



DIXONS
SIXTH FORM
ACADEMY

SUMMER WORK

**A LEVEL
MUSIC**

STUDENT NAME:

20
25



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About the Summer Work

This booklet contains a number of tasks that students are expected to complete to a good standard in order to be able to be enrolled in this subject.

Please complete these tasks on A4 paper and **bring them with you to your first music lesson.**

The work handed in should be:

- **handwritten** in black or blue ink on A4 lined paper
- written in full sentences with **no copying and pasting** from external sources
- have all compulsory tasks completed
- have your full name on each sheet
- multiple sheet should be connected together

This booklet also contains significant additional information and a range of optional tasks. We would encourage you to complete all the tasks including the optional ones to fully prepare for Sixth Form study.

In order to complete the summer homework effectively, you will need access to the following:

- The internet or a public library
- A black or blue pen and pencil
- Lined paper
- Manuscript paper or notation software
- A quiet space to work
- Time to dedicate to your studies



Welcome to Music

A level Music is a stimulating course that allows you to develop your creative response to a wide range of musical styles through performance, composition and analysis. Analysis work will develop your aural understanding of a wide range of music so you are able to confidently answer questions on the use of musical elements in familiar and unfamiliar music. This analysis enables you to develop your understanding of how to create your own work in a range of styles and how to effectively communicate as a performer in a range of genres. During the two years you will prepare a ten-minute portfolio of performance work and create two compositions with a wide choice of briefs. This practical and academic course provides you with a range of transferable skills such as creative and analytical thinking, confidence, personal evaluation, organisation and management of workload, useful in any chosen career path.

At Dixons we study AQA A Level Music which is made up of 3 components:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Component 1 Appraising Music | Written paper – 2 hours 30 mins | 40% of total A level marks |
| Component 2 Performance | Solo and/or ensemble performing as an instrumentalist, or vocalist and/or music production (via technology) | 35% of total A level marks |
| Component 3 Composition | Composition 1: Composition to a brief Composition 2: Free composition | 25% of total A level marks |

Summary of Assessment:

Component 1 – Appraising Music – 40% of A-Level marks

You will be tested on analysis & aural perception linked to a variety of set works.

Area of study 1 - Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910

From the 3 strands we are required to select 2 areas to study (we study A and C):

Strand A: Baroque Solo Concerto

- Purcell: Sonata for trumpet and Strings in D major Z.850
- Vivaldi: Flute Concerto in D Op 10 no 3
- Bach: Violin Concerto in A minor BWV1041

**Strand B: Classical The Operas of Mozart**

- Mozart: *Le Nozze Di Figaro* K492 Act 1
- Overture and Arias 1,3,4,5,6,7,9

Strand C: Romantic Piano Music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg

- Chopin: Ballade no 2 in F major Op 38 & Nocturne in E minor Op 72 no.1
- Brahms: Intermezzo in A major Op 118 no2 & Ballade in G minor op 118 no 3
- Grieg: Norwegian March Op 54 no 2 and Notturmo Op 54 no 4

Areas of Study 2 – 7

You will also study 2 from the following (those in bold are our current topics):

- Pop Music
- Music for Media
- **Music for Theatre**
- **Jazz**
- Contemporary traditional music
- Art music since 1910

For each Area of Study you will focus on at least THREE composers/artists and at least TWO of their pieces of music.

The exam will be split into 3 sections – listening, analysis and contextual understanding.

Section A – Listening (56 marks)

- Some short answer questions based on one of the three strands
- An extract with an aural dictation question based on another of the three strands
- An extract from the remaining strand with long answer questions

Section B – Analysis (34 marks)

- The first two questions of each set will be short responses questions testing aural and/or score reading skills
- The third and fourth questions demand more extensive responses showing contextual knowledge of the music

Section C – Essay (30 marks)

- You are required to answer one essay title from a choice of six options covering AoS 2-7



Component 2: Performance – 35% of A-Level mark

Non-exam assessment (NEA) which will be externally marked by AQA examiners. Work must be completed between 1st March and approx. mid May (exact date TBC) in year two of the A-Level course.

