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Syllabus for Music – Secondary cycle (S1-S5)

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Preface

Music is a unique form of communication that influences the way students feel, think, act and understand their world. Music is an important part of each young person's identity both as an individual and as a European citizen. Music classes typically comprise students from many different European countries. Music education enables students of the European Schools to build bridges between their various cultural backgrounds.

In lessons with expert music teachers, young people acquire competencies that help them shape the musical world around them. Through activity-based learning, music-making and working with conventional instruments and contemporary media, music lessons contribute substantially to students' education, artistry, and their acquisition of appropriate communication skills, far beyond the boundaries of the subject and school itself.

Music education fosters in student the qualities and skills necessary to develop a diverse set of interests and participate in artistic citizenship. The insights provided by music education enable students to become aware of the significance of musical, artistic, cultural, literary, and media diversity. Students come to recognise the importance of cultural traditions and contemporary aesthetic concepts in societal development. Furthermore, they are inspired to engage with contemporary and historic music, arts and culture.

The syllabus for Secondary Music builds on the learning objectives of the Primary Music Curriculum.

1: General Objectives

1.1: General Objectives of the European Schools

The European Schools have the two objectives of providing formal education and of encouraging students' personal development in a wider social and cultural context. Formal education involves the acquisition of competences (knowledge, skills and attitudes) across a range of domains. Personal development takes place in a variety of spiritual, moral, social and cultural contexts. It involves an awareness of appropriate behaviour, an understanding of the environment in which students live, and a development of their individual identity.

These two objectives are nurtured in the context of an enhanced awareness of the richness of European culture. Awareness and experience of a shared European life should lead students towards a greater respect for the traditions of each individual country and region in Europe, while developing and preserving their own national identities.

The students of the European Schools are future citizens of Europe and the world. As such, they need a range of competences if they are to meet the challenges of a rapidly-changing world. In 2006 the European Council and European Parliament adopted a European Framework for Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. It identifies eight key competences which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, for active citizenship, for social inclusion and for employment:

1. Communication in the mother tongue
2. Communication in foreign languages
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology
4. Digital competence
5. Learning to learn
6. Social and civic competences
7. Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship
8. Cultural awareness and expression

The European Schools' syllabuses seek to develop all of these key competences in the students.

1.2: Objectives of the subject Music

The Music Syllabus for Years 1-7 aims to support teachers in meeting the challenge of providing for the musical needs and aspirations of all young people in the European Schools. It is underpinned by a belief that every young person is entitled to a broad musical education that meets their musical needs, interests and aspirations. The syllabus builds upon the learning that takes place in primary schools but also recognises that young people bring to the music classroom musical skills, experiences, interests and aspirations developed in their lives outside of school.

Music is an important means by which young people shape their sense of individual and collective identity. They use it as a means for expressing ideas, concepts, feelings and thoughts and to come to a richer and more meaningful understanding of the world. Music also develops creative and lateral thinking skills which have a positive impact on other areas of learning. Most importantly, music is a practical subject where young people gain most when they are enabled to act as artists and musicians.

Positive interaction with music develops students' competence as learners and increases their self-esteem. It brings together intellect and feeling and enables personal expression, reflection and emotional development. Music can help foster personal development and maturity, engender a sense of achievement and self-worth, and develop the ability to work with others. Music education develops students' critical skills: their ability to listen, to value a wide variety of music, and to make judgements about musical quality. It also develops self-discipline, creativity, aesthetic sensitivity and fulfilment.

The music curriculum supports young people's musical development through providing them with a range of challenging and enriching musical encounters which lead to increasingly sophisticated and meaningful relationship with music as composers¹, performers and listeners. Music plays a key role in delivering one of the key objectives of the European Schools which is to provide young people with opportunities for creative endeavour and to promote an understanding of a common European heritage.

The music syllabus fosters young people's:

Critical understanding	Critical engagement with music, developing views and justifying opinions
Creativity	Ability to use existing musical knowledge, skills and understanding for new purposes and in new contexts. Exploring innovative ways in which music can be combined with other art forms.
Communication	Explorations into how thoughts, feelings, ideas and emotions can be expressed through music.
Cultural understanding	Understanding of musical traditions and the part music plays in national, European and global culture and the construction of personal and collective identity.
	Understanding of how ideas, experiences and emotions are conveyed in a range of music from different times and cultures.

¹ In this document composing is taken to also include improvising.

2: Didactic Principles

The music curriculum reflects the common didactic principles of the European schools through adopting an integrated approach to musical learning and a belief that students develop through active learning as makers of music.

2.1: General Didactic Principles

The learning and teaching of music is based on the following didactic principles:

- **Integrated teaching and learning:** Links and correlations among the different areas of the European School curriculum make learning a more comprehensive and meaningful experience.
- **Active Learning:** Students gradually become responsible for their own learning process.

These principles are applied through a variety of teaching and learning approaches and strategies, the use of differentiated teaching methods and the use of a wide range of learning resources including digital tools and resources.

