israeli Folk Dances Vol 1 Hataklit label: E.g. Ve'Shuv Itchem</li> </ul> <p>Greek folk music:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audio CD: The Rough Guide to Greek Café World Music Network label E.g. Lesvos Aiolis: Kontrabatziðhes</li> </ul> <p>Traditional African Drumming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BBC GCSE Bitesize: Music of Africa <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/world_music/music_africa2.shtml">www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/music/world_music/music_africa2.shtml</a></li> </ul> <p>Traditional Rhythms of the Americas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Beatlife Book: Playing &amp; Teaching Samba by Preston and Hardcastle</li> <li>• BBC GCSE Bitesize: Samba Music <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrk9dxs/revision/5">www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zrk9dxs/revision/5</a></li> </ul>
Area of Study 4: Film Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Barry: <i>Out of Africa, Somewhere in Time</i></li> <li>• Hans Zimmer: <i>Pirates of the Caribbean, Gladiator</i></li> <li>• Emmanuel Fratianni: <i>Avatar</i></li> <li>• John Williams: <i>Jaws, Star Wars</i></li> <li>• Tommy Tallerico &amp; Emmanuel Fratianni: <i>Advent Rising</i></li> <li>• <i>Halo</i></li> <li>• <i>Assassins Creed</i></li> </ul>

Area of Study 5: Conventions of Pop	<p>Rock 'n' Roll of the 1950s and 1960s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elvis Presley: <i>Hound Dog</i> (1952)</li> <li>• The Beatles: <i>Saw Her Standing There</i> (1963)</li> <li>• The Beach Boys: <i>Surfin' USA</i> (1963)</li> </ul> <p>Rock Anthems of the 1970s and 1980s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Queen: <i>We Will Rock You</i> (1977)</li> <li>• Bon Jovi: <i>Livin' On A Prayer</i> (1986)</li> <li>• Guns and Roses: <i>Sweet Child O' Mine</i> (1987)</li> </ul> <p>Pop Ballads of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elton John: <i>Candle In The Wind</i> (1973)</li> <li>• Bette Midler: <i>Wind Beneath My Wings</i> (1988)</li> <li>• Bob Dylan: <i>Make You Feel My Love</i> (1997) (Also same year performed by Billy Joel)</li> </ul> <p>Solo Artists from the 1990s to the Present Day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Michael Jackson: <i>Black or White</i> (1991)</li> <li>• Kylie Minogue: <i>Can't Get You Outta My Head</i> (2001)</li> <li>• Adele: <i>Someone Like You</i> (2011)</li> </ul>
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## 5e. Language for learning

As detailed on page 7 of this specification, learners should be able to recognise and accurately use appropriate musical vocabulary related to the areas of study.

Learners should understand and correctly use language from the following list. Where appropriate they should be able to recognise and name features

heard. The lists define the vocabulary which will be used in the listening test, either within the questions asked, or as part of the answer required. Learners will not be penalised for correctly using other terminology outside of the list.

Learners will also use many of the concepts listed in their performing, composing and appraising.

### Articulation

- Staccato, tongued, legato/slurred
- Pizzicato, arco
- Tremolo
- Accent/sforzando.

### Dynamics

- *ff* to *pp* (including Italian names), crescendo and diminuendo in words and symbols.

## Harmony

- Diatonic, dissonant, atonal, chromatic, microtonal
- Chords: major, minor, seventh, tonic, sub-dominant, dominant, blue note
- Cadences: perfect, imperfect, plagal, interrupted
- Block chords/chordal, arpeggio/broken chord, triad, comping
- Primary triads, simple harmony, harmonic progression, harmonic rhythm
- Modulation: tonic, sub-dominant, dominant, relative minor, relative major
- Drone
- 12 bar blues.

## Instruments/Ensembles/Timbre

- Standard orchestral instruments and their families
- Piano, harpsichord, organ, cello
- Orchestra, string orchestra, duet, trio,
- Jazz group
- Electronic and pop instruments
- Basic instruments that relate to:

Indian Classical Music, Punjabi Bhangra, Greek folk music, African Drumming, Samba, Calypso/Steel band.