Solo and/or ensemble performing as an instrumentalist, or vocalist and/or music production (via technology)

A minimum of 10 minutes of performance in total is required – ***marks will be deducted if the performance falls below 10 minutes in duration.*** There is no maximum time limit.

You may choose to perform on more than one instrument or a mixture of instruments/vocals/music production as appropriate – so there is flexibility for all different types of performers

Although the recordings have to be done between the assessment window dates there is no limit to how many times they can be recorded – you could record them several times over this time period and submit the best recordings.

The assessment of the performance is split into the following categories:

- **Ambition of project** (5 marks) – to achieve the top mark the standard is expected to be Grade 8 or its equivalent
- **Technical control** (15 marks) – assessment of pitch (including intonation), rhythm and quality of tone, (including breathing and diction, bowing, pedalling etc).
- **Expressive control** (15 marks) – assessment of tempo, dynamics, phrasing and articulation.
- **Performance** (or production) quality (15 marks) – assessment of musical style and communication

Component 3: Composition – 25% of A-Level mark

Composition 1: Composition to an externally set brief (25 marks) – to be released near to 15th September in the year of certification.

Composition 2: Free composition (25 marks) – this is started in Year 1, but is required to be completed in the year of certification

A minimum of four and a half minutes of music in total is required. ***If the student's work is less than the minimum time marks will be deducted.*** A score or annotation must be



produced for both pieces, plus a programme note of approximately 150 words to inform the assessor of their compositional intention.

Outside lessons

Students should expect to study for approximately four hours per week on average outside lessons. This will include continuing to analyse music studied in the lesson, reviewing notes, writing essays, undertaking contextual research, completing composition tasks. In addition to this you would be expected to practise your chosen instrument several times per week in line with your current standard and the guidelines set out by your specialist instrumental / vocal tutor.

Careers & Higher Education

A Level Music is the ideal preparation for going on to study Music in any capacity, either for an academic course at University, or a performance-based course at a Music Conservatoire. There is a wide choice of careers in the music industry, all of them require a passion for Music. In a broader sense, you will also develop skills such as creative and analytical thinking, confidence, personal evaluation, organisation and management of workload, which are valuable to any prospective employer or University. Various degrees are open to you after studying Music.

Here are just a few of the jobs you could go into if you have a passion for music:

- A&R (artists & repertoire) Assistant
- Artist (songwriter, band member)
- Copyright Assistant
- Digital Marketing Manager
- Music Recording / Mixing Engineer
- Instrumental Teacher
- Junior Product Manager
- Live Event Technician
- Member Services Representative
- Music Manager
- Music Producer
- Orchestral Musician
- Research Officer
- Royalties Assistant
- Session Musician
- Sync Assistant

For further information on some of these careers visit the [Ukmusic.org](https://www.ukmusic.org) page and check out the Education and Careers resources:

<https://www.ukmusic.org/education-skills/resources/>



- Project Co-ordinator
- Music Data Administrator
- Songwriter
- Composer for Video Games
- Media Music Composer
- Studio Maintenance Engineer

Links to key information:

Specification

Summer work tasks

Music theory – Compulsory tasks

In preparation for advanced Set Work Analysis and advanced Composition you need to work through the following sections of the [BBC Bitesize website](https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/gcse/music/edexcel).

Secondary/England GCSE Yr10 and 11/Subjects/Music/Edexcel:

- Melody
- Harmony
- Tonality
- Structure
- Tempo, metre and rhythm
- Sonority
- Texture
- Notation

Make any relevant notes, complete the tests and write down your scores.

