

Hello!

I hope you have all had a well-deserved, good, restful break over the summer. This newsletter is to remind you of some key information, and also to give you some updates for both GCSE and A Level Music.

I hope that you have had a chance to look at the principal examiners and moderators' reports on the Summer 2024 series which are available on the website. These always contain a lot of valuable information. In addition, we will also have some **free** online events as detailed below:

**WJEC GCSE Music Feedback** – 22/10/24 (English Medium)

**CBAC GCSE Music Feedback** – 24/10/24 (Welsh Medium)

**WJEC GCE Music Feedback** – 15/10/24 (English Medium)

**CBAC GCE Music Feedback** – 27/10/24 (Welsh Medium)

## GCSE

### 2024 moderation

I would like to thank the centres who were so helpful during the moderation period, if additional work was requested by the moderator. Your prompt uploads were very much appreciated. Please remember that the reason for the whole moderation process is to make sure that candidates in every school in the country are assessed at the same standard. We do have to make some adjustments to centre marks, but these are done in order to treat your candidates fairly, which I believe is what all teachers want.

You can review the reports written by your moderators via Portal. Please ask your Exams Officer if you cannot locate these yourself.

### GCSE NEA Processes for 2025 Submission

There will be some changes to the GCSE NEA submissions process for summer 2025. An updated NEA Process document will be added to the website in the next few weeks. I would recommend downloading this to refer to during the year. The deadline for uploading sampled work will, as always, be 5<sup>th</sup> May.

### Unit 1 Performing

The marksheets for 2025 submission have been updated to request further information regarding the ensemble performances, and the role of the candidate within them. The new marksheets are on the website under Administration.

Centres are reminded that an ensemble performance requires between two and eight **live** performers and should not simply be another solo. Please note that **one** live performer with a backing track can never be classed as an ensemble. There is guidance on the website to help you to select repertoire which will allow your candidates to demonstrate the evidence required for them to be able to achieve marks in the higher bands.

Remember that all performances for submission must be recorded in the year of submission (Usually Year 11.) There are descriptors for the levels of difficulty in Appendix A of the specification. Please refer to these, and if you are still unsure you can send a **copy of a score** to the music inbox, and we can confirm the level of difficulty.

All GCSE performances must be accompanied by a score or lead sheet which clearly shows the part performed by the candidate. Guide recordings are NOT permitted as an alternative. A singer must provide a vocal melody line, not just a copy of the lyrics.

Candidates who submit performances with a combined duration of less than 4 minutes will be subject to a penalty, as laid out in Appendix A of the specification. Note that the timing should start when the candidate begins to play or sing, and end when they finish, and should not include any extended sections when they are silent. Some centres mistakenly used the duration of the mp3 recordings including (unnecessary) announcements, introductions etc which were deducted from the total, and penalties were applied as appropriate.

## **Unit 2 Composing**

The Composing briefs were uploaded to Portal on 1<sup>st</sup> September, as usual.

The marksheet and log document has been updated for 2025 and can be downloaded from the Administration area of the subject page on the website.

Centres are reminded that if candidates are using other live performers to realise their compositions for recording, then it must be made clear in the log how the performers knew exactly what to play. eg via a score, with a recorded guide track.

It is also important to note that in Composing, credit can only be given for original ideas, so candidates would be best advised not to use loops or similar facilities provided in software packages. Candidates who use any form of AI, including software which generates an accompaniment from a chord pattern must give full details of this. They will only be credited for their original work. Candidates must also detail the level of support they have been given if the teacher has supplied for example a chord sequence, a structure or a step by step composing template.

## **Unit 3 Appraising**

There are no changes currently planned for the Appraising Unit. The set works will remain as *Anitra's Dance* and *Everything Must Go* until the introduction of the new QFF specification. There are free resources relating to these pieces on the WJEC digital resources website, including a full analysis, score, class performance pack and linked composing activities.

### [Professional Learning 2024/2025](#)

Our new Assessment Feedback Package for 2024-25 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 2024-25 \(wjec.co.uk\)](#). You can download the most recent Principal Examiner Report and register for FREE, online feedback events on your qualification page. Please see below for details and how to book.

### **Autumn Term: FREE Feedback on Summer Assessments**

We begin the season with free online feedback sessions, focusing on the 2024 summer series. These sessions are presented by our expert team of Examiners and include an opportunity for Q&A along with a free exemplar pack.

#### **Dates:**

16/10/2024	WJEC GCSE Summer Assessment Feedback	Online	4-6pm
24/10/2024	WJEC GCSE Summer Assessment Feedback - Welsh Medium	Online	4-6pm
15/10/2024	WJEC AS and A Level Summer Assessment Feedback	Online	4-6pm
17/10/2024	WJEC AS and A Level Summer Assessment Feedback - Welsh Medium	Online	4-6pm

#### **How to book:**

To book, visit the website and find the webpage relevant to the course(s) you are teaching. Then, click on the 'Training' tab, just below the specification. From there, click on the event you wish to book and follow the instructions on the event page.

## [QFF 2024/2025](#)

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. For more information on the new Made for Wales GCSE qualifications, and to stay up to day with new resources, events and the specification, please head to: [GCSE Music | Made for Wales \(wjec.co.uk\)](#)

### Key dates:

Item	Key date
Publication of approved specification	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
Publication of Sample Assessment Materials	19 <sup>th</sup> December 2024
Publication of Guidance for Teaching	31 <sup>st</sup> January 2025

### Events

We will be holding a series of Professional Learning opportunities designed for practitioners starting to teach the new Made for Wales GCSE Drama specification, available for first teaching from September 2025.

