

### Welcome back to the new term

I hope you have enjoyed a restful break over the summer. Below you will find some information and things to bear in mind as we start the new academic year.

### Useful information and where to find it:

The following may be especially useful in preparing for data analysis meetings:

#### Principal Examiners' and Moderators' Reports

The Principals' reports will all be available to download from the main public website at the end of this month. They always contain useful advice and guidance directly from the person who has set the standards and overseen the assessment of each Unit

#### Centre reports for Moderated Unit

Your centre reports for GCSE Music Unit 1 Performing and Unit 2 Composing are available via Portal. Ask your exams officer to download these for you.

#### Item Level Data for Examined Components

On Portal you can also find the Item Level Data for all examined Units which breaks down the marks awarded to each assessed item. For the appraising exams this breakdown is by part question on the papers. For A / AS Level performing the breakdown is per piece, and for A / AS Level Composing there are two or three marks shown for each piece, corresponding to the two or three columns of the assessment criteria. The item level data documents also have a section which relates to the centre performance when compared to national average marks etc.

#### 2025 Question Papers and Marking Schemes

These can be downloaded from Portal, along with the required audio files. The most recent papers will not be released to the public website until around Easter next year, so may be useful to save for use as a mock exam.

#### Circulars

These are how we communicate officially with centres. Every month a set of circulars is uploaded to Portal. They are not sent directly to centres, the exams officer should log in and check, around the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month, and forward any relevant information to individual subject teams. There will be a September circular regarding the visiting examiner route for A Level Music.

### Composing briefs for 2026 submission

These are available to download from Portal from the 1<sup>st</sup> September, as usual. Please ensure that you check carefully to make sure you are looking at the correct document for your cohort – there are different briefs for GCSE, AS and A Level, as well as the briefs for the new QFF GCSE.

### NEA forms for 2026 submission

These will be uploaded to the public website shortly. Please use the correct forms to ensure that all required information is supplied.

## GCSE news

We will have one final assessment (in 2026) under the current GCSE specifications.

### 2025 moderation – thank you

Thank you once more to all centres who responded promptly and helpfully to all moderator requests for information or candidate work during the summer series. We do understand how this can sometimes be stressful, but we also know that teachers understand that any additional requests are made to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly in the assessment process. We are frequently asked to explain why additional items are requested, but please remember that we are not able to give details of the moderation and marks before the publication of results. The main reasons we ask for additional items are:

- There is an issue with an individual candidate's work, eg. the audio file won't play, the audio and score do not match.
- There is something missing, for example only one composition has been submitted.
- There is an issue with authentication – there are missing signatures.
- There is an issue with candidate work not being original.
- A clerical error has been detected (see below) and we need to check that it is the only one.
- There is an issue with the assessment – some or all of the teacher's marks are too harsh or too generous.

### Clerical errors

These are centre errors in the processes involved in assessing your candidates' work, not errors in the application of the assessment criteria. They could be:

- Errors in transferring the marks from the mark sheets to IAMIS.
- Errors in calculations.
- Errors in the selection of levels of difficulty.
- Errors in the application of timing penalties.

You will see clerical error marks in red on IAMIS. These show what the mark would have been if you had not made the error. They do not show the final mark for a candidate, as an assessment error is not a clerical error.

If you need any help in understanding clerical errors, you can contact the music team. Please include your centre number in your email.

### File types for upload

Once again, this year the moderators encountered some centres whose uploads were not in the correct format. **Please note that zip files are not in the list of accepted files.** Audio files should ideally be mp3 or wav files, and scores and other documents should be pdf or word. Full details can be found in the e-submission subject guide on the website.

### New GCSE Specification for Wales

We are excited that centres will start teaching the new GCSE Music made for Wales in September. As ever the Music team will be here to answer any queries you may have. The main differences in the new specification are outlined below, but it is essential that teachers read the full specification document on the new qualification page [here](#).

### Performing

- There is no longer a requirement to write a programme note.
- There is no longer a compulsory ensemble performance.
- There are new assessment criteria.
- Performances can be recorded at any time during the course – usually Year 10 and 11.
- Each piece should be at least a minute long.

Please remember that teachers will still have to be present for all recordings, a score will be required for every piece (not a “reference recording”) at least two pieces will still be required, and the minimum total time of the performances remains at 4 minutes.

### Composing

- The composing briefs will be released to allow candidates to work on them through the whole course – not just in the final year – so the first set of briefs are available from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.
- There is no longer a requirement for an evaluation.
- There is now a “reflective log” which will be worth 6 marks.
- There are new assessment criteria.

Teachers will still need to monitor compositions on at least 3 occasions, and the non-assessed composing log will still be required for authentication purposes. Compositions will still be submitted in the form of an audio file and a score or equivalent.

### Appraising

There are quite a number of changes in the appraising exam which will be sat for the first time in 2027. It will now be an on-screen test, and candidates will be able to pause and replay the extracts as many times as they need to in the time allowed. There are no areas of study any more – instead the exam focuses on the elements of music. As before, candidates will answer two questions on prepared extracts (set works) and six on unprepared extracts. There are now two lists of set works, and centres must choose to study one from each list (shown below.) There are resources available for all of these works on the WJEC resources page and Portal, including analyses, glossaries of terms, performance packs, scores and lead sheets and linked composing ideas.