Didactic principles are provided as a guide for the Learning and Teaching.

2.2: Didactic Principles for Music Education

The syllabus is built upon five key principles.

There is that, Music education and the assessment of musical learning will:

1. Foster the musical learning and development of all young people in the European schools.
2. Involve young people in musical activities and experiences which develops their musical skills and knowledge.
3. Integrate composing, performing and listening and responding.
4. Recognise and value the diverse ways in which young people demonstrate musical understanding and development.
5. Reflect and value the diversity of music in society and particularly contemporary European society.

Music teaching built upon these key principles demonstrates the following characteristics:

Principles	Characteristics of Teaching and Learning
The music syllabus will:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Support the musical learning and progression of all young people in the European schools.	Young people learn music in many ways and have different musical interests, strengths and needs. The curriculum and its teaching supports the musical development of all young people, helps them to fulfil their musical aspirations and introduces them to new forms of musical experience and music making
<ul style="list-style-type: none">· Involve young people in musical activities and experiences which support them in developing their musical skills and knowledge.	Involves young people in authentic and real-life music-making processes.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrate composing, performing and listening activities 	<p>Composing, listening and performing are usually brought together within lessons to create rich musical experiences.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognise and value the many ways in which young people demonstrate musical understanding and development 	<p>Teaching and assessment provide opportunities for students to demonstrate musical learning and understanding in a range of different ways. Teachers adapt their teaching to reflect the musical experiences and needs of the young people whose musical learning they support.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect and value the rich diversity of music and musical practices in society and particularly contemporary European society 	<p>Teaching reflects and builds on the diversity of music in society and the many ways in which people engage with music and gain fulfilment from it.</p>

Resources

Adequate resourcing is a precondition for meeting the musical learning needs of all young people in European Schools. Rich and meaningful musical experience and high musical achievement is dependent upon access to high quality resources including music technology/ICT, instruments and audio equipment. Young people cannot produce high quality musical work from low-quality resources. The following list is a basic minimum:

1. Teaching space which allows for a range of individual, group and whole class musical activities to take place
2. Arrange of good quality acoustic and electronic instruments, including percussion, electronic keyboards, pop and rock instruments and instruments from non-western cultures as well as amplifiers and microphones
3. Good quality audio-visual and digital recording equipment, including MP3, CD and DVD
4. Access to the world-wide web within the music teaching rooms
5. Arrange of computer-based music technology and software
6. A range of digital and print resources
7. Opportunities for teachers to share ideas and resources via e-communication and the Learning Gateway.

The most important resource however is an expert music teacher who can foster a culture of music making in the school.

3: Learning Objectives

3.1: Overall Learning Objectives

Throughout the years S1-S7, teaching and learning in music will address the subject content, learning objectives and didactic principles of the music syllabus fostering the development of young people's musical skills, knowledge and understanding in the three main musical competencies of composing and improvising, performing, and listening & responding.

Musical Learning	Activities and Processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Composing and Improvising 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing and shaping musical elements into expressive ideas and structures for a range of mediums and purposes, including the use of music technology (ICT). - Demonstrating an increasing awareness of musical style, genre and tradition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Work collaboratively on compositions and improvisations recognising, valuing and responding to the contributions made by others to the musical processes and outcomes. · Create, develop and extend musical ideas within musical structures. · Create, develop and extend musical ideas within the conventions of a range of musical styles, traditions and genres. · Make expressive use of musical elements, devices, tonalities and structures using conventional instruments, voices and ICT. · Employ a range of means to record their music making including using notations and digital technologies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Performing 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform and improvise fluently and expressively both in groups and individually with an increasing awareness of style, genre and tradition. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Sing and perform on instruments in solo or group contexts with musical expression and secure technical control and an awareness of ensemble. · Perform with an awareness of musical style, context and occasion. · Work collaboratively on musical performances and compositions, recognising, valuing and responding to the contributions made by others to the musical processes and outcomes. · Develop an understanding of different musical practices through performing music from a range of traditions and cultures. · Perform by ear and from a range of notations.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Listening and responding 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Listening and responding in the context of composing, performing and improvising. - Listening and responding to music from a wide range of styles, traditions and cultures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Respond to music through composing, improvising and performing. · Listen with discrimination to music from a wide range of traditions and cultures. · Respond to music through talk, discussion and writing using appropriate technical and non-technical language.

3.2: Learning Objectives for the different cycles

This section sets out the main learning objectives to be attained at the end of S3, S5 and S7.