## Large structures

- Concerto, concerto grosso symphony, sonata.

## Melodic and compositional devices

- Repetition, sequence, imitation, ostinato
- Inversion
- Riff
- Improvisation/improvised
- Dialogue, question and answer phrases, call and response
- Walking bass
- Fills, stabs
- Hook.

## Melody/Pitch

- Stepwise, scalar, passing note, leap
- Intervals; unison, 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 6th 7th, octave, tone, semitone, microtone
- Scales: Major, minor, chromatic, blue scale
- Raga
- Mode
- Range
- Bend/slide/glissando.

## Musical Periods

- Baroque, Classical, Romantic, Modern.

## Notation

- Note lengths and rests from semibreve to semiquaver including dotted notes and triplets
- Pitch names and their places on the treble clef from G1 to C4
- Stave, score
- Treble and bass clefs
- Bar and double bar lines, repeat marks
- Key signatures and keys up to at least four sharps and flats
- Time signatures: simple duple, triple, quadruple, and compound duple
- Sharp, flat, natural
- Phrase marks, tie
- Ornaments, decoration and their signs: trill, turn, mordent, acciaccatura, grace note.

## Rhythm

- Anacrusis/up-beat
- Off-beat/syncopation, dotted
- Metre/pulse
- Irregular metre
- Rest/silence
- Cross-rhythm, polyrhythm
- Swung/swing rhythm
- Tala
- Chaal
- Son Clave.

## Structure

- Binary, ternary, rondo, variation
- Strophic, through composed
- Round, canon
- Introduction, coda, bridge, tag
- Cadenza
- Verse and chorus
- Instrumental break, middle eight.

## Technology

- Synthesiser, drum machine, mixing desk, sequencer, multitracking, overdubbing
- amplification, sampler, sampling, scratching, DJ, decks, looping, groove, panning
- MIDI, computer
- Digital effects, (FX), reverb, echo, distortion, attack, delay
- Vocoder, quantising
- Remix, collage, overlay.

## Tempo

- Largo, andante, moderato, allegro, vivace, presto
- Accelerando
- Rallentando/ritenuto
- Allargando
- Rubato
- Pause.

## Texture

- Solo, monophonic, thick, thin
- Homophonic/chordal
- Polyphonic, contrapuntal, counterpoint
- Unison, parallel motion, contrary motion
- Counter melody, descant, obbligato
- Melody and accompaniment.

## Tonality

- Key, major, minor
- Basic modulations, e.g. tonic – dominant
- Chord progression

## Voices/Ensembles/Timbre

- Voices: soprano, alto, tenor, bass
- A cappella
- Syllabic, melismatic
- Solo, lead singer, backing vocals, chorus/choir
- Scat.

## 5f. Difficulty Mark Criteria for Groups of Instruments

When making their assessment, teachers are reminded that the standard expected is one that can be achieved by learners who have received tuition only in the classroom situation.

Advice is given on the choice of difficulty marks for specific groups of instruments. These are listed on the following pages, but are only intended as a guide.

The level of difficulty requirements of a part assessed in the 0–2 mark band is given for each group of instruments, followed by an indication of what is required to build on that level of difficulty.

An example of what might be required for the 5–6 mark band is then provided.

### 5 **These descriptors all refer to solo parts or pieces.**

In an ensemble, the relationship between the assessed part and the other parts must also be considered when determining the level of difficulty of the learner's part.

Terms such as 'easy key', 'easy leaps', etc. are specific to the instrument being assessed. It is not always possible to give comparable examples of 'easy keys' for all groups of instruments as these may vary for instruments within that group.