Performing task - recommended

Performing is a huge part of A-Level music and is 30% of your final grade. So why not challenge yourselves to practise your instrument/voice for 30 minutes every day. You will be aiming to study repertoire of **Grade 5** and above pieces. Transitioning to A-Level Music is all about incrementally improving your instrumental and vocal skills throughout the 2 years of the course. So this challenge will really help you to develop a good routine and progress. **In your first few lessons your teacher will be discussing your performance skills with you and there will be an initial assessment of your performance skills before the end of Term 1.**

Regular practise and thought about the pieces you enjoy and feel confident performing will help you be successful in this aspect of the course.

Composing tasks

For the A level music course you are required to create 2 pieces of composition work. One is a free composition, and one is to a set brief sent by the exam board. For those who have studied GCSE composition this is very similar to the requirements of GCSE. The difference at A level is the expectation that you can handle the technical side of the music well; for

example, including a modulation (transitioning to a different key) within the piece, using an imaginative structure, and creating more complex harmonies and rhythmic features. One of the most important things when composing is the ability to create ideas and to start getting them down onto paper. To help you with the link from Yr 11 to Yr 12 I'd like you to try and complete the following tasks:

Task 1 - compulsory

- Really think about what styles of music you enjoy listening to or singing/playing, and how any of the music you listen to could be a starting point for creating your own music
- In order to do this you need to break down the key elements of that music
 - Listen to one of your favourite pieces – write down the name of the piece and make notes on the key points below
 - What instruments are playing?
 - What kind of harmonies are used (can you get access to the chord structure or music and look at what is happening in the piece – the key, the chords, the different layers)?
 - What is the overall structure of the piece (e.g. intro, verse, chorus, bridge, outro or intro, A, B, coda etc)?
 - What different instruments/voices are used at different points in the piece – i.e. how is the texture/layers varied?
 - How is the melody constructed – are there repetitive aspects? Can you identify any sequences or call & response techniques?

Task 2 - recommended

- Taking into consideration some of the key things you have discovered about your chosen piece above now try the following:
 - Can you come up with an 8 bar chord sequence (improvise on a guitar or keyboard if you have one, or use a piece of software if you have access to one)
 - Can you create a series of melodies that would go with the chord sequence, or stand-alone if you have been unable to create a chord sequence?
 - Can you develop the piece further, with additional layers?
 - Are you able to note any of it down – either on manuscript, graphically (chord symbols) or input to any software you have access to at home?

Listening and Appraising Task – compulsory

Listening to music is a daily activity for Musicians. An important part of A Level Music is being able to critically appreciate a wide range of music. The listening and appraising exam paper is 40% of your final grade.

The first area of study we will be studying on the course is Baroque Solo Concertos, and we will study the following pieces:

- Purcell: Sonata for trumpet and Strings in D major Z.850
- Vivaldi: Flute Concerto in D Op 10 no 3
- Bach: Violin Concerto in A minor BWV1041

Task 1 (hand write onto paper):

- Find out the dates of the Baroque Period
- Find out which composers were popular during this time period
- In particular write a short paragraph about Purcell, Vivaldi and Bach (the dates they were alive, where they lived / worked, what kind of music did they compose)
- Find out the definition of the **basso continuo** or **ground bass**
- Find out about the instruments of the orchestra during the Baroque period; strings, woodwind, brass and percussion

Task 2

- Listen to Purcell's Trumpet Concerto and write down anything you can spot about the things listed below
- Tempo, texture, melody, accompaniment, harmony
- Finally, make sure you have made some specific notes on the **Baroque Trumpet**



Reading list

[The story of Music Howard Goodall](#)

[How Music Works by John Powell](#)

[Music: A very short introduction by Nicholas Cooke](#)

[Listen to this by Alex Ross](#)

Recommended Podcasts

[The Listening Service BBC Radio 3](#)

[How to compose music](#)

[Composer of the Week](#)

[The Armstrong Tapes](https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b0075fpx) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/b0075fpx>

[Jazz Record Requests](#)

YouTube

[BBC Howard Goodall's Story Of Music The Age of Invention](#)

[The Story of Musicals](#)