3.2.1: Years S1-S3

The syllabus for Years 1-3 builds upon the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the Primary Years and reflects the principles and the rationale set out earlier in this syllabus; particularly that young people's musical learning should take place through musical encounters involving performing, composing, and listening and responding. The aim of the syllabus in Years 1-3 is to provide students with a secure foundation of musical knowledge, skills and understanding through a broad-based approach which addresses the main areas of musical competence

<p>Composing and improvising:</p> <p><i>Learning Objective</i> By the end of S3 students can: compose and improvise music in simple structures to a given or chosen stimuli; make expressive and appropriate use of melody, rhythm, harmony, and dynamics demonstrating an awareness of the characteristics of a limited range of voices and instruments.</p>
<p>Performing:</p> <p><i>Learning Objective</i> By the end of S3 students can perform music appropriate to their age and musical development with fluency, expression, technical control and making expressive use of dynamics, articulation and phrasing.</p>
<p>Listening & Responding:</p> <p><i>Learning Objective</i> By the end of S3 students can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - listen and respond to music in the context of improvising and performing. - recognize some common musical styles and their characteristics. - draw on appropriate technical and non-technical vocabulary to describe and discuss music.

3.2.2: Years S4-S5

The syllabus for Years 4-5 is topic-based and builds upon the skills, knowledge and understanding that students have developed in Years 1-3. It reflects the principles and the rationale that young people's musical learning should take place through musical encounters involving composing, performing and listening to music. Topics reflect the breadth and variety of music genres and traditions across the world with a particularly focus on European music in all its diversity.

The aim of the curriculum in Years 4-5 is to provide students with progressive development of their musical knowledge, skills and understanding in the context of in-depth studies of a range of musical genres, styles and traditions. To gain a meaningful understanding of music young people develop critical awareness of its context, its history and its potential for future development.

The above-mentioned broad-based approach addresses:

Composing and improvising:	
By the end of S5 students can compose / improvise extended music for a particular context, occasion and in response to a brief or musical or non-musical stimuli.	
Product	<p>Extended compositions / improvisations are characterized by creative and appropriate choice and use of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - instruments, voices and digital technologies demonstrating and awareness of their technical capabilities and characteristics - musical elements, structures and devices
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The appropriate and creative use of the musical characteristics, devices and processes from a range of musical styles and traditions. <p>The process of composing and preparing improvisations is characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A clear musical intention - An ability to critically reflect and revise in time or over time in order to refine their work and meet the musical intention - The identification and use of appropriate and inspiring stimuli - Adopting appropriate working practices that support creativity and enables deadlines to be met.
Performing:	
By the end of S5 students can perform music on their own and with others with fluency, expression, and a sense of style.	
Product	<p>Performances are characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ A sensitive and stylistically appropriate use of articulation, dynamics and phrasing. ¾ An awareness of the musical characteristics and performing conventions of a range of musical styles and traditions. ¾ Good sound quality which is appropriate to the musical style. ¾ The ability to draw on a broad range of instrumental and vocal techniques. ¾ A good awareness in ensemble playing.
Process	<p>The foundation for successful performances are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ¾ Appropriate choice of appropriate repertoire.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">¾ An understanding of the challenges and aims required to make progress.¾ Working strategies for success.¾ Ongoing critical reflection resulting in improved performance.
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Listening and Responding:

By the end of S5 students can:

- ¾ Listen and respond to music in the context of improvising and performing.
- ¾ Recognize the characteristics of a variety of musical styles and sub-divisions of those styles
- ¾ Draw on appropriate technical and non-technical vocabulary to describe, discuss and analyze music.
- ¾ Demonstrate an open minded and inquisitive approach to new musical styles

4: Content for the subject music

This section sets out the relevant contents necessary to meet the learning objectives outlined above. Contents are sequenced per cycle: S 1-3 and S 4-5.

The content, knowledge and skills to be taught derive from the objectives for the three curricular units: S 1-3, S 4-5 and S 6-7 and refers to the three main areas of musical competence:

- A. Composing and Improvising
- B. Performing
- C. Listening & Responding

4.1 Content in music education for S 1-3

In years S 1-3 students acquire a solid foundation in the three main areas of musical competence. Music teaching and learning should cover all areas mentioned above.

Composing and improvising

Composing and Improvising in S 1-3 is about creating/arranging/producing music through developing and shaping musical elements into expressive ideas and simple structures.

Composing may be in response to:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ A musical framework for example, an ostinato, chord sequence, blues sequence, creating a melody from a chord sequence;
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Extra musical stimuli (the use of words or other non-musical ideas as essential part of the music):
 - a mood or atmosphere for example scary music;
 - a picture, a poem;
 - a real-world context in which students would want to situate their musical expressions.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ A special occasion or a specific intention of the student.

Performing

Performing music in S 1-3 involves singing and playing music fluently, expressively and with secure technical control. Students develop knowledge, skills and dispositions, which enable them to sing and perform by ear and from a range of notations, and to improvise fluently and expressively both in groups and individually. Their work in groups develops their collaborative dispositions and their ability to listen to others recognising and valuing the contributions made by them to the musical processes and outcomes. They also learn how to present their performances according to the context in which they are taking place.