The following points should be noted when determining the difficulty mark for a particular part or piece:

- a part that clearly fulfils the descriptor for one instrument may be easier or more difficult when performed on a different instrument. This could be because of key, range, types of leaps, etc
- different arrangements of many popular pieces are available, each with its own specific degree of difficulty
- some learners may wish to perform a section of a piece, not the entire piece. In such cases, centres should judge the difficulty of the section(s) submitted
- in many solo pieces, the nature of the accompaniment may have a bearing on the difficulty of the learner's part; this should be taken into account when deciding on the appropriate difficulty mark
- in ensemble pieces, the inclusion/exclusion of other parts can affect the difficulty of the assessed part. It is important therefore that each performance submitted should be judged on the technical requirements of the particular submission presented.

## Piano and organ

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key, with a melody using step movement and easy leaps with minimal changes in hand position
- melody using mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement
- little independent movement of hands and/or the left hand moves steadily. For organ, no use of pedals
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a wide range of notes, and more difficult leaps; requires changes in hand position
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- use of dynamic contrast, including gradation of volume
- some independence of parts
- challenges posed by the speed of the part.
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult melody in range and/or leaps
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic contrasts
- tempo: use of tempo requiring more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: sensitivity of touch; use of pedal(s) (piano); registration (organ)
- texture: addition of polyphony and/or homophony and consideration of its complexity, e.g. independence of hands and/or feet
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing: appropriate articulation and sensitivity of touch highlights the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Electronic keyboard

### An example of a 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key, with a melody using step movement and easy leaps, with minimal changes in hand position
- melody uses mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement
- basic chord changes, e.g. a maximum of one per bar, using easy single finger chords
- touch sensitivity/dynamic contrast is limited
- the part has a simple structure and requires a basic command of the technology
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a wide range of notes and changes in hand position; use of harmony in the right hand
- complex rhythmic patterns, such as syncopation and/or dotted rhythms
- quicker chord changes and a wider range of chords
- challenges posed by the speed of the part
- a good use of the technology is required
- dynamic contrast through touch sensitivity and registration changes
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

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### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult melody in range and/or leaps
- duration: rhythmically more difficult; quicker chord changes
- tempo: requires more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: good use/control of sound bank
- texture: more complex chords; fingered chords
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands; use of fill-ins
- phrasing: appropriate articulation and control of touch sensitivity to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Tuned percussion

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### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key, with a melody using step movement and easy leaps with a limited range of less than an octave
- a melody using mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement
- perhaps a simple second part moving slowly
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult melody in range and/or leaps
- duration: rhythmically more difficult; use of tremolando
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requires more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: use of the different timbres available from the instrument
- texture: addition of a more demanding second part with some complexity
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing: appropriate articulation and beater control to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a wider range of notes and leaps
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- dynamic contrast required, showing good control and use of both beaters, and including gradations in volume
- agility of beaters to manage the speed of the part
- use of harmony and tremolando
- use of clear phrasing and articulation
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Untuned Percussion

Where the instrument requires the use of more than one sound source (e.g. congas), the complexity of the relationship between the two or more sounds must be considered.

Where the genre of the instrument includes repetition of a pattern (e.g. drum kit), this will need to be considered.

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- rhythms using crotchets and quavers, with perhaps some easy dotted rhythms, or simple compound time
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- duration: rhythmically more difficult; use of rolls, flams and other rudiments
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requires more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: use of the different timbres available from the instrument
- texture: the number of sound sources used and consideration of their complexity
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing: appropriate articulation and stick/hand control to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements.
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part requiring rhythmical dexterity; perhaps more dotted rhythms, and some syncopation
- good use of dynamic contrast through effective control of drumsticks (or hand and finger dexterity), including gradation of volume
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- challenges posed by the speed of the part
- contrasting sections, perhaps including an improvisatory section
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Guitar – chords style

