



AS/A Level Music

(Available for teaching from September 2008)

This specification extends the GCSE skills of Performing, Composing and Appraising in ways which emphasise their interdependence. There are no limits on the instruments (or voices) and types of repertoire which may be presented in performance and the study of the widest possible range of music, including folk, popular and classical traditions of non-Western origin as well as those of jazz and Western classical and popular traditions, is encouraged.



What are the benefits to me and my students of delivering this OCR specification?

- There are three AS units and three A2 units representing the three major activities involved in this qualification: Performing, Composing and Listening/Analysing.
- This specification retains visiting examination for the performance units in recognition of the fact that candidates need to perform in a 'live' context.
- The combined percentage weighting for the two performance units has increased from 33% to 40% in recognition of centre preferences and the fact that performing lies at the very core of this subject.
- The popular synoptic element provided by the Performance Investigation in the A2 Performance unit has been retained in spirit by substituting a viva voce, for which the candidates will prepare by completing the OCR pro-forma found in Appendix C of the new specification.
- Those candidates whose performing preferences require an element of improvisation have been catered for in the assessment criteria for the two Performance units and by the inclusion of an improvisation option in Section B of the AS Performing unit.
- The composing option in Section B of the AS Performing unit has been retained for the benefit of those performers who are also strong composers.
- The assessment of the A2 Composing unit will now align with that of the AS Composing unit – by teacher assessed portfolio. These two will be moderated together, bringing a closer focus to the developing talents of composers.

AS Level

Unit title	Description	Mandatory/Optional?
G351: Performing Music 1	Candidates perform solo (on any instrument or voice) a programme of pieces which demonstrate representative features of the repertoire for the instrument or voice presented. If it is appropriate to the repertoire being performed, candidates may improvise. Candidates then demonstrate an extension to their ability by either performing on a second instrument, as a member of a small ensemble, as an accompanist, perform their own composition, or improvise a given stimulus.	Mandatory
G352: Composing 1	Candidates are required to submit a portfolio representative of work undertaken throughout the course. This should demonstrate their developing compositional skills through a series of set exercises and through a composition or arrangement of their own choice. Candidates should demonstrate their ability to communicate clearly and accurately using staff notation and detailed performance directions.	Mandatory
G353: Introduction to Historical Study in Music	In this unit, candidates must demonstrate skills of aural perception that will allow them to recognise, describe and compare techniques and effects within selected extracts of music. By comparing similarities and differences in the contextual background to each of the prescribed works candidates should begin to develop an awareness of musical history as an exploration of continuity and change over time.	Mandatory

A2 Level

Unit title	Description	Mandatory/Optional?
G354: Performing Music 2 (Interpretation)	Candidates are required to demonstrate interpretative skills and understanding through performing and in discussion with the examiner. The performance will be a focussed recital, performed as a soloist, a member of an ensemble, or as an accompanist, but not a mixture of these rôles. Candidates are required to have listened to, and compared, at least two interpretations of music relevant to the style or genre that is the focus of their Recital in and to have supported their study by appropriate research. Candidates will be questioned on their listening, composition and research as part of a viva voce.	Mandatory
G355: Composing 2	Candidates are required to submit a portfolio representative of work undertaken throughout the course. Candidates are expected to show the development and extension of their compositional skills from Unit G352 through a series of set exercises and a single composition, chosen from vocal music, programme music or music for film or TV. Compositions can be for any medium.	Mandatory
G356: Historical and Analytical Studies in Music	Candidates should develop their knowledge and understanding of the two Areas of Study, Tonality and Interpretation . They should become familiar with the expressive features found in music that interpret text or other subject matter, and with the ways in which this interpretation can create dramatic tension, characterisation, mood or feeling as appropriate to the genre, within the structural integrity of the whole. Candidates should also study the expressive use of tonality in response to words or other stimulus.	Mandatory

How is this qualification assessed?

Performing is assessed by visiting examination through recital and a short viva voce.

Composing is assessed through a centre marked portfolio (part of which is compiled under controlled conditions), which is externally moderated.

Listening/Analysing is assessed by an externally set and marked examination.

All units will be available for assessment in June sessions. In addition, the two externally set and marked examinations for the Listening/ Analysing units will be available for assessment in January sessions.

Dates of first examinations

AS

Available from June 2009.

A2

All available from June 2010, with the exception of Historical and Analytical Studies in Music which will be available from January 2010.

What support will I receive?

Training

A variety of INSET courses will be available to prepare centres for the changeover and to support teachers and students after September 2008.

Publishers

Developed in close consultation with OCR, Rhinegold is publishing materials for the 2008 Music A Level specification.

Resources

You will be able to download all the following resources from the OCR website – www.ocr.org.uk.

- Sample Assessment Material
- Teacher Guidance

More information on support will appear after QCA accreditation.

For more information please contact the OCR Customer Contact Centre on **01223 553998**, or visit www.ocr.org.uk