Students in S 1-3 will perform their work by singing, playing on a range of musical instruments as well as using electronic devices e.g. computers, tablets, phone apps and any other emerging media. Students will perform with growing awareness of musical style and context, developing an understanding of different musical practices from a range of musical traditions and cultures.

Listening and responding

Listening and responding in S 1-3 is central to all aspects of music making and experience. When performing young people develop and improve their musical performances and understanding by listening to themselves and others. They revise and improve their own performance through self-evaluation and group-assessment and help others to improve through giving constructive feedback.

In S. 1-3, students develop their musical vocabularies and their understanding of the technical and non-technical language and stylistic characteristics underpinning some common musical styles. They use their knowledge to identify how the elements of music (pitch, rhythm, harmony, dynamics and articulation, timbre, texture, forms, and style) are used expressively and structurally in music.

Listening and responding also involves the development of those aural and notational skills needed to identify, read and write expressive elements of music, for example motifs, melodies, rhythms, and chords. Listening and responding perceptively, students will draw on technical and non-technical terminology to discriminate between and to describe musical elements, devices, instruments and voices from some common musical styles.

4.1.1 Knowledge and Skills Framework for S 1-3:

To support their composing/improvising, performing, and listening and responding students need to develop competency in the use of conventional, technological and digital resources, music notation skills, and appropriate language and terminology for analysis and critical reflection upon music.

Students will develop a working knowledge and understanding of:

1. The characteristics and properties of music materials and elements including:

Pitch: high/low	melodic shape (melody = pitch + time); expressive possibilities in different melodic shapes (articulation).
Time: duration	Rhythm, beat/pulse; metre, duple metre, triple metre, compound metre; subdivisions.
Tempo:	Tempo names and tempo gradations
Timbre: tone colour	Instrumentation: voices, instruments, electronic sounds and effects
Dynamics:	Gradations of volume; dynamical accents; dynamic expression.
Harmony:	Tonal system: major/minor; chords.
Texture:	Musical sonorities; main melody, accompaniment, harmony.
Structure:	Motif, phrase, repetition/contrast, variation, simple forms e.g. round, verse/chorus, call and response, rondo (ABA).

2. Some common musical styles, including examples from:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ Popular music, particularly current popular musical forms, styles and performers.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Jazz and Rock music.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Traditional music.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Non-western music.
- $\frac{3}{4}$ Music from the western classical tradition.

4.2 Content in music education for S 4-5

In years 4 and 5, students extend their acquired competence in Years S 1-3 in a topic-based curriculum based on the three areas of musical competence mentioned above. They develop and apply progressively their knowledge, skills, and dispositions in a greater range of musical contexts, traditions and styles.

4.2.1 Five topics and a final project

Over the course of the two years, students will study five topics from the list below (approximately one per term). In addition, there is a final project (approximately 25 hours of study time) which takes place in the final period of Year 5.

The content, form and organisation of the topics should be negotiated with each student and personalised to meet and reflect their needs, interests, and aspirations.

- Music for film
- Contemporary musical styles and cultures
- Music for dance
- Music for special occasions
- Musical theatre
- European 'folk' traditions
- Music and voice
- Programme music in the 19th Century
- Composing during the last 100 years

Music for film:

In this topic, students will explore how composers achieve appropriately dramatic effects through their deployment of musical materials and resources within a specific narrative context. They will study some music examples from different films and genres, and compose music for a short film extract. This topic provides an outstanding opportunity to develop students composing skills using music technology.

Contemporary popular music styles and cultures:

In this topic, students will engage with contemporary music styles and cultures over the last decade. Knowledge of the antecedents of styles, which have developed over the period, will support a growing understanding of contemporary popular music and the various fusions that are typical in popular song culture. The topic involves students in performing songs/music of the period and composing their own music in contemporary styles informed by their knowledge of the distinctive characteristics of music from different world traditions, and of the impact of music technology on the creation and performance of popular song styles.

Music for dance:

In this topic, students will investigate, create and perform various forms and styles of socially embedded dance music, exploring how music is produced for various types of dance, and how the context influences its creation, performance and audience.

Music for special occasions:

In this topic, students will explore the ways in which composers and other musicians have responded to briefs and commissions to produce music suitable for a variety of events. The outcome of this topic might be a composition for a special occasion or to meet the requirements of a brief set by the music teacher.

Musical theatre:

In this topic, students will explore the ways in which musical theatre has developed its various forms and styles, and how composers, choreographers, designers, directors and

performers co-operate to respond to the challenges of this multi-disciplinary genre. Students will listen to and perform theatre music from a wide range of musical theatre as well as compose their own examples of musical theatre songs.

European folk traditions:

In this topic, students will study some examples of traditional music in Central and Eastern Europe, and investigate the use of folk elements in European music of the 19th and 20th Century, also to explore the meaning of folk music for national culture(s) and understanding. Students might be encouraged to integrate aspects and characteristics of traditional music into their own compositions as well as perform examples of traditional music.

