

Spring 2025 newsletter WJEC

Happy New Year! I hope that you have returned to school well rested and having enjoyed the winter break. This is the term when we count down to submitting NEA work, so there are some reminders below, plus details of a new uploading system for GCSE.

GCSE Music

Please see the teacher guide on the website for reminders of the processes for each unit. It may be useful to share this with your exams officer too.

Unit 1 - Performing

Deadline for submission of marks and sampled candidate work: **5th May**

There is an amplification of the criteria on the website which has been written to support teachers in their assessments. There are other helpful documents, such as guidance on choosing repertoire, ensemble requirements and the upload process.

For each candidate in the sample, you should submit the following:

- One ensemble recording lasting at least one minute
- At least one other performance recording (solo or ensemble) to give a total of at least 4 minutes of performance time
- A score for every piece performed
- A programme note
- A completed and **signed** mark sheet. Teachers may make additional comments but are not required to do so.

In addition please complete the timing penalty form with details of the whole cohort and upload this with the first candidate in the sample.

As a reminder, recordings must be made in the year of assessment (usually Year 11) and the teacher who will complete the assessment **must** be present.

The standard level of difficulty is equivalent to Grade 3. For pieces not on any graded syllabus please refer to the level of difficulty descriptors in Appendix A of the specification. If you are still unsure please email a copy of the score to music@wjec.co.uk. Please note that it takes a few days for these to be checked, so please don't wait until 4th May to send them!

Please ensure that you time performances very carefully. Do not include long introductions before the candidate starts to sing/play, or extended sections where they are silent. When timing an ensemble performance please only include the sections where they candidate is performing an independent line at the same time as others, not solo sections.

Every year in different centres there are candidates with injuries, orthodontic braces, and other issues, so please consider recording performances sooner rather than later, with an opportunity to re-record at a later date if needed. Whilst we will always look for the best ways to support candidates fairly in these situations, is much better for them to receive a mark based on their actual performance, rather than having to go through special considerations.

Unit 2 – Composing

Deadline for submission of marks and sampled candidate work: **5th May**

There is an [amplification of the criteria](#) on the website which has been written to support teachers in their assessments. There are other helpful documents, such as guidance on the [upload process](#), and you can find the Composing briefs on the Portal.

For each candidate in the sample, you should submit the following:

- One composition to the set brief – mp3 file and score or equivalent
- One free composition – mp3 file and score or equivalent
- An evaluation of the composition to a brief
- A completed and **signed** [composing log and mark sheet](#)

Although the log is not assessed it is vital that it is completed properly with details of any non-original ideas in the compositions, how the recording was made and a brief explanation of any influences and how the composition was put together. Teachers may make additional comments but are not required to do so.

It is **essential** that candidates write a brief for their free composition. Part of the assessment relates to the success of the piece in relation to that brief, so if none is specified there cannot be any evidence to support the award of marks.

GCSE NEA uploads from 2025 will all be submitted within IAMIS – the same system you use each year to submit your marks. For GCSE there will be no use of Surpass, no keycodes, and no delays in being able to upload.

Unit 3 – Appraising

From 2025, we will no longer be sending physical CDs to centres. This will reduce waste, and also recognises the fact that schools are becoming less likely to have a CD player available.

The mp3 file for the GCSE Music exam will be available to download from the Portal one working day before the exam. There will also be a version available for candidates entitled to 25% extra time. Please note that in general, these candidates will not benefit from simply having an extra block of time at the end of the exam as they are not able to replay the audio. If you have any candidates with a different percentage extra time allowance please see the [guidance](#) on the website.

Candidates with an extra time allowance must be roomed separately from candidates using the standard audio as the files should be played out loud in the room.

The 2024 exam paper will remain available only on the secure site until the summer, so centres will be able to use this as a mock assessment.

Qualified For the Future

There will be a number of face-to-face events available for Music teachers to find out more about the new QFF, Made for Wales GCSE Music. There will be opportunities to submit questions before the events, as well as joining the discussions on the day. Full details can be found on the [website](#).

A Level Music

Centres should be aware that there will be a change in set works, as previously communicated, but this change does not affect any candidates sitting AS or A Level Music in 2025.

