

*A Level Music
Preparation Unit*



*St Anthony's and
St Aidan's Catholic
Sixth Form*

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AQA A Level Music

The course has three main components: Appraising (listening), Performance and Composition. This course overview will help you to see what is coming up, and it will be explained in more detail when you start the course in September. If you have any questions, make a note of them at the bottom of the page to ask in September

Component 1: Appraising music	+	Component 2: Performance	+	Component 3: Composition
What's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Analysis • Contextual understanding 		What's assessed <p>Music performance</p>		What's assessed <p>Composition</p>
How it's assessed <p>Exam paper with listening and written questions using excerpts of music.</p>		How it's assessed <p>Solo and/or ensemble performing as an instrumentalist, or vocalist and/or music production (via technology).</p>		How it's assessed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Composition 1: Composition to a brief (25 marks) • Composition 2: Free composition (25 marks)
Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section A: Listening (56 marks) • Section B: Analysis (34 marks) • Section C: Essay (30 marks) <p>This component is 40% of A-level marks (120 marks).</p>		Requirement <p>A minimum of ten minutes of performance in total is required.</p> <p>This component is 35% of A-level marks (50 marks).</p> <p>Non-exam assessment (NEA) will be externally marked by AQA examiners. Work must be completed between 1 March and the specified date given at aqa.org.uk/keydates</p> <p>Work must be sent by post/ uploaded to AQA by the specified date given at aqa.org.uk/keydates</p>		Requirement <p>A minimum of four and a half minutes of music in total is required.</p> <p>This component is worth 25% of A-level marks (50 marks).</p> <p>NEA will be externally marked by AQA examiners. Work must be completed and sent by post/uploaded to AQA by the specified date given at aqa.org.uk/keydates</p>

Component 1: Appraising Music

Throughout the course, you will be studying a number of set works. Listen to these pieces of music, as well as other pieces by these composers. This will be excellent preparation for the course, and a wide listening base will also support you in your composition work. You will be able to find all of these on Spotify or YouTube.

Strand A: Baroque solo concerto

Composer	Set works
Purcell	Sonata for trumpet and strings in D major Z.850 (complete)
Vivaldi	Flute concerto in D <i>Il Gardellino</i> op.10 no.3 RV428 (complete)
Bach	Violin concerto in A minor BWV1041 (complete)

Strand B: The operas of Mozart

Composer	Set works
Mozart	<i>Le Nozze di Figaro</i> k.492: Act 1, focusing on: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• overture• No.1 Duettino (Figaro and Susanna, including following recitative)• No.3 Cavatina (Figaro, including the previous recitative)• No.4 Aria (Bartolo)• No.5 Duettino (Susanna and Marcellina)• No.6 Aria (Cherubino)• No.7 Terzetto (Susanna, Basilio, Count)• No.9 Aria (Figaro).

Strand C: The piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg

Composer	Set works
Chopin	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ballade no.2 in F major op.38• Nocturne in E minor op.72 no.1
Brahms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intermezzo in A major op.118. no.2• Ballade in G minor op.118 no.3
Grieg	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Norwegian march op.54 no.2• Notturmo op.54 no.4

Component 1: Appraising Music

You will also study two genres of music in detail:

3.1.4 Area of study 3: Music for media

For the purpose of this specification, music for media is defined as music specifically composed for film, television and gaming from 1958 to the present.

Named composers

- Bernard Herrmann
- Hans Zimmer
- Michael Giacchino
- Thomas Newman
- Nobuo Uematsu



Research these composers and their works, and listen to as many as possible. If you can, watch films or play games where these composers have composed the score – make a note of any patterns or characteristics you notice.

3.1.5 Area of study 4: Music for theatre

For the purpose of this specification, music for theatre is defined as music composed to govern, enhance or support a theatrical conception from 1930 to the present.

Named composers

- Kurt Weill
- Richard Rodgers
- Stephen Sondheim
- Claude-Michel Schönberg
- Jason Robert Brown



Research these composers and their works, and listen to as many as possible. If you can, watch a musical where these composers have composed the score – make a note of any patterns or characteristics you notice.