Music and voice:

In this topic, students will investigate and perform various forms and styles of singing (solo and choral) in Romantic and popular music from 1850 up to the present day. They will explore different types of song, and the contextual influences affecting its creation, performance and audience.

Programme music in the 19th Century:

In this topic, students will engage with 19th Century music of a narrative or descriptive kind. They explore the attempts to depict objects and events in music, and investigate the relationship of music to external texts or sources.

Composing in the last 100 years:

In this topic, students will explore some of the major composing styles from the last 100 years as the source for their own composing. They will analyze the characteristics of these styles and some representative works from them, and use the understanding that is developed from this study to produce their own compositions and improvisations.

Final Project: portfolio presentation of personal musicianship:

This project should be chosen by the student, personalised, and focus particularly on his/her individual musical interests, aspirations and strengths. It should bring together the musical knowledge, skills and understanding developed during Years 4 and 5.

Where appropriate, the final project may serve as means of enabling effective transition from Year 5 to Years 6-7. The project may take form of preparing an individual or group performance, composition, multi-media presentation or a combination of these.

4.2.2 The three main areas of musical competence in S 4-5

Composing and improvising

In this cycle students build on their learning in S1-3 demonstrating in their composing and improvising a growing technical fluency, skill and creativity and an increasing awareness of style and tradition.. They use different forms of music notations and digital technologies, to document and store their musical work ideas of their music, for example rhythmic and melodic phrases and harmonic sequences.

Performing

In this cycle students build on their learning in S 1-3, demonstrating a growing technical development and awareness of the technical capabilities of their instruments/voices and increasing awareness of style, tradition and genre. They perform by ear and using music notations on their own and in groups, demonstrating effective ensemble skills.

Listening and responding

In S 4-5 students will build on their learning in S1-3 extending and developing their skills and knowledge in listening to music through composing, improvising and performing. Students use appropriate technical and non-technical vocabulary to describe and analyse music demonstrating their understanding of the ways composers and other musicians achieve their musical goals. By active listening to themselves and other students they revise and improve their own musical performances. Through their study of the topics students develop a growing understanding of the ways in which music can be organised, and an increasing sophisticated awareness of different musical styles and traditions and their general features and the role music plays in historical and social contexts.

4.2.3 Knowledge and Skills Framework for S 4-5:

To support and foster their development in composing/improvising, performing, and critical listening and responding students develop in addition to their learning outcomes in S1-3 a growing knowledge and understanding of

- The use of acoustic, technological and digital instruments and resources;
- The use of music notations to make musical arrangements for their own class or group;
- The use of recording devices and available digital technologies to store their musical work enabling it to be revisited and revised;
- The use of technical and non-technical language when describing, analysing and critical reflecting upon music.

Students demonstrate their working knowledge and understanding in performing, improvising and composing music in a diversity of musical styles, traditions and genres. They demonstrate their knowledge of musical and instrumental techniques in a developed command of their instruments and voices including a growing technical and musical command of rhythm, melody and harmony.

Examples of developed command:

Pulse and rhythm	$\frac{3}{4}$ Performing rhythms also in compound time, asymmetrical metre, metrical subdivisions and accents; $\frac{3}{4}$ Rhythmical coordination with other students and instruments; $\frac{3}{4}$ Performing rhythmical patterns by ear and from notation also in polyrhythmic textures;
Melody	$\frac{3}{4}$ A secure technical command of at least one instrument (or voice) demonstrating a well-developed range appropriate to the instrument / voice. $\frac{3}{4}$ Performing melodic lines with a convincing use of dynamics, articulation and expression;
Harmony	$\frac{3}{4}$ Applying common chord progressions and chord inversion (e.g. chords such as C major, G major, A minor, and E minor, including the Dominant 7 chord) and broken and block chords in the context of composing and improvising.

5: Assessment in music

General Principles of Music Assessment

Assessment should support, enhance, and reinforce musical learning and make learning outcomes transparent. Assessment in music should be viewed as a continuous, integral part of planning, teaching and learning. The learning objectives for each cycle are the basis for assessment. They include students' competences - knowledge, skills and attitudes (dispositions). Assessment should be integrated into teaching not as something which interrupts learning or is bolted-on to it separate from the learning process. Assessment should involve students in the assessment process and should be framed in such a way that students perceive it as supportive rather than as a source of fear or anxiety.

Assessment is fundamentally about helping teachers get to know better those they teach both as musicians and musical learners: to know their needs as musical learners and their interests and aspirations as musicians. Importantly, teachers need to frame assessment in such a way that students perceive it as supportive rather than as a source of fear or anxiety.

In this section, specific music assessment criteria in relation to the student's attainment are set.

Assessment criteria must meet the principles of fairness, validity, reliability and transparency in accordance to the Assessment Policy in the European Schools².

1. Fairness
Equal opportunities for appropriate teaching and learning approaches, access to resources should be given. Assessment should remain unbiased by ethnicity, culture, gender, and age.
2. Validity
Assessment procedures, methods, instruments and material should match to what is assessed.
3. Reliability
Same judgments should be made in the same or similar context each time an assessment is administrated.
4. Transparency
Clear terms should be communicated to students/students.

