

Your 2 compositions will be worth 30% of your GCSE, with the evaluation being an additional 5%, so it is worth spending time working on these. There are a number of different ways to approach composing: Using notation software, such as Dorico, Musescore, Noteflight or Sibelius; Using a DAW such as Ableton, Cubase, Garageband, Logic or Soundtrap; Using an instrument and noting down ideas on paper; A combination of these approaches. All of these are perfectly acceptable ways of working. You should use whichever are available to you, and that you feel will help you to express, develop and record your creative ideas.

**Composition 1** must be a response to a brief set by WJEC, released on September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year that you will sit the exam (usually Year 11.) There will be a choice of four briefs, and they will all be quite open and allow for a variety of different responses, but you must do what is asked! (For example if it says write a pop song, you must write a pop song!)

You also have to write an **evaluation** of Composition 1, in 500-1000 words. This should use musical terminology, and should focus on

- how well your piece meets the brief (refer to aspects of the brief and describe exactly how your piece meets them)
- how well you have used the elements of music in your piece (choose a number of elements and talk about what you have done)
- an evaluation of the overall piece (is it a successful and convincing piece of music?)
- an evaluation of the recording (eg. did you use computer sounds rather than real performers? Did anyone make any mistakes?)

**Composition 2** is a free composition. You can start this in Year 10 if you wish. You do not have to write an evaluation, but you must write your own brief, which should include a context for the music. It's OK to change your brief before you submit your work.

**The Composing Log** is a document you must complete and hand in with your pieces. There are no marks for it, but it allows your teacher and the WJEC moderator to understand the decisions you have made in composing your piece. It also gives you the chance to state if anything in either piece is not original – eg. if you used a loop for a drum part, or an existing tune to write a theme and variations piece. Finally, it must be **signed** by you and your teacher to confirm that your compositions and evaluation are your own work.

Each composition must be submitted as an **audio file** (preferably mp3) and a **score or lead sheet**. If you have composed using notation software then you can simply export the score as a pdf document. If you have used a DAW you could convert your work into a score, or otherwise make a document of screenshots with annotations to show what it going on in the music. Your teacher can show you examples of these. If you have composed using an instrument, you can write a lead sheet and a description of your piece. Your teacher is allowed to help with the score/lead sheet.

If anyone else has performed anything in your piece, you must explain how they knew EXACTLY what to play, so that it is clear it is all your work, not someone else's interpretation of your ideas.

You will be assessed on the quality of your original ideas, how well you develop them, how well you use the elements of music, and the overall structure, style and coherence of your pieces. Look closely at the assessment criteria – they are in Appendix B of the specification. Highlight the important words, and refer back to them regularly while you compose. Ask yourself if your ideas are “highly effective,” “generally effective,” “simple,” or “limited.” Are any aspects of your piece “inconsistent?” Your teacher is allowed to give you general feedback to help you develop your piece.