List A - choose 1

- Concerto for Two Trumpets in C (first movement) - Antonio Vivaldi
- Palladio (allegretto) for string orchestra - Karl Jenkins
- Elizabeth Remembered - Debbie Wiseman

List B – choose 1

- Hwyl Ti, Gymru - Fleur De Lys
- Tale of Two Dragons - Calan
- One Day Like This - Elbow
- Burn (Hamilton) - Lin-Manuel Miranda
- I Don't Wanna Know - Mared
- Sir Duke - Stevie Wonder

You can find a playlist of all of these works on Apple Music or Spotify by using these QR codes.



### GCSE Music Professional Learning 2025/26

Our new Assessment Feedback Package for 2025-26 is an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how assessments are marked or moderated. This integrated suite of resources and training brings together free access to Principal Examiner reports, marked scripts, and online assessment feedback sessions, as well as a range of optional paid face-to-face Professional Learning events. Learn more about how you and your learners can benefit from our Assessment Feedback Package here: [Assessment Feedback Package 2025-26](#). You can download the most recent Principal Examiner Report and register for FREE, online feedback events on your qualification page.

We are excited to launch the new specification for Music. Here are some key dates for your diaries including information on upcoming Professional Learning opportunities.

Event	Location and type	Description	Schedule
WJEC GCSE Music (new specification) Unit 1 - Preparing to Assess (English) FREE	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	17 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, 4-6pm
CBAC TGAU Cerddoriaeth (newydd) Uned 1 - Paratoi i Asesu (Saesneg) AM	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, 4-6pm
WJEC GCSE Music (new specification) Unit 2 - Preparing to Assess (English) FREE	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, 4-6pm
CBAC TGAU Cerddoriaeth (newydd) Uned 2 - Paratoi i Asesu (Saesneg) AM	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, 4-6pm

## Resources for the new Made for Wales GCSE Music

### Class performance packs

Class performance packs (including PDFs and XMLs) for each of the set works for the new Made for Wales GCSE Music can be found on Portal. They are listed as “**New WJEC GCSE Music Set Works Scores (PDF and XML)**”.

### Blended Learning Resources

A Blended Learning resource is available for each of the new set works, accompanied by a Knowledge Organiser. These can be found on the [Resources Website](#).

## AS and A Level news

### Unit 1 and 4 Performing – centre reports

We have moved away from providing a report to each centre on the visiting examiner process. There will only be a report available if there were particular issues noted in your centre. These are available from Portal as normal.

### Levels of difficulty and timing penalties

Once again there were candidates whose performance pieces were incorrectly judged for the level of difficulty – these were adjusted by the examiner – and also candidates whose performing time fell short of the minimum requirement of either 6 or 10 minutes (depending on the option selected.)

It is essential that teachers check the timing of every candidate’s performance to avoid penalties. Remember that you should time from the start of the candidate’s first note to the end of their last note of each piece, but discount and long sections where the candidate is silent, such as extended rests while the accompaniment plays, an instrumental verse in a song where the candidate is the singer, or a section where other ensemble members play or sing but the candidate is silent. You are permitted to add additional repeats into a piece, as long as they make musical sense, and this can be a good way to avoid a penalty.

### Unit 2 and 5 Composing – examiner comments

This year for the first time, Composing examiners have been able to save brief comments regarding the candidate’s work on Surpass. These are available to you via “access to scripts.”

### Unit 3 and 6 Appraising – changes to set works

Please note carefully the dates of the first examination of these new set works. There are new, free resources available to download from the WJEC resources website.

Area of Study	New set work	Date of first examination
AS Music AoS A: The Symphony	<b>Haydn:</b> Symphony 103 (Drum Roll) Movements 3 and 4	Summer 2026
AS Music AoS A: Religious Choral Music	<b>Mozart:</b> Requiem – Recordare, Confutatis, Lacrimosa, Domine Jesu.	Summer 2026
A Level Music AoS A: The Symphony	<b>Brahms:</b> Symphony 1 Movement 1	Summer 2027

A Level Music AoS A: Religious Choral Music	<b>Verdi:</b> Requiem – Ingemisco, Confutatis, Lacrymosa, Domine Jesu Christe, Sanctus	Summer 2027
AoS F Strand 1: Impressionism	<b>Lili Boulanger:</b> Pour Les Funerailles d'un Soldat	Summer 2027
AoS F Strand 2: Chamber Music in Wales	<b>Ben Henegan:</b> Summer to Autumn	Summer 2027

## GCE Music Professional Learning 2025/26

Please find details below of all CPD events for WJEC AS and A Level Music.

Event	Location and type	Description	Schedule
CBAC TAG Cerddoriaeth: Adborth ar asesiadau haf (Cymraeg) AM DDIM	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	15 <sup>th</sup> October 2025, 4-6pm
WJEC AS/A Level Music: Feedback on Summer Assessments (English) FREE	Online	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2025, 4-6pm
WJEC GCE Music: Exploring NEA Step by Step & Looking at the new Set Works	Cardiff, Face to face	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	20 <sup>th</sup> January 2026, 9:30-3:30pm
WJEC GCE Music: Exploring NEA Step by Step & Looking at the new Set Works	Llandudno, Face to face	<a href="#">Click here for a full description</a>	22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2026, 9:30-3:30pm

## Looking Ahead

We are frequently asked about changes to the published specifications. At present there are no plans to change the Eduqas GCSE Music specification, as taught in centres in England. This includes the set works which will remain as *Badinerie* and *Africa* for the foreseeable future. When the time comes to make any changes these will be communicated via the website, circulars and newsletters, allowing centres plenty of time to prepare – at least a year.

(If you will be offering the Eduqas A level, there are planned changes to set works. Details in the A level section of this newsletter.)