Please see the [teacher guide](#) on the website for reminders of the processes for each unit. It may be useful to share this with your exams officer too.

Unit 1/4 Performing

The specification has been amended to remove the requirement for pieces selected for performing to be linked to Areas of Study.

Centres submitted their impossible dates form in the autumn term. If you have missed this, please read the September circular on the Portal to find the link. You will be contacted directly by your examiner in the New Year to book a visit. Please try to respond as soon as possible so that they can build an effective route between the schools they need to visit. It is vital to remember that this is an external exam, so should be the highest priority in school. If there is a genuine reason why the date proposed may not be possible then the examiner will aim to be flexible, but in general it is expected that centres will confirm the date they are offered. If you need the examiner to visit an alternative venue, please discuss this with them when they initially make contact and remember that a member of school staff will need to go too.

The marksheets are available to download from the [website](#), under “Administration.” Please ensure that you use the correct one – AS, A Level Option A or A Level Option B. You will need to provide copies of all scores which the examiner can take away with them.

Please ensure that you have checked the timing of all performances to avoid any penalties being applied. Time only the sections where the candidate is actually performing, not including extended introductions, tacet verses etc.

Unit 2/5 – Composing

Deadline for submission of marks and sampled candidate work: 15th May

There is an [amplification of the criteria](#) on the website which has been written to support teachers in their feedback to learners. There are other helpful documents, such as guidance on the [upload process](#), and you can find the Composing briefs on the Portal.

For each candidate in the sample, you should submit the following:

- One composition to the set brief – mp3 file and score or equivalent
- One free composition – mp3 file and score or equivalent
- A completed and **signed** [composing log and mark sheet](#)

Although the log is not assessed it is vital that it is completed properly with details of any non-original ideas in the compositions, how the recording was made and a brief explanation of any influences and how the composition was put together. Teachers may make additional comments but are not required to do so.

Please remember that the composition to a brief **must** demonstrate an understanding of the Western Classical Tradition, which in this context is defined as the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods.

It is **essential** that candidates write a brief for their free composition. Part of the assessment relates to the success of the piece in relation to that brief, so if none is specified there cannot be any evidence to support the award of marks.

AS and A Level composing work will still be submitted via Surpass.

Unit 3/6 Appraising

From 2025, we will no longer be sending physical CDs to centres. This will reduce waste, and also recognises the fact that schools are becoming less likely to have a CD player available.

The mp3 files for the AS and A Level Music exam will be available to download from the Portal one working day before the exam. There will be more than one audio file required for each examination, to cover the selected areas of study, so we will be providing a tick sheet for teachers to send to their exams officers to make clear which they require. Please do **not** send these to WJEC, they are for centre use only.

There will also be versions of the audio files available for candidates entitled to 25% extra time. Please note that in general, these candidates will not benefit from simply having an extra block of time at the end of the exam as they are not able to replay the audio. If you have any candidates with a different percentage extra time allowance please see the [guidance](#) on the website.

Candidates with an extra time allowance must be roomed separately from candidates using the standard audio as the files should be played out loud in the room.

The 2024 exam papers will remain available only on the secure site until the summer, so centres will be able to use them as mock assessments.

Finally, a reminder that the set works will be changing. The dates of the first examination for each are shown in the table below.

Area of Study	New set work	Date of first examination
AS Music AoS A: The Symphony	Haydn: Symphony 103 (Drum Roll) Movements 3 and 4	Summer 2026
A Level Music AoS A: The Symphony	Brahms: Symphony 1 Movement 1	Summer 2027
AS Music AoS A: Religious Choral Music	Mozart: Requiem – Recordare, Confutatis, Lacrimosa, Domine Jesu.	Summer 2026
A Level Music AoS A: Religious Choral Music	Verdi: Requiem – Ingemisco, Confutatis, Lacrymosa, Domine Jesu Christe, Sanctus	Summer 2027
AoS F Strand 1: Impressionism	Lili Boulanger: Pour Les Funerailles d'un Soldat	Summer 2027
AoS F Strand 2: Chamber Music in Wales	Ben Henegan: Summer to Autumn	Summer 2027