PL Type	Aims	Format and Notes
Your Guide to the new specification module  <b>Available from end of September 2024</b>	<i>To support your understanding of the specification document.</i>	<i>This asynchronous module will be on the "training on demand" tab of your qualification page on the WJEC website. You will need to register to access a link to view.</i>
Parent / Options evening flyers  <b>Available from end of September 2024</b>	<i>To support you to provide information to parents and learners before start of study.</i>	<i>This PDF will be published on your qualification's home page.</i>
Live Online Qualification Briefing & Q&A  <b>Available 2nd half autumn term 2024.</b>	<i>To support your understanding of the new qualification, its content and assessment structure. The live event will also refer to resources and upcoming PL and offer an opportunity to</i>	<i>These live online events will be advertised on the WJEC website, and you will be required to register via a link. They will be hosted on Teams Live (Townhall).</i>

<p><b>Events are open for registration.</b></p> <p><b>Visit the <i>Training</i> tab on your new qualification’s webpage to view dates and register.</b></p> <p>19/11/24 - WJEC GCSE Music Specification Briefing (English Medium)</p> <p>27/11/24 - WJEC GCSE Music Specification Briefing (Welsh Medium)</p>	<p><i>put questions to our Subject Teams and specification experts.</i></p>	<p><i>The events will be presented by WJEC Subject Advisors with Q&amp;A support from WJEC Subject Officers. There will be English medium and Welsh medium events (except for English and Welsh qualifications).</i></p>
<p>* Preparing to Teach (face-to-face)</p> <p><b>Available from 14/02/25 to 07/04/25</b></p> <p><b>Registrations for the Pan Wales INSET days will be collected via your head teacher. No registrations through WJEC’s website.</b></p>	<p><i>To support teaching the new specification. There will be a focus on understanding the assessments, assessment objectives, content and teaching approaches based on the specification, sample assessment materials and guidance for teaching.</i></p>	<p><i>These days take place on designated regional INSET days – there are 12 days in this series held across Wales, including 2 Welsh medium days and 1 bilingual day.</i></p> <p><i>These events will be led by WJEC Subject Advisors and our expert presenting teams.</i></p>
<p>Exam and NEA Walk-throughs</p> <p><b>Available summer Term 2025</b></p> <p><b>Access via the WJEC Portal secure website</b></p>	<p><i>To support you and your learners to understand the structure of question papers/NEA briefs, question types, assessment objectives and marking methods.</i></p>	<p><i>These pre-recorded PPT will initially be published on the WJEC Portal secure website only.</i></p>

\* Your designated regional WJEC face-to-face INSET date (Preparing to Teach) can be found here: [Made-for-Wales GCSEs \(wjec.co.uk\)](https://www.wjec.co.uk/made-for-wales-gcse). For more information and to get in touch, please contact [music@wjec.co.uk](mailto:music@wjec.co.uk)

## GCE AS and A Level

### Unit 1/4 Performing

Please look out for the September circular with the link to the impossible dates form. Circulars are published to the Portal every month and contain official communications. Please ask your exams officer to check for these for you. The impossible dates form should be returned as soon as possible to allow us to begin planning the visiting examiner route.

The marksheets for 2025 submission have been updated to include a reminder of the requirements for each candidate. The new marksheets are on the website under Administration.

Centres are asked to check all of the marksheets they prepare to make sure that all information is correct, and also clearly legible, avoiding any possible confusion.

Please check the timing of your AS and A Level performances in advance of the exam. Again, this year, there were candidates who had penalties applied because they fell short of the minimum time requirement. It is wise to remember that sometimes a candidate may perform faster when under exam pressure, so allowing for a sensible time buffer may be worth considering.

### Unit 2/5 Composing

The Composing briefs were uploaded to Portal on 1<sup>st</sup> September, as usual.

The log documents have been updated for 2025 and can be downloaded from the Administration area of the subject page on the website.

Centres are reminded that the composition to a brief MUST demonstrate an understanding of the conventions of the Western Classical Tradition. In this context we are defining this as Baroque, Classical or Romantic music. Compositions in a 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> Century style, or in a different genre such as Rock or Jazz will not be able to achieve well if they are submitted as a composition in response to a set brief, even if they are otherwise successful pieces.

If candidates are using other live performers to realise their compositions for recording, then it must be made clear in the log how the performers knew exactly what to play, eg via a score, with a recorded guide track.

It is also important to note that in Composing, credit can only be given for original ideas, so candidates would be best advised not to use loops, accompaniment generators or similar facilities provided in software packages. Candidates who are guided by teachers giving step by step instructions for composing should outline the details of anything in their pieces which is not their own work, for example if the teacher has supplied a chord sequence or a rigid structure.

### Processes for 2025 GCE Composing Submission

The process for submitting AS and A level Compositions will not change for 2025. An updated NEA Process document will be added to the website in the next few weeks. I would recommend

downloading this to refer to during the year. The deadline for uploading all candidate work will, as always, be 15<sup>th</sup> May.

### **Unit 3/6 Appraising**

The set works for AS and A Level music are changing as shown below. Please note carefully the date when the first exam using the new set works will be sat to avoid any errors. These changes will also be communicated to centres via a circular.

Thank you to those teachers who contributed their views during the consultation period for these set works.

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

### **CPD**

The following CPD events have been planned for this academic year. Please visit the website to book your place.

### **WJEC Feedback from the Summer Assessments (online: free)**

GCE 15 October 2024 (English Medium)  
 17 October 2024 (Welsh Medium)

### **GCE: Approaches to Appraising (online)**

WJEC 5 December 2024

### **Refreshing Your Insight into Teaching GCE Music**

Cardiff 16 January 2025  
 Llandudno 21 January 2025