



Schola Europaea / Office of the Secretary-General

Pedagogical Development Unit

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Syllabus for Music – s6-s7 complementary course – 2 periods

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1. General introduction

The complementary Music curriculum for Years 6–7 is designed to support the development of free, active and socially responsible individuals. It fosters students' growth as improvisers, composers, performers and critical listeners, while encouraging creativity, curiosity and personal expression. Through a project-based approach that incorporates research and reflection, the curriculum promotes independent learning, individual responsibility and responsiveness to students' diverse interests, needs and aspirations.

The syllabus places particular emphasis on the development of musical understanding through active engagement in music-making. Students are encouraged to explore, create and critically engage with music across a wide range of styles, genres and cultural contexts. In doing so, they build the knowledge, skills and attitudes that underpin meaningful and sustained engagement with music throughout their lives, laying the foundation for lifelong learning, autonomy and responsibility.

The curriculum and assessment focus on students' achievements in the core areas of performing, composing, and listening and responding. These are supported by the development of aural awareness, analytical skills, and the ability to apply musical knowledge in a critical and discerning way, alongside an informed understanding of musical styles, traditions and relevant aspects of music theory.

The complementary course also provides a valuable opportunity for students to pursue and deepen their individual musical interests through the development of a personal portfolio. This portfolio-based approach supports personalised learning pathways, encourages reflection on progress, and recognises musical engagement both within and beyond the school context.

This curriculum is embedded within the professional learning community of music teachers across the European Schools. It reflects a shared commitment to collaboration, the exchange of good practice and continuous professional development. Through this collective engagement, teachers contribute to the ongoing refinement of teaching, learning and assessment in Music, ensuring coherence, quality and responsiveness to contemporary pedagogical developments and the diverse needs of learners.

2. General Objectives of the European Schools

The Mission of the European Schools and Accredited European Schools is to provide all pupils with plurilingual and multicultural broad education of high quality, from early education to secondary school, and to equip upper secondary students for adult life and form a basis for further learning.

The European Schools and Accredited European Schools have also the vocation of being a flagship of European policies in education. They are the ideal testbed for innovative projects and a laboratory of pedagogical excellence where professionals from all over Europe work together.

The Curriculum of the European Schools is:

Comprehensive: It requires pupils to study a combination of subjects from different areas until the end of their schooling. (Mathematics, at least one science, humanities and languages)

Multilingual: Pupils learn content through their dominant language and other working languages.

Competence-based: It aims at developing the 8 key competences for lifelong learning. The level of pupils' attainment in the different subjects is measured through specific descriptors for each subject at each level.

Value-oriented: It aims to develop a European dimension of values in our pupils.

Flexible: The principle of differentiation is central the teaching and learning approach.

The **Objectives** of the European Schools are:

1. To provide a high quality, broad education centred on the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, supporting all pupils' learning needs and encouraging them to reach their potential. To foster tolerance, co-operation, communication, and concern for others throughout the school community and beyond.
2. To focus on the mental and psychological wellbeing of pupils and all members of the community, believing that it is through stimulating and supportive classrooms and School life that all members of the school community can be enabled to thrive in our schools.
3. To stay abreast of the most recent developments on pedagogical theories and practices in teaching and learning methods/approaches to ensure that the provided educational experiences are high-quality based.

4. To support inclusion and diversity, creating inclusive classrooms and learning experiences in which pupils are stimulated to be reflective, active and creative, aware of their own learning profile and achievements, confident in their capacity with tenacity, curiosity and enthusiasm through several pupil-centred teaching approaches and the use of digital tools.
5. To cultivate pupils' confidence in their own cultural identity – the bedrock for their development as European citizens.
6. To develop high standards in the mother tongue and in foreign languages, as defined in the “Language Policy of the European Schools”.
7. To embed the learning about Education for Sustainable Development as an overarching concept in the curriculum.
8. To develop STEAM (Science, Technological, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) knowledge, competences, and skills.
9. To encourage a European and global perspective in Human Sciences, across the curriculum and in school life.
10. To encourage creativity in music and arts.
11. To develop physical skills and instill in pupils an appreciation of the need for healthy living through participation in sporting and recreational activities.
12. To offer pupils professional guidance on their choice of subjects and on career/university decisions in the later years of secondary school.

The pupils of the European Schools and Accredited European Schools are future citizens of Europe and the world. As engaged citizens, they need a range of competences if they are to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world.

The Council of the European Union adopted a Recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning in May 2018¹. The Recommendation identifies eight key competences that are essential to citizens for personal fulfilment, a healthy and sustainable lifestyle, employability, active citizenship and social inclusion.

¹ The Official Journal 2018/C 189/01: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=0J%3AC%3A2018%3A189%3ATOC>

The key competences are a combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

Knowledge

Knowledge is composed of the concepts, facts and figures, ideas and theories which are already established, and support the understanding of a certain area or subject.

Skills

Skills are defined as the ability to carry out processes and use the existing knowledge to achieve results.

Attitudes

Attitudes describe the disposition and mindset to act or react to ideas.

All key competences are considered equally important and aspects essential to one domain will support competence development in another.

