

A Level Music: WJEC Eduqas GCE A LEVEL in MUSIC

Qualification Accreditation Number: 601/8146/1

Subject content

Learners must choose **either** Option A in both Components 1 and 2 **or** Option B in both Components 1 and 2. All learners must study Component 3.

- **Option A** allows learners to specialise in **Performing**: 35% of Component 1 will be allocated to performing and 25% of Component 2 will be allocated to composing.

- **Option B** allows learners to specialise in **Composing**: 35% of Component 2 will be allocated to composing and 25% of Component 1 will be allocated to performing.

Learners will develop knowledge and understanding of music through **three** areas of study from the choices below. Area of study A is compulsory and learners then choose two further contrasting areas of study: **one** from **either** area of study B **or** area of study C **or** area of study D, and **one** from **either** area of study E **or** area of study F.

Area of study A: **The Western Classical Tradition** (The Development of the Symphony)

Choose **one** from:

Area of study B: **Rock and Pop**

Area of study C: **Musical Theatre**

Area of study D: **Jazz**.

Choose **one** from:

Area of study E: **Into the Twentieth Century**

Area of study F: **Into the Twenty-first Century**.

The following paragraphs provide background information about the music of each area of study; the full specification content for each area is located in Components 1, 2 and 3.

Area of study A: **The Western Classical Tradition** (The Development of the Symphony 1750– 1900)

This area of study focuses on the development of the symphony through the Classical and Romantic eras. The symphony, as it developed, was considered to be the most important instrumental genre of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and contains some of the most exciting orchestral repertoire of the period. The development of the symphony went hand in hand with the development of the orchestra into a grand and powerful force. Equally grand forms and structures were needed to allow the instruments to demonstrate their full potential and with this we see the emergence of sonata form.

Area of study B: **Rock and Pop**

This area of study focuses on rock and pop music from a variety of genres composed between 1960 and 2000. Extensive changes occurred in pop music in the 1960s and, by the end of the decade, a good number of pop musicians were creating music with artistic rather than commercial intent. Consequently, in the 1970s, rock splintered into diverse styles, and in the 1980s even more styles evolved, some of which owed their existence to advances made in music technology. Sub-genres continued to merge and turn into new styles, and song structures changed, often moving away from the conventional verse-chorus format. The 1990s witnessed continual reliance on technology, though some bands chose to take a step backwards.

Area of study C: **Musical Theatre**

This area of study focuses on the work of six musical theatre composers: Richard Rodgers, Leonard Bernstein, Stephen Sondheim, Claude-Michel Schönberg, Andrew Lloyd Webber and Stephen Schwartz. Musical theatre is a diverse art form as it encompasses many different genres and styles of music. However, all musicals contain spectacle, drama and music including integrated musical numbers which propel the action of the story forward. The 1950s and early

1960s were considered the golden age of musical theatre with book musicals establishing the importance of music and story as an integrated art form. Throughout the 1970s the rock musical grew in popularity. Often composers worked in partnership with the same lyricist over many years, for example, Rodgers and Hammerstein and Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice. This highlights the importance of the relationship between lyrics and music.

Area of study D: **Jazz**

This area of study focuses on prominent genres from the world of Jazz between 1920 and 1960. Jazz is universally recognised as one of America's most original art forms, an unquestionable musical phenomenon that originated in African/American communities in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Initially, Jazz emerged as a fusion of African and European music, with Ragtime and Blues being the important precursors of the style. The vitality of the music reflected the significant social and cultural changes taking place in American society during this time, ultimately capturing the imagination of a worldwide audience. During the 'Roaring Twenties' musicians such as Ella Fitzgerald, Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Count Basie travelled the country spreading their new sounds. From there, the phenomenon grew and many distinctive and diverse styles were to emerge. Amongst others, Swing Big Bands became popular in the 1930s, and the 1940s witnessed the more challenging Be-bop style, and then Cool Jazz emerged towards the end of the 1950s

Area of study E: **Into the Twentieth Century**

This area of study focuses on the distinct musical styles of the early twentieth century, which was a time of change and experimentation in music. Both the symphony and the orchestra had reached considerable proportions by the end of the nineteenth century and many composers such as Debussy, Ravel, Schoenberg and Stravinsky were starting to look for new ways to create music, often preferring clarity and sparseness of timbre and texture over late Romantic indulgence. This resulted in the emergence of several diverse schools of composition during the period, including Impressionism, Expressionism and Neo-classicism.

Area of study F: **Into the Twenty-first Century**

This area of study is possibly the most difficult to classify, as it is happening here and now, while at the same time it is potentially the most exciting, as it engages with the work of living composers such as Sally Beamish, Judith Weir, Mark-Anthony Turnage and Thomas Adès, and how they create and develop ideas to make music. Polystylism, or musical eclecticism, is a growing trend in the 21st century. The music of today combines elements of diverse musical genres and compositional techniques, such as popular music and minimalism, into distinctive compositional styles.

How it is assessed

Component 1: Performing

Option A: Total duration of performances: 10-12 minutes

Option A: 35% of qualification

Option B: Total duration of performances: 6-8 minutes

Option B: 25% of qualification

Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by a visiting examiner

Option A: Performing (35%)

A performance consisting of **a minimum of three** pieces. At least **one** of these pieces must be as a **soloist**. The other pieces may be **either** as a soloist **or** as part of an ensemble **or** a combination of both. **One** piece must reflect the musical characteristics of **one** area of study. **At least one** other piece must reflect the musical characteristics of **one other, different** area of study.

Option B: Performing (25%)

A performance consisting of **a minimum of two** pieces **either** as a soloist **or** as part of an ensemble **or** a combination of both. **One** piece must reflect the musical characteristics of **one** area of study.

Component 2: Composing

Option A: Total duration of compositions: 4-6 minutes

Option A: 25% of qualification

Option B: Total duration of compositions: 8-10 minutes

Option B: 35% of qualification

Non-exam assessment: externally assessed by WJEC

Option A: Composing (25%)

Two compositions, **one** of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of **four** set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken.

The **second** composition is a free composition.

Option B: Composing (35%)

Three compositions, **one** of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will have a choice of **four** set briefs, released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken.

The **second** composition must reflect the musical characteristics of **one different** area of study (i.e. not the Western Classical Tradition) while the **third** composition is a free composition.

Component 3: Appraising

Written examination: 2 hours 15 minutes (approximately)

40% of qualification on examination

Three areas of study:

Area of study A: **The Western Classical Tradition** (The Development of the Symphony 1750-1900) which includes two set works. Choose **one** set work for detailed analysis and the other for general study.

- *Symphony No. 104 in D major, 'London'*: Haydn
- *Symphony No. 4 in A major, 'Italian'*: Mendelssohn

A choice of **one** area of study from:

Area of study B: **Rock and Pop**

Area of study C: **Musical Theatre**

Area of study D: **Jazz**

A choice of **one** area of study from:

Area of study E: **Into the Twentieth Century** including **two** set works:

- *Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano, Movement II*: Poulenc
- *Three Nocturnes, Number 1, Nuages*: Debussy

Area of study F: **Into the Twenty-first Century** including **two** set works:

- *Asyla, Movement 3, Ecstasio*: Thomas Adès
- *String Quartet No. 2 (Opus California) Movements 1 (Boardwalk) and 4 (Natural Bridges)*: Sally Beamish

Questions:

1. Set work analysis with a score
2. Extended responses on wider context
3. Unprepared extracts of music with and without a score
4. Comparison questions

This component includes a listening examination.

This linear qualification will be available in the summer series each year. It will be awarded for the first time in summer 2018.