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key
- chords mainly primary, with some easy secondary, and no (or very few) changes in position
- chord changes mainly minims and semibreves, with perhaps a little easy crotchet change
- strumming in a simple style – maybe with some limited variety at the upper end of this band
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult chords
- duration: more frequent chord changes; more complicated rhythm
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requires more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: use of the different timbres available from the instrument
- texture: density of the chords; more intricate strumming
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; strumming patterns and articulation indicate the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key, with modulations
- a wide range of chords, including extension chords
- dynamic contrasts including gradations in volume
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- requires left-hand dexterity - chord changes are more rapid and complex; position changes are frequent and use a wide range of the fret board
- a range of right-hand techniques are evident, thus showing a range of articulation and some challenging rhythmic accompaniment figurations
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Guitar – classical

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key with a melody using step movement and easy leaps with a limited range
- mainly pulse notes with perhaps a little easy quaver movement towards the upper end of this mark band
- no position work
- perhaps two parts at the top end of the range, occasionally with the second part moving slowly
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a wide range of notes with frequent leaps
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- dynamic contrast and gradation of volume is required
- the addition of an independent second part and/or chords
- requires left-hand dexterity – position changes are frequent and use a wide range of the fret board
- a range of right-hand techniques are evident, thus showing a range of articulation and phrasing
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

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### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult in range and/or leaps; some position work
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requires more control and/or dexterity
- timbre: use of the different timbres available from the instrument
- texture: addition of polyphony and/or homophony and consideration of its complexity
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; use of appropriate articulation to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Strings

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key with a melody using step movement and easy leaps across adjacent strings with a limited range (only 1st position work)
- a melody using mainly pulse notes with perhaps a little easy quicker movement
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- requiring elementary bowing technique and/or pizzicato
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; more difficult in range and/or leaps; some position work
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requiring greater bow control to sustain a slower pace or to articulate a faster moving part
- timbre: use of the different timbres available from the instrument
- texture: possible addition of simple double stopping
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; use of appropriate articulation and bowing technique to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a wide range of notes, leaps and (frequent) changes in hand position; possibly including modulation(s)
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- use of dynamic contrast, including gradations in volume
- good bow control to sustain and phrase a slow-moving melody, or challenges posed by the speed of the part
- dexterity and/or sustained control required in both left hand and in bowing technique
- clear use of phrasing with a range of articulation
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Brass

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key, with a melody using step movement and easy leaps with a range of less than an octave
- melody using mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement, in a way that makes minimal demands in terms of breath control
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; a wider range with leaps requiring greater embouchure control
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requiring greater breath and embouchure control to sustain a slower pace or the valve/slide dexterity and technique to perform a faster moving part
- timbre: a good tone throughout the range of the instrument; use of different timbres available from the instrument
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- style: more complex in its requirements
- phrasing; use of tonguing technique (staccato, slurring), and breath control to create the musical shape of the piece
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- a range of notes beyond a 12th, and more difficult intervals
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- use of dynamic contrast, including gradation of volume
- good breath control to sustain and phrase a slow moving melody, or challenges posed by the speed of the part, with subsequent dexterity required in fingering or slide technique and in embouchure/breath control
- clear use of phrasing with a range of articulation
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Woodwind and recorders

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part in an easy key, with a melody using step movement and easy leaps with a limited range of up to an octave
- melody using mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement, in a way that makes minimal demands in terms of breath control
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: a more difficult key; wider in range and/or leaps requiring greater embouchure control
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: requiring greater breath control to sustain a slower pace or the fingering dexterity and technique to perform a faster moving part
- timbre: use of different timbres available from the instrument; good tone and control across the registers of the instrument
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; use of tonguing technique (staccato, slurring), and breath control to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part in a more difficult key
- with a range of notes beyond a 12th, and more difficult leaps
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- use of dynamic contrast, including gradation of volume
- good breath control to sustain and phrase a slow moving melody, or challenges posed by the speed of the part, with subsequent dexterity required in fingering technique and in embouchure/breath control
- clear use of phrasing with a range of articulation
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## Voice