5.1: Assessment Practice

Fundamental to effective assessment in music is that it should:

- Assess musical learning and understanding in its broadest sense
- Provide opportunities for all students to demonstrate their achievements in musical learning and understanding
- Involve students in evaluating their work through discussion and self and peer assessment
- Help teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and support them in future planning for students' musical learning

² Ref: 2011-01-D-61 Assessment Policy in the European Schools

The music syllabus for Years 1-7 establishes a clear set of principles and beliefs about the nature of music teaching and learning, the kinds of musical knowledge, skills and understanding which young people should develop and the musical activities and experiences that they need to have the opportunity to engage with in order to develop as fully rounded musicians. Assessment that is useful and legitimate reflects these principles and beliefs.

In order that assessment reflects and supports musical learning and assessment it should:

- Take place mainly through musical activity
- Reflect the full range of musical learning, knowledge and experience gained through composing, performing and listening
- Be integrated into the learning process
- Provide feedback which supports students in reflecting upon their learning and developing understanding of what they need to do to improve
- Involve self-reflection and peer-assessment
- Assess the knowledge and understanding that the lesson, module or project is aiming to achieve
- Value musical learning that takes place beyond the lesson and outside of school

5.2: Music Attainment Descriptors

The Music Attainment Descriptors should be used in conjunction with the relevant learning objectives and content for the cycle contained in the syllabus for music. These learning objectives describe the expected standards to be met by students at the end of each cycle. Progression within and across the cycles S1-3 and S4-5 is expressed through the increased technical and artistic challenges demanded of students in their composing and improvising, performing, and listening and responding as set out in the syllabus content and learning objectives. The learning objectives, content and attainment descriptors draw on contemporary research into music education pedagogies and musical development.

The attainments descriptors should be applied using a best 'fit' approach i.e. the student should be awarded the mark whose descriptor best fits their attainment.

5.3: Attainment descriptors for the end of S3

Denominator	Notation	Mark	Competences
<p>Excellent though not flawless performance entirely corresponding to the competences required by the subject</p>	A	9-10	<p>The student has achieved excellent standards across the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates excellent musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener within in a range of common musical styles. They draw on appropriate technical and non-technical language to describe, analyse and discuss music and when justifying their opinions and views about music and musical performances</p> <p>The student performs with excellent fluency, secure technical control and expression. They have an excellent awareness of the requirements and protocols of different performing context. When performing in groups the student demonstrates an excellent sense of ensemble and is able to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within simple structures using musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and convincingly. Compositions and improvisations demonstrate an excellent understanding of the characteristics of a limited range instruments and voices and the ability to respond imaginatively and creatively to musical and non-musical stimuli. With support, the student can use notations and available digital technologies in their composing and also to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Very good performance almost entirely corresponding to the competences required by the subject.</p>	B	8-8.9	<p>The student has achieved very good standards across the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates very good musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener within in a range of common musical styles. They consistently draw on appropriate technical and non-technical language to describe, analyse and discuss music and when justifying their opinions and views about music and musical performances.</p> <p>The student performs with very good fluency, secure technical control and expression. They have a very good awareness of the requirements and protocols of different performing context. When performing in groups the student demonstrates a very good sense of ensemble and is able to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within simple structures using musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and convincingly. Compositions and improvisations demonstrate a very good understanding of the characteristics of a limited range instruments and voices and the ability to respond imaginatively and creatively to musical and non-musical stimuli. With support the student can use notations and available digital technologies in their composing and also to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>

<p>Good performance corresponding overall to the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>7-7.9</p>	<p>The student has achieved good standards in the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates good musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener within in a range of common musical styles. They are usually able to draw on appropriate technical and non-technical language to describe, analyse and discuss music, and when justifying their opinions and views about music.</p> <p>The student performs with good fluency, secure technical control and expression. They have a good awareness of the requirements and protocols of different performing contexts. When performing in groups the student demonstrates a good sense of ensemble and is able to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student is usually able to compose and improvise within simple structures and to use musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and convincingly. Compositions and improvisations demonstrate a good understanding of the characteristics of a limited range instruments and voices and the ability to respond imaginatively to musical and non-musical stimuli. With support, the student can use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing and also to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Satisfactory performance corresponding to the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>D</p>	<p>6-6.9</p>	<p>The student has achieved satisfactory standards in the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates satisfactory musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener within in a small range of common musical styles. They are usually able to draw on appropriate technical and non-technical language to describe analyses and discuss music and when justifying their opinions and views about music.</p> <p>The student performs with satisfactory fluency and technical control. When performing in groups the student demonstrates some sense of ensemble.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within simple structures using musical elements and devices convincingly. Compositions and improvisations demonstrate the ability to respond imaginatively to a small range of musical and non-musical stimuli. With support the student can use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing and to store their compositions and performances.</p>