- Literacy competence
- Multilingual competence
- Mathematical competence and competence in science, technology and engineering
- Digital competence
- Personal, social and learning to learn competence
- Citizenship competence
- Entrepreneurship competence
- Cultural awareness and expression competence

3. Didactic Principles

The European Schools provide formal education and encourage pupils' personal development in an ample social and cultural context.

Personal development involves awareness of appropriate behaviours, understanding of the environment in which pupils live, the respect of the diverse spiritual, moral, social and cultural backgrounds and the development of their individual identity in the context of a school ethos based on European values.

Awareness and experience of the richness of European life, culture and values nurture the pupils towards a greater respect for the traditions of each individual country and region in Europe, while developing and treasuring their own cultural identities.

Teaching and learning are competence-based, with a focus on:

- Active learning
Active learning emphasises pupils' active involvement and participation in the learning process. In active learning, pupils take an active role. Teachers help pupils

to gradually become more independent and autonomous, i.e. more aware, and responsible for their own learning process.

- **Project-based learning**
During project-based learning pupils gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.
- **Inquiry-based learning**
Inquiry-based learning prioritises problems that require critical and creative thinking so pupils can develop their abilities to ask questions, design investigations, interpret evidence, form explanations and arguments, and communicate findings.
- **Cross-discipline learning**
Cross-disciplinary learning combines insights from interdisciplinary learning, transfer, and resources frameworks and highlights the processes of resource activation, transformation, and integration to support sense making in a novel disciplinary context by drawing on knowledge from other prerequisite disciplines.
- **Integrated teaching and learning**
Teachers play a pivotal role in creating a comprehensive and meaningful learning experience for pupils. By establishing links and correlations among different areas of the curriculum, teachers enrich the educational journey for their pupils.
- **Social and emotional learning**
Pupils develop self-awareness, self-control, and interpersonal skills that are vital for school, work, and life success.

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. These principles are further developed and contextualised within subject-specific practices and through the collaborative work of teachers within the professional learning community of the European Schools.

Especially for Music

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 music makers.

The syllabus is built upon five key principles.

Music education and the assessment of musical learning will:

1. Foster the musical learning and development of all young people in European Schools.
2. Involve students in musical activities and experiences which develop their musical skills and knowledge.

3. Integrate composing, performing, 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 its historical and social traditions.

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

1. Integrated teaching and learning: links and correlations among the different areas of the European School curriculum make learning a more comprehensive and meaningful experience.

2. Active learning: students gradually become responsible for their own learning process.

Didactic principles are provided as a guide for learning and teaching.

4. Learning Outcomes

The learning outcomes are for students to:

- participate as active, independent and responsible learners, demonstrating the ability to make informed and critical judgements about music, its performance and composition;
- compose, perform and critically analyse music to a high standard across a range of musical styles, genres and cultural contexts;
- engage critically and reflectively with the diversity of contemporary and historical musical practices and traditions;
- develop and sustain an informed and meaningful relationship with music through the integrated practices of composing, performing, listening and responding;
- apply musical knowledge, skills and understanding in creative and appropriate ways, including the use of relevant technologies where appropriate;
- reflect on and evaluate their own learning, identifying strengths, areas for development and strategies for further progress;
- recognise and explore connections within music and between music and other disciplines, fostering a broader understanding of artistic and cultural expression.

The Portfolio

The development of the portfolio will be the main focus of students' work in Years 6-7 and will provide the context within which they develop the musical knowledge, skills and understanding. The purpose of the portfolio is to provide evidence of the range and quality of the student's musical achievement across all the three core areas of musical practice and the progress that they have made during the two years of the course. Formative feedback should be given to the students on a regular basis.

Importantly, the development of the portfolio allows students to take ownership of their musical learning and development, teachers to adopt

an individualised approach to teaching, and to continue the integrated approach to music teaching and learning which has underpinned teaching in Years 1-5.

The portfolio must be submitted in an ICT form with its content accessible to teachers via a forwarded link. Portfolios presented as hard paper copies or via CDs/pen drives/DVDs will not be accepted.

The portfolio contents:

Section 1: Musical Diary/Log

This will contain

- i. a short personal statement by the student which describes their musical interests, background and aspirations and notable musical achievements and experiences prior to beginning the course. The portfolio must be completed by the student, not by the teacher or the school;
- i. an ongoing evaluative log which provides evidence of critical self-reflection on their progress as musicians. This evidence might include examples of:
 - critical reviews of concerts/recordings- for example published on internet/school magazine- which show evidence of developing critical awareness,
 - evidence of innovative ways in which they have engaged with music, such as the creative use of music technologies or use of social networking sites for exchanging ideas and discussing music-related issues,
 - a record of students' listening and appraising including additional analyses as appropriate to student's individual needs,
 - records of assessment including certificates, teacher assessments and reports,
 - final assessment is done by the teacher. A final assessment should be included in the Portfolio.

Section 2: Performing and Composing

- i. Performances from across the course including at least two from Year 6 and two from Year 7. Performing occasions can be from outside or inside school and can include solo and ensemble work.
- ii. Compositions from across the course including at least two from Year 6 and two from Year 7 which demonstrate the student's progression and development as a composer. Compositions can be for instruments, voices or using digital technologies.