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a part with a melody using a limited range (up to an octave), step movement and easy leaps
- the melody uses mainly pulse notes, with perhaps a little easy quicker movement, in a way that makes minimal demands of breath control
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the part has a simple structure
- the style is simple in its demands
- the accompaniment supports the voice without consistently doubling the voice part
- the assessed part fits easily with any other part.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a part with a wider range of notes (beyond a 10th), and some leaps, resulting in challenges in pitching and intonation
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- use of dynamic contrast, including gradation of volume
- good breath control to sustain and phrase a slow-moving melody, or challenges posed by the speed of the part and therefore requiring vocal dexterity
- clear use of phrasing with a range of articulation
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other part.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: more difficult melody in terms of range and/or leaps
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: greater breath control to sustain a slower pace, or the technical dexterity to articulate a faster moving part
- timbre: good tone and expressive control of the sounds across the vocal range
- structure: the addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; use of vocal technique, diction and breath control to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- increased difficulty in relation to other parts e.g. lack of support from any accompaniment present
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

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## Beatboxing

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### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- simple rhythmic ideas using basic sounds for bass drum, snare drum and hi-hat (b/t/psh)
- has a steady beat in a simple structure
- basic use of dynamics and tempo
- has simple demands in terms of vocal techniques
- the assessed part fits easily with any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: alternative sounds – creating variations and/or fills
- duration: rhythmically more difficult
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: faster sections requiring technical dexterity in order to articulate faster movement of sounds
- timbre: more inventive sounds
- structure: addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing; use of vocal technique, diction and breath control to create the musical shape of the piece
- style: more complex in its requirements
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a faster piece using 16 beat patterns requiring vocal dexterity
- the addition of more complex vocal effects
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- the inclusion of scratching sounds or pitched instrumental (vocal) sounds
- dynamic contrasts including gradation of volume
- a longer piece, perhaps as an accompaniment to an MC or rapper
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other part.

## Rapping/MC-ing

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- has simple rhythmic ideas using simple rhymes
- has a steady beat in a simple structure
- basic use of dynamics and tempo
- has simple demands in terms of vocal technique
- the assessed part fits easily against any other parts.

### To achieve a higher mark, the part would require several of the following in addition to the above:

- pitch: addition of a hook line being sung
- duration: more complicated rhythmically with syncopation including breaks
- dynamics: clear dynamic range and contrasts
- tempo: faster pieces requiring technical dexterity in order to articulate faster movement of words
- timbre: longer words; a range of vocal inflections
- structure: addition of contrasting sections or new demands
- phrasing: use of vocal technique, diction and breath control to create the musical shape of the piece
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a faster piece requiring vocal dexterity, using long words, and including syncopation
- the inclusion of a hook line(s) being sung
- use of syncopated, dotted or other complex rhythms
- dynamic contrast – including gradation of volume
- a longer piece requiring constant rapping and good breath control
- use of articulation, vocal inflections and phrasing
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

## DJ-ing

This should be a FREESTYLE performance using Vinyl, CD, or a suitable software package. The performance must be filmed – the input of the learner to the performance must be clearly evident from the video. Ideally, the video should be shot “looking over the learner’s shoulder”, showing clearly all that he/she is doing. If the performance consists of more than one learner, i.e., an “ensemble”, it must be possible to observe in the video ALL learners at ALL times.

Due to the absence of a score, learners need to provide a list of the sound sources (songs) used in the performance – along with details of the original artiste, and the original bpm of each song. It is also necessary to provide details of the equipment used by the learner in their performance.

**An example of the 0–2 mark band:** Minimal application of some of the techniques below:

- has simple demands. Learner has some control of the (virtual) decks
- simple application of beatmatching, using the “automatic sync” function
- basic application of “traditional” FX (e.g. flanger, echo, EQ adjustment and filtering, etc)
- Simple rhythmic scratching (baby scratching) in time to beat. *It is appreciated that scratching is often primarily used in Hip Hop. A learner who is using “up-tempo” electronic styles of music may use no or very little scratching techniques in his/her mixes.*

**To achieve a higher mark, the part would require one or more of the following in addition to the above:**

- techniques: use of drum scratching, forward and backward scratching, chops/stabs, crab scratching, scribble scratching, echo fading
- duration: more complicated rhythmic ideas including syncopation
- dynamics: use of deck faders and cross faders; good mix of both sound sources
- tempo: faster movement of scratches; manual beatmatching adjustments (not achieved through use of the “automatic sync” function)
- timbre: inventive use of sound sources, including creative application of FX and “beat aware” effects (if using DJ software)
- structure: possible addition of contrasting sections using a wider range of material from additional sources
- the assessed part has increased difficulty and independence in relation to any other parts.