For these genres, you will be required to write an essay as part of your listening and appraising examination at the end of the course. You will be asked to comment on particular pieces of music and how the composers have used musical elements, techniques and devices. Try to think of the elements as you listen to the pieces:

<i>D</i>	<i>Dynamics</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>Rhythm</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Structure</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>Melody</i>
<i>I</i>	<i>Instrumentation</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>Texture</i>
<i>H</i>	<i>Harmony & Tonality</i>

Listening Record

Piece and Composer	Analysis

Listening Record continued

Piece and Composer	Analysis

Component 2: Performance Planning

Task: Prepare a list of pieces that you can already play (or would like to learn) that you could perform as part of your performance assessments throughout the course. You should think carefully about the following:

- Choose pieces that are **challenging**. To achieve the highest possible marks for the 'demand' category of your performance examination you should be aiming to perform Grade 8 Standard pieces. As a rough guide, you should be looking at Grade 5-6 pieces at this stage.
- Choose pieces that are **contrasting**. You will be assessed on how well you can play/sing contrasting styles and genres and how you show different expressions.

	<i>Piece and composer</i>	<i>Style or Genre</i> (eg Baroque, Jazz, Ballad)	<i>Level of difficulty</i> (Grade)
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			

Component 3: Composition

Intermediate Theory Questions

It is important to have a strong background in simple composition techniques as you start the course. Have a go at these theory papers and see how well you do! (Answers at the back)

Candidates should answer ALL questions.

Write your answers on this paper - no others will be accepted.

Answers must be written clearly and neatly - otherwise marks may be lost.

TOTAL MARKS
100

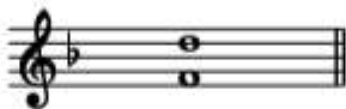
1 Add the time signature to each of these five examples.

10

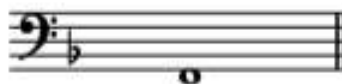


2 Above each note write a *higher* note to form the named *harmonic* interval, as shown in the first answer. The key is F major.

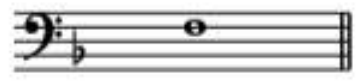
10



6th



5th



3rd



4th



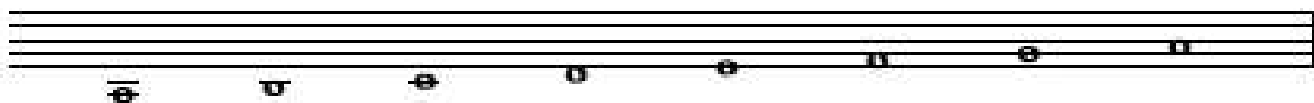
7th



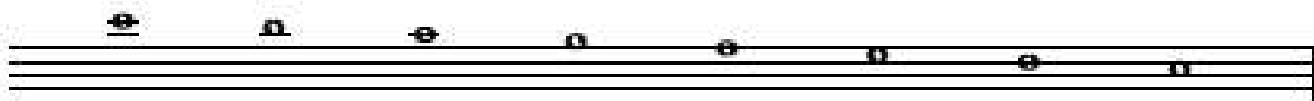
8th/8ve

- 3 Add the correct clef and any necessary sharp or flat signs to make each of the scales named below. Do not use key signatures.

10



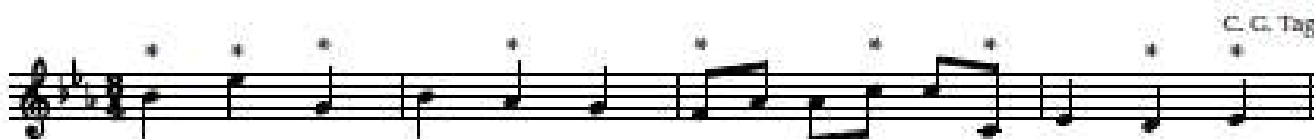
A major



Emmör

Which form of the minor scale have you used? _____

- 4 (a) Give the letter name of each of the notes marked *, including the sharp or flat sign where necessary. The first answer is given.