<p>Sufficient. Performance corresponding to the minimum of the competences required by the subject.</p>	E	5-5.9	<p>The student has achieved the minimum standards in the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates some musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener. They are usually able to draw on limited appropriate non-technical language to describe, analyse and discuss music and when justifying their opinions and views about music.</p> <p>The student performs with limited fluency but some technical control. When performing in groups the student can demonstrate a sense of ensemble but does not do so consistently.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within very simple structures using a limited range of musical elements and devices. Compositions and improvisations demonstrate the ability to respond imaginatively to a small range of musical and non-musical stimuli. With significant support the student can use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing and to store their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Failed. Weak performance almost entirely failing to meet the competences required by the subject</p>	F	3-4.9 (weak)	<p>The student has failed to achieve the minimum expected standards in the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates weak musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener. Their use of appropriate technical and non-technical musical language is inconsistent. Their analyses and discussion of music is superficial and they are often unable to justify their opinions and views about music in a convincing way.</p> <p>Performances lack fluency, technical control and expression. They have a very limited awareness of the requirements and protocols of different performing context. When performing in groups the student has a very limited sense of ensemble and is unable to respond to the contributions of others.</p> <p>Compositions and improvisations are unconvincing and demonstrate a limited ability to respond imaginatively to some musical and non-musical stimuli. The student is unable to use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing or to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Failed Very weak performance entirely failing to meet the competences required by the subject.</p>	FX	0.2.9 (Very weak)	<p>The student has failed to achieve the minimum expected standards in all of the areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates very weak musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener. They are unable to use technical or non-technical musical language. Their analyses and discussion of music is very superficial and they are rarely able to express or justify opinions and views about music.</p>

		<p>Performances lack continuity and demonstrate very limited technical control. The student has little understanding of the requirements and protocols of different performing contexts. When performing in groups the student has very limited sense of ensemble and is unable to respond to the contributions of others.</p> <p>Compositions and improvisations lack structure or the ability to use musical elements in a convincing way. The student is unable to respond to musical and non-musical stimuli. The student is unable to use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing or to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
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5.4: Attainment descriptors for the end of S5

Denominator	Notation	Mark	Competences
<p>Excellent though not flawless performance entirely corresponding to the competences required by the subject</p>	A	9-10	<p>The student has achieved excellent standards across the three areas of musical competence and within the topic areas studied.</p> <p>The student demonstrates excellent musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and critical listener. They demonstrate an excellent open-minded approach to new musical experiences. They describe, analyse and discuss music with excellent perception and discrimination drawing on a wide range of appropriate technical and non-technical language.</p> <p>The student can justify convincingly their opinions and views about music and musical performances. The student has an excellent understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of a wide range of musical styles and traditions and can demonstrate this understanding through performing, composing and improvising and when analysing and discussing music.</p> <p>The student performs with excellent fluency, secure technical control and expression. When performing in groups they demonstrate an excellent sense of ensemble and ability to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within extended musical structures using musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and convincingly. They can respond imaginatively and creatively to a wide range of musical and non-musical stimuli both given and self-selected.</p> <p>In their performing, composing and improvising they demonstrate an excellent understanding of the characteristics of a broad range instruments and voices and can exploit with confidence their technical possibilities and limitations. They use notations and available digital technologies with great confidence and independently to compose and to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>

<p>Very good performance almost entirely corresponding to the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>B</p>	<p>8-8.9</p>	<p>The student has achieved very good standards across the three areas of musical competence and within the topic areas studied.</p> <p>The student demonstrates very good musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and critical listener. They demonstrate a very good open-minded approach to new musical experiences. They describe, analyse and discuss music with excellent perception and discrimination drawing on a wide range of appropriate technical and non-technical language.</p> <p>The student can justify convincingly their opinions and views about music and musical performances. The student has a very good understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of a wide range of musical styles and traditions and can demonstrate this understanding through performing, composing and improvising and when analysing and discussing music.</p> <p>The student performs with very good fluency, secure technical control and expression. When performing in groups they demonstrate a very good sense of ensemble and ability to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within extended musical structures using musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and convincingly. They can respond imaginatively and creatively to a wide range of musical and non-musical stimuli both given and self-selected.</p> <p>In their performing, composing and improvising they demonstrate a very good understanding of the characteristics of a broad range instruments and voices and can exploit with confidence their technical possibilities and limitations. They use notations and available digital technologies independently to compose and to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Good performance corresponding overall to the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>C</p>	<p>7-7.9</p>	<p>The student has achieved good standards in the three areas of musical competence and within the topic areas studied.</p> <p>The student demonstrates good musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and critical listener. They demonstrate a good open-minded approach to new musical experiences. They are usually able to describe, analyse and discuss music with good perception and discrimination drawing on a range of appropriate technical and non-technical language.</p> <p>The student can justify convincingly their opinions and views about music and musical performances. The student has a good understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of a wide range of musical styles and traditions and can demonstrate this understanding through performing, composing and improvising and when analysing and discussing music.</p>