**An example of the 5–6 mark band:**

- A performance incorporating frequent changes between many sections and tracks
- regular use of the cross fader between all the available sources
- a mixer, or DJ software is used to incorporate at least 3 sound sources into the performance
- Appropriate use of a wide range of FX
- the assessed part has significant difficulty and independence in relation to any other part.

## Sequencing

Needs to have at least **three** sequenced parts. A copy of the given starting point (melody or score) must be provided for moderation. The piece must be all the learner's own work – no use of pre-programmed loops or samples is allowed.

### An example of the 0–2 mark band:

- a simple 12–16 bar melody with two suitable accompanying parts
- basic in its use of dynamics and tempo
- the style is simple in its demands
- the three parts fit together in a simple way.

**To achieve a higher mark, the piece would require several of the following in addition to the above:**

- techniques: balancing of different parts; use of panning (stereo placing); use of reverb/chorus/other effects
- duration: use of quantisation and editing of note values; use of staccato/legato notes; a range of rhythm patterns
- dynamics: use of volume changes; changes in individual note velocity for phrasing
- tempo: use of tempo changes
- timbre: inventive choice/use of sound sources
- texture: addition of more parts – with some independence
- structure: addition of (a) contrasting section(s)
- style: more complex in its requirements.

### An example of the 5–6 mark band:

- a longer piece (32 bars or more) using 7/8 different parts in a range of octaves and voicings
- extended structure
- tempo and dynamic changes, including gradations
- some rhythmic challenges and a sense of articulation and phrasing
- limited repetition and/or doubling within and between parts – (*therefore reduced opportunity for copy and paste*).

## Summary of updates

Date	Version	Section	Title of section	Change
April 2018	1.1	4e	Results and Certificates	Amend to Certification Titling
August 2018	1.2	3e 4d	Retaking the qualification Admin of non-exam assessment	Update to the wording for carry forward rules
May 2019	1.3	3g	Non-exam assessment	Update to minimum duration requirements. Specified types of evidence permissible where a written score or lead sheet is unavailable because it does not exist.
January 2020	1.4	4d	Authentication of learners' work	Enquiries about results changed to Review of results
		4f	Post-results services	
		4d	Minimum Duration Statement	Clarification of the process for submitting the minimum duration statement form
				Update to specification covers to meet digital accessibility standards
October 2022	1.5	2a	OCR's GCSE (9-1) in Music (J536)	Removal of reference to CDs from the Listening and appraising (05) component.
June 2023	1.6	2a.	OCR's GCSE (9-1) in Music (J536) Content of Integrated portfolio (01 upload or 02 postal) Content of Practical component (03 upload or 04 postal)	Update to the wording of moderation submission options.
		2c.		
		2d.		
		4a.		
		4d.	Admin of non-exam assessment	
		3	Assessment of OCR GCSE (9-1) in Music	Insertion of new section 3d. Total qualification time.
February 2024	1.7	3d, 3e	Qualification availability, Language	Inclusion of disclaimer regarding availability and language
		4a	Pre-assessment	Update to include resilience guidance
		Checklist		Inclusion of Teach Cambridge

Date	Version	Section	Title of section	Change
April 2026	2.0	Covers, page footers, and section 1a and 4f		Updated covers, footers and certificate title to reflect the new Cambridge OCR brand. Inside cover includes statement: 'About our new name'. Minor rewording in generic section 1a.
		4e	AI use in the NEA	Instructions added for centres on the use of AI in the NEA.





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