CCTA

E

(b) How many bars contain only crotchets (quarter notes)? _____

- 5 Write the time values      in the correct order, from the longest to the shortest. The first answer is given.



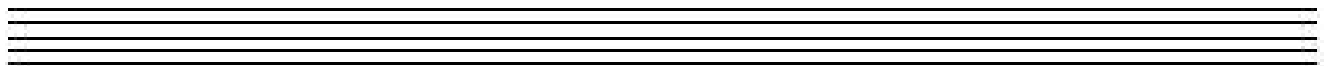
170

9 Look at this melody, adapted from a piece by Johann Strauss II, and then answer the questions below.

Andantino

The musical score is written on a single staff in treble clef. It consists of 8 bars. Bar 1 starts with a piano (p) dynamic. Bar 8 ends with a forte (f) dynamic. The melody is written on a single staff in treble clef. The notes are: Bar 1: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bar 2: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Bar 3: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bar 4: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Bar 5: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bar 6: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4. Bar 7: C4, D4, E4, F4, G4, A4, B4, C5. Bar 8: C5, B4, A4, G4, F4, E4, D4, C4.

Write your answer to question (b) on the stave below.



(a) (i) This melody is in the key of C major. Give the number of a bar that contains all the notes of the tonic triad in this key. Bar

10

(ii) Name the degree of the scale (e.g. 1st, 2nd) of the first note in the melody. Remember that the key is C major.

(iii) Give the letter name of the lowest note in the melody.

(iv) How many times does the rhythm  occur?

(v) Underline one of the following words that best describes how bars 1–3 of this melody should be played:

legato (smoothly) or staccato (detached)

(b) Copy out the music from the start of bar 5 to the end of the melody, exactly as it is written above. Don't forget the clef, dynamics and all other details. Write the music on the blank stave above question (a).

10

Component 3: Composition

Advanced Theory Questions

This is a much more advanced style of theory paper. Challenge yourself! (Answers at the back)

1. Look at this melody and then answer the questions below.



- (a) Put in the time signature at the beginning of the melody. (7)

- (b) Describe the time signature as: simple or compound _____

duple, triple or quadruple _____ (7)

- (c) Tick one box for each term.

Larghetto means:

- very slow, solemn ☐
rather slow ☐
at a medium speed ☐
gradually getting slower ☐

sotto voce means:

- resonant, with rich tone ☐
in an undertone ☐
dying away ☐
simple, plain ☐

(4)

- (d) Give the letter name of the lowest note in the melody. _____ (1)

- (e) Name the ornament used in bar 7. _____ (2)

- (f) Name a minor key that contains all the notes of bars 1–2. _____ (2)

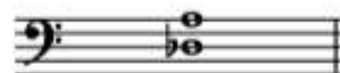
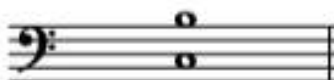
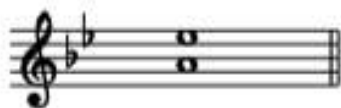
- (g) Complete this statement:

The triplet () in bar 6 means
three semiquavers (16th notes) in the time of _____

(7)

- 2 (a) Describe fully (e.g. minor 3rd, perfect 5th) each of these harmonic intervals.

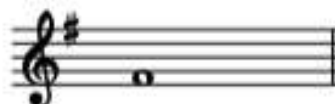
10



- (b) After each of these notes write a *higher* note to form the named *melodic* interval.



augmented 4th



minor 3rd

- 3 (a) Put accidentals in front of the notes that need them to make the scale of F **harmonic** minor.
Do *not* use a key signature.

10



- (b) Write the key signature of five sharps and then one octave **ascending** of the major scale with that key signature.
Use semibreves (whole notes) and begin on the tonic.