			<p>The student performs with good fluency, secure technical control and expression. When performing in groups they demonstrate a good sense of ensemble and ability to respond creatively and imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within extended musical structures using musical elements and devices expressively, creatively and usually convincingly. They can respond imaginatively and creatively to a wide range of musical and non-musical stimuli.</p> <p>In their performing, composing and improvising they demonstrate a very good understanding of the characteristics of a broad range instruments and voices and can exploit with confidence their technical possibilities and limitations. They use notations and available digital technologies independently to compose and to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Satisfactory performance corresponding to the competences required by the subject.</p>	D	6-6.9	<p>The student has achieved satisfactory standards in the three areas of musical competence and within the topic areas studied.</p> <p>The student demonstrates satisfactory musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and critical listener. They demonstrate a satisfactory openness to new musical experiences. They are usually able to describe, analyse and discuss music with perception and discrimination drawing on a range of appropriate technical and non-technical language.</p> <p>The student can justify convincingly their opinions and views about music and musical performances. The student has a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of a range of musical styles and traditions and can demonstrate this understanding through their performing, composing and improvising and when analysing and discussing music.</p> <p>The student performs with satisfactory fluency, technical control and expression. When performing in groups they demonstrate a satisfactory sense of ensemble and some ability to respond imaginatively to the contributions of others.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within extended musical structures using musical elements and devices expressively and usually convincingly. They can respond imaginatively and creatively to a range of musical and non-musical stimuli both given and self-selected.</p> <p>In their performing, composing and improvising, they demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the characteristics of a broad range instruments and voices and can exploit some of their technical possibilities and limitations. They use notations and available digital technologies independently to compose and to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>

<p>Sufficient. Performance corresponding to the minimum of the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>E</p>	<p>5-5.9</p>	<p>The student has achieved minimum standards in the three areas of musical competence and within the topic areas studied.</p> <p>The student demonstrates some musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and critical listener. They are occasionally open to new musical experiences. They are usually able to describe and discuss music drawing on a range of technical and non-technical language.</p> <p>The student can express opinions and views about music and musical performances but not always justify these in relation to musical criteria. The student has a minimum acceptable understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of a range of musical styles and traditions.</p> <p>The student performs with limited fluency, technical control and expression. When performing in groups the student demonstrates a sense of ensemble but does not do so consistently.</p> <p>The student composes and improvises within musical structures using a limited range of musical elements and devices. They can respond imaginatively to limited range of musical and non-musical stimuli both given and self-selected.</p> <p>In their performing, composing and improvising they demonstrate an acceptable understanding of the characteristics of a limited range of instruments and voices and. With support they use notations and available digital technologies with to compose and to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
<p>Failed. <u>Weak performance</u> almost entirely failing to meet the competences required by the subject</p>	<p>F</p>	<p>3-4.9 (weak)</p>	<p>The student has failed to achieve the minimum expected standards in the three areas of musical competence.</p> <p>The student demonstrates weak musical understanding when responding to music as a performer, composer and critical listener. They tend not to be open to new musical experiences. They are unable describe and discuss music and their use of appropriate technical and non-technical musical language is inconsistent.</p> <p>Their analyses and discussion of music are superficial and they are often unable to justify their opinions and views about music in a convincing way. The student has very limited understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of different musical styles and traditions.</p> <p>Performances lack fluency, technical control and expression. When performing in groups the student has very limited sense of ensemble and is unable to respond to the contributions of others.</p> <p>Compositions and improvisations are unconvincing and demonstrate a limited ability to respond imaginatively to musical and non-musical stimuli. The student needs significant support to use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing or to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>

<p>Failed <u>Very weak</u> performance entirely failing to meet the competences required by the subject.</p>	<p>FX</p>	<p>0.2.9 (Very weak)</p>	<p>The student has failed to achieve the minimum expected standards in all of the areas of musical competence</p> <p>The student demonstrates very weak musical understanding when responding to music as performer, composer and listener. They are not open to new musical experiences. They are unable to use technical or non-technical musical language. Their analyses and discussion of music are very superficial and they are rarely unable to express or justify opinions and views about music.</p> <p>The student has extremely limited understanding of the characteristics, processes and protocols of different musical styles and traditions.</p> <p>Performances lack continuity and demonstrate very limited technical control. The student has no understanding of the requirements and protocols of different performing contexts. When performing in groups the student has a very limited sense of ensemble and is unable to respond to the contributions of others.</p> <p>Compositions and improvisations lack structure or the ability to use musical elements in a convincing way. The student is unable to respond to musical and non-musical stimuli. The student is unable to use simple notations and available digital technologies in their composing or to store and rework their compositions and performances.</p>
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