5. Assessment

The basis for assessment are the learning outcomes for each cycle.

Assessments must be oriented around the competence-based attainment descriptors for the different subjects and the Key Competences for the European Schools. Teachers must incorporate assessment of all of these in each year's teaching.

Pupils must be assessed in a broad variety of ways throughout the year, to give a wide-ranging picture of each pupil's attainments, strengths, and areas for further work. Both formative and summative assessments must be used, ranging from quick and simple to more complex and time-demanding.

The basic principles and procedures relating to the assessment of pupils in the European Schools system are set out in the following documents:

- General Rules of the European Schools
- Assessment Policy of the European Schools
- Summative assessment from s4 to s6 in the European Schools: Pedagogical and organisational arrangements

5.1. Attainment descriptors

The Music Attainment Descriptors should be used in conjunction with the relevant learning objectives in the syllabus for music - complementary course. These learning objectives describe the expected standards to be met by students at the end of cycle. Progression 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.

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. Learning objectives 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. 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.

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

Assessment Music Portfolio

Markers should adopt a holistic approach to the assessment of the portfolio which recognises the different emphases and specialisms that students have brought to their studies.

Marks	Performance indicator	Description of Attainment
9-10	excellent	The portfolio provides evidence of excellent progression and attainment across a range of musical activities. These include all or most of the following: The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates a highly perceptive understanding by the candidate of their own musical strengths and areas for development. These show excellent progression across a range of musical activities. Written work including reviews of concerts and performances demonstrate a keen and critical awareness of music across a range of styles. Ideas and opinions are well justified and expressed clearly. There is a very open-minded approach to different musical traditions, ways of making music. The sample of work demonstrates an excellent level of creativity and attainment. The portfolio clearly reflects the student's personal engagement. Teacher assessments are very positive.
8-8,9	very good	The portfolio provides evidence of very good progression and attainment across a range of musical activities. The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates a perceptive understanding of the candidate's own musical strengths and areas for development. These show very good progression across a range of musical activities. Written work including reviews of concerts and performances demonstrate a keen awareness of music across a range of styles. Ideas and opinions are well justified and expressed clearly. There is a very open-minded approach to different musical traditions, ways of making music. The sample of work demonstrates a high level of creativity and attainment. The portfolio reflects the student's personal engagement very well. Teacher assessments are very positive and indicate a student at a high level.
7-7,9	good	The portfolio provides evidence of good progression and attainment across a broad range of musical activities. The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates a good understanding of the candidate's own musical strengths and some areas for development. Written work and reviews show good awareness of music across a range of styles and ideas and opinions are expressed reasonably well. There is an open-minded approach to different musical traditions, ways of making music. The sample of work represents a good level of creativity and attainment. Personal engagement is good. Teacher assessments are mainly positive and indicate a student whose work is at good quality.

6-6,9	satisfactory	The portfolio provides evidence of satisfactory progression and attainment across a broad range of musical activities. The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates some good understanding of the candidate's musical strengths and areas for development. These show some inconsistent progression across a range of music activities. Written work and reviews show quite good awareness of music across a range of styles. Ideas and opinions are not always justified and clarity is sometimes lacking. There is a fairly open-minded approach to different musical traditions, ways of making music and some evidence of having engaged with these innovatively. The sample of work demonstrates a good level of creativity and mixed success in attainment. Personal engagement is satisfactory. Teacher assessments are mainly fair or good.
5-5,9	sufficient	The portfolio provides evidence of satisfactory attainment and progression but across a relatively narrow range of musical activities. The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates a slightly limited understanding of their own musical strengths or areas for development. There is limited evidence of self-reflection and improvement in musical skills and knowledge. Written work and reviews show a basic awareness of music across a range of styles and ideas expressed are mainly satisfactory. The approach to different musical traditions is quite limited, and ways of making music are rather restricted or lacking imagination. The sample of work demonstrates a satisfactory level of creativity and attainment shows mixed success. Personal engagement is somewhat unclear. Teacher assessments are mainly average to poor.
3-4,9	failed (weak)	The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates limited understanding of the candidate's musical strengths or areas for development. There is limited evidence of engaging in self-reflection or improvement in music activities. Written work and reviews show a narrow awareness of musical styles. Ideas and opinions are not satisfactorily justified and/or are poorly expressed. The approach to different musical traditions is limited, and ways of making music lack imagination. The sample of work demonstrates some satisfactory levels of creativity and attainment shows success. Personal engagement is less than satisfactory. Teacher assessments are mainly below average.
0-2,9	failed (very weak)	The personal statement and self-reflection demonstrates very limited understanding of the candidate's musical strengths or areas for development. There is very little evidence of engaging in self-reflection or improvement in music activities. Written work and reviews show a narrow awareness of musical styles. Ideas and opinions are not satisfactorily justified and are often poorly expressed. The approach to different musical traditions is limited, and ways of making music lack imagination. Teacher assessments indicates a student working mainly below average.