4 Look at this melody by Field and then answer the questions that follow.

Allegretto grazioso ♩ = c.126

(a) (i) Tick one box for each term/sign.

10

dolce means:

- solemn ☐
- playful ☐
- merry ☐
- sweet ☐

grazioso means:

- expressive ☐
- with movement ☐
- graceful ☐
- majestic ☐

ff means:

- forced, accented ☐
- loud, then immediately soft ☐
- slight pressure ☐
- moderately loud ☐

(6)

(ii) How many demisemiquavers (32nd notes) is the first note of bar 3 worth?

(2)

(iii) Write as a breve (double whole-note) an enharmonic equivalent of the first note in bar 2.

(2)

- (b) (i) Give the technical names (e.g. tonic, dominant) of the two notes in bar 7 marked **X** and **Y**. The key is E major.

10

X

(2)

Y

(2)

- (ii) How many notes in bars 5–6 are *not* found in the key of E major?

(2)

- (iii) Which other key has the same key signature as E major?

(2)

- (iv) Draw a bracket () over three notes next to each other that form part of a chromatic scale.

(2)

- (c) (i) Name two standard orchestral instruments, one woodwind and one string, that could play bars 1–3 of the melody so that it sounds at the same pitch.

10

Woodwind

String

(4)

- (ii) Which member of the string family normally uses the alto clef?

(2)

- (iii) Underline two instruments from the list below that are *not* members of the orchestral percussion family.

timpani

tuba

cymbals

bassoon

bass drum

(4)

- 5 (a) Rewrite the following passage in simple time but without changing the rhythmic effect. Remember to include the new time signature.

10

Debussy (adapted)

(6)

- (b) Rewrite these alto clef notes at the same pitch but using the treble clef.

(4)

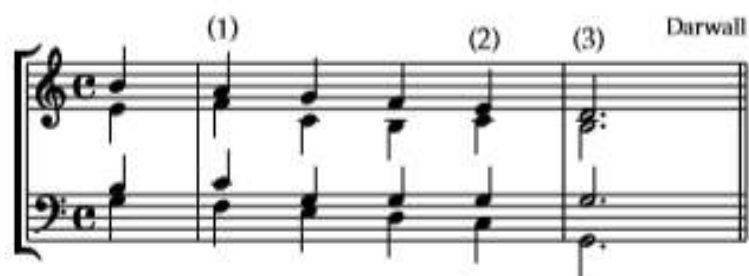
- 6 Transpose this melody *up* one octave, using the treble clef as shown.

10

J. S. Bach

- 7 (a) Name each of the numbered chords as tonic (I), subdominant (IV) or dominant (V).
The key is C major.

15



Chord:

(1)

(2)

(3)

(6)

- (b) Identify these triads by naming the key and describing them as tonic (I), subdominant (IV) or dominant (V).



Key

Triad



Key

Triad



Key

Triad

(9)

Theory Paper Grade 2 Sample X July 2017

Model Answers

Using these answers

- Answers are given in the same order and, where possible, in the same layout as in the exam papers, making it easy to match answer to question.
- Where it is necessary to show the answer on a staff, the original stave is printed in grey with the answer shown in black, for example:

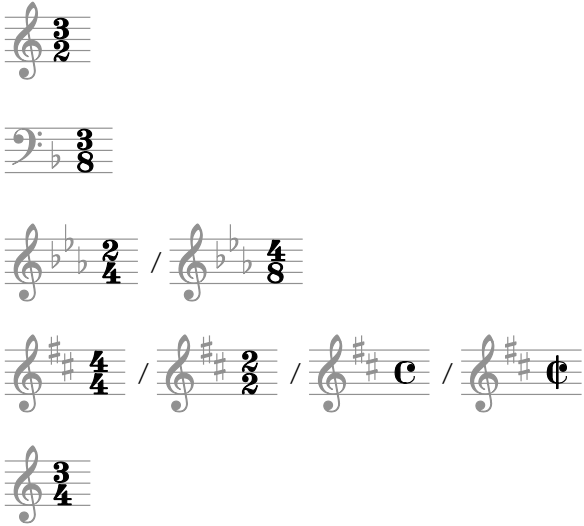
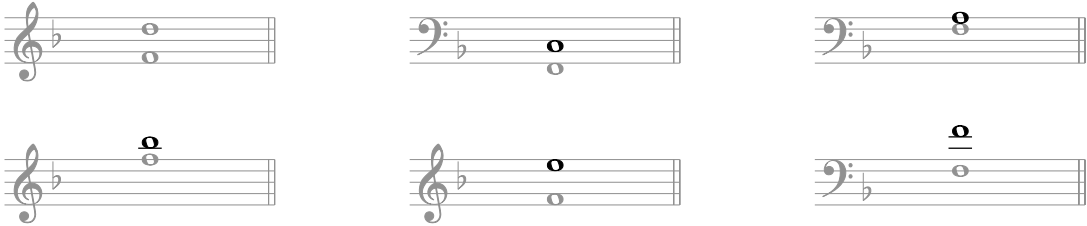
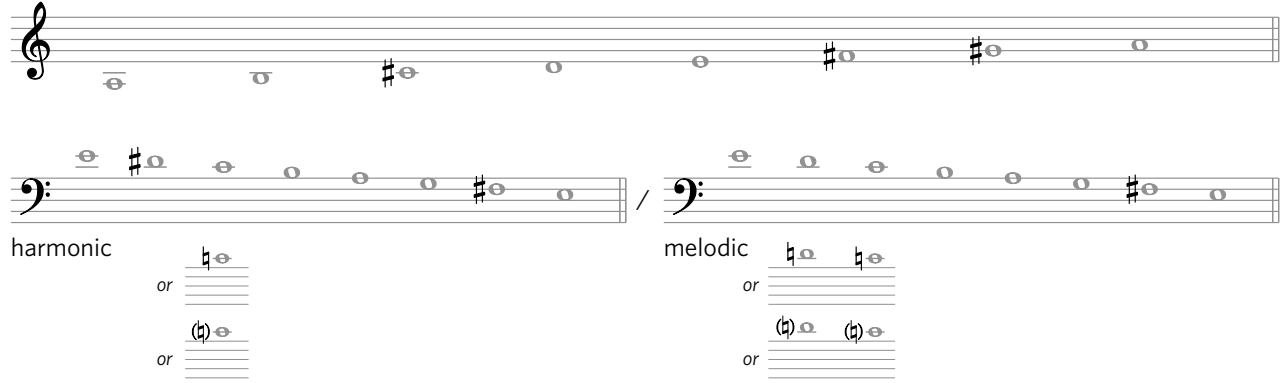



- Alternative answers are separated by an oblique stroke (/) or by *or*, for example:

getting slower / gradually getting slower



- Answers that require the candidate to write out a scale, chord or triad have been shown at one octave only. Reasonable alternatives at different octaves can also receive full marks.

- 1  (10)
- 2  (10)
- 3  (10)
- 4 (a) B \flat E \flat G A \flat F C C D E \flat (10)
(b) three
- 5  (10)

- 6 D major F major A minor (10)
E minor E \flat major

7  (10)

- 8 (10)

dolce means:

- solemn ☐
slow ☐
stately ☐
sweet ☒

allargando means:

- broadening ☒
very slow, solemn ☐
gradually getting quicker ☐
slow, stately ☐

 means:

- gradually getting quieter ☐
accent the note ☐
loud ☐
gradually getting louder ☒

 means:

- strong accent ☐
staccato ☐
slight pressure ☒
sforzando ☐

Vivo means:

- fairly quick ☐
lively, quick ☒
gradually getting quicker ☐
at a medium speed ☐

 means:

- perform an octave higher ☐
legato; smoothly ☐
pause on the note or rest ☒
staccato; detached ☐

- 9 (a) (i) 1 / 3 (10)
(ii) 3rd
(iii) B / B \flat / B natural
(iv) two
(v) staccato (detached)

(b)  (10)

Theory Paper Grade 4 Sample X July 2017

Model Answers

Using these answers

- Answers are given in the same order and, where possible, in the same layout as in the exam papers, making it easy to match answer to question.
- Where it is necessary to show the answer on a staff, the original stave is printed in grey with the answer shown in black, for example:



- Alternative answers are separated by an oblique stroke (/) or by *or*, for example:

getting slower / gradually getting slower



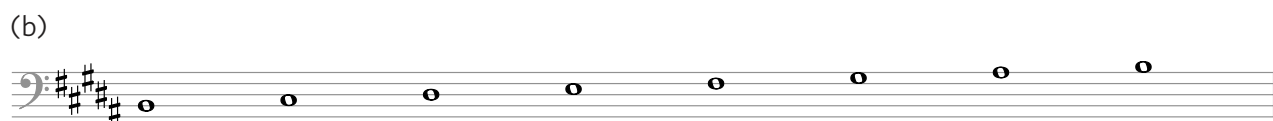
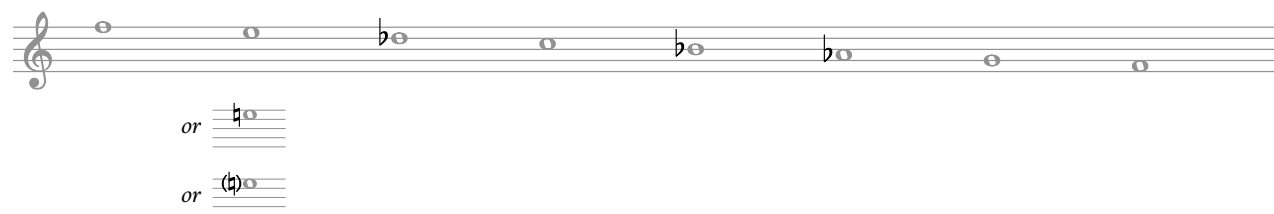
- Answers that require the candidate to write out a scale, chord or triad have been shown at one octave only. Reasonable alternatives at different octaves can also receive full marks.

- 1 (a)  (2)
- (b) compound duple (2)
- (c) **Larghetto** means: *sotto voce* means: (4)
- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| very slow, solemn | <input type="checkbox"/> | resonant, with rich tone | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| rather slow | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | in an undertone | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| at a medium speed | <input type="checkbox"/> | dying away | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| gradually getting slower | <input type="checkbox"/> | simple, plain | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- (d) F / F natural (1)
- (e) acciaccatura / grace note / crushed note (2)
- (f) B \flat minor (2)
- (g) two / two semiquavers / two 16th notes / one quaver / one eighth note (2)

- 2 (a) diminished 5th major 7th augmented 5th (10)



- 3 (a) (10)



4 (a) (i) (6)

dolce means:

solemn ☐
playful ☐
merry ☐
sweet ☒

grazioso means:

expressive ☐
with movement ☐
graceful ☒
majestic ☐

sffz means:

forced, accented ☒
loud, then immediately soft ☐
slight pressure ☐
moderately loud ☐

(ii) 6 (2)

(iii)  (2)

(b) (i) **X** subdominant (2)
Y leading note (2)

(ii) 3 (2)

(iii) C# minor (2)

(iv) All possible answers are shown on the extract reproduced below.
For full marks candidates need to identify only one example. (2)

Allegretto grazioso ♩ = c.126



(c) (i) Woodwind flute / oboe / clarinet (4)
String violin / viola

(ii) viola (2)

(iii) tuba bassoon (4)

5 (a) (6)

(b) 

6  (10)

7	(a)	(1)	subdominant / IV							(6)
		(2)	tonic / I							
		(3)	dominant / V							
	(b)	Key	B \flat minor	Key	C minor	Key	A major			(9)
		Triad	subdominant / IV	Triad	dominant / V	Triad	tonic / I			