



**NCCA**

An Chomhairle Náisiúnta  
Curraclain agus Measúnachta  
National Council for  
Curriculum and Assessment

# Draft Leaving Certificate Music Specification

For consultation

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## Senior cycle

Senior cycle aims to educate the whole person and contribute to human flourishing. Students' experiences throughout senior cycle enrich their intellectual, social and personal development and their overall health and wellbeing. Senior cycle has 8 guiding principles.

Senior Cycle Guiding Principles	
Wellbeing and relationships	Choice and flexibility
Inclusive education and diversity	Continuity and transitions
Challenge, engagement and creativity	Participation and citizenship
Learning to learn, learning for life	Learning environments and partnerships

These principles are a touchstone for schools and other educational settings, as they design their senior cycle. Senior cycle consists of an optional Transition Year, followed by a two-year course of subjects and modules. Building on junior cycle, learning happens in schools, communities, educational settings, and other sites, where students' increasing independence is recognised. Relationships with teachers are established on a more mature footing and students take more responsibility for their learning.

Senior cycle provides a curriculum which challenges students to aim for the highest level of educational achievement, commensurate with their individual aptitudes and abilities. During senior cycle, students have opportunities to grapple with social, environmental, economic, and technological challenges and to deepen their understanding of human rights, social justice, equity, diversity and sustainability. Students are supported to make informed choices as they choose different pathways through senior cycle and every student has opportunities to experience the joy and satisfaction of reaching significant milestones in their education. Senior cycle should establish firm foundations for students to transition to further, adult and higher education, apprenticeships, traineeships and employment, and participate meaningfully in society, the economy and adult life.

The educational experience in senior cycle should be inclusive of every student, respond to their learning strengths and needs, and celebrate, value, and respect diversity. Students vary in their family and cultural backgrounds, languages, age, ethnic status, beliefs, gender, and sexual identity as well as their strengths, needs, interests, aptitudes and prior knowledge, skills, values and dispositions. Every student's identity should be celebrated, respected, and responded to throughout their time in senior cycle.

At a practical level, senior cycle is supported by enhanced professional development; the involvement of teachers, students, parents, school leaders and other stakeholders; resources;

research; clear communication; policy coherence; and a shared vision of what senior cycle seeks to achieve for our young people as they prepare to embark on their adult lives. It is brought to life in schools and other educational settings through:

- effective curriculum planning, development, organisation, reflection and evaluation
- teaching and learning approaches that motivate students and enable them to improve
- a school culture that respects students and promotes a love of learning.

## Rationale

Music is a universal form of human expression. It transcends linguistic, geographical and cultural barriers. Music helps us to explore and understand our identity, communicate meaning, and engage meaningfully with the world around us.

Music significantly contributes to the development of the whole person - personally, emotionally, intellectually, socially, culturally and creatively. It is a dynamic and expressive subject that encourages curiosity, creativity, communication, experimentation and self-reflection. In music, students create, perform and actively listen in an integrated way both individually, and with others. This integration provides students with a powerful means of self-discovery, supports the development of key competencies, and promotes a deeper understanding and knowledge of both the theoretical and practical aspects of music.

Music builds resilience, develops self-awareness, fosters self-confidence and cultivates a sense of wellbeing. Students learn to give and respond to feedback constructively, refining their music and craft with discipline and perseverance.

Music nurtures problem-solving and original thinking. It enables students to experiment with original ideas and develops their individuality, personality and creative voice. Students consider musical context, purpose and audience. It provides an outlet for emotional expression, helping students to navigate personal challenges and moments of celebration.

Music provides a valuable lens for understanding history and culture. In Leaving Certificate Music, students encounter a diverse range of musical traditions, styles, and practices from historical to contemporary. Music helps to develop an appreciation of historical, personal, political, social and cultural contexts within which it was created and experienced. This learning helps to foster an awareness and appreciation of our own history and culture, environment and ethos, while developing an understanding of other cultures.

Music inherently fosters social skills, collaboration and teamwork through the sharing of ideas, instruments, skills and reflections. Through shared musical experiences, the subject promotes social cohesion and brings people together. Students learn to listen actively, communicate effectively, and use their individual talents to support one another and work as a team. Cooperation builds mutual respect and strong interpersonal relationships. As students learn to react and respond to, and with others, they cultivate empathy, patience and self-discipline.

In today's rapidly evolving musical world, digital technologies have transformed how music is created, performed and experienced. Students benefit from using digital technology to create, arrange, record, produce, edit and share music, fostering creativity and developing technical proficiency. The specification reflects contemporary practices and acknowledges that students encounter and engage with music in diverse ways.

Music can empower students to contribute meaningfully to their own communities. Engaging in music prepares students for diverse roles in the music world and for a wide range of careers opportunities. Music develops lifelong skills to engage in, appreciate and enjoy the arts beyond the classroom.

## Aims

The aims of the Leaving Certificate Music specification are to develop in students:

- the competency to communicate effectively as musicians through the three integrated modes of engagement: Creating and Experimenting; Performing and Music-making; Listening, Appraising and Responding.
- knowledge, understanding and enjoyment of music as experienced in their daily lives and in the world around them.
- the ability to engage with a diverse range of musical styles and to deepen students' awareness and appreciation of historical, personal, political, social and cultural contexts.
- the ability to create and communicate musically, ideas, emotions, thoughts, mood and atmosphere in a variety of contexts.
- the skills to be creative and innovative through individual and collaborative learning experiences.

## Continuity and progression

Leaving Certificate Music builds on the knowledge, skills, values, dispositions that stem from learners' early childhood education through to the junior cycle curriculum and provides continuity and progression in music education although students do not need to have studied junior cycle Music in advance of studying Leaving Certificate Music.

### Junior Cycle

Learning at the core of junior cycle is described in Statements of Learning, a number of which apply to music. These include the creation, appreciation and presentation of music and composition, the use of musical ideas in reflecting life and living in the community, understanding patterns and relationships in music and taking an idea from conception to realisation. Many junior cycle subjects have links with and support the learning in junior cycle Music, such as Mathematics, Visual Art, History and English. Students may also have experience of musical learning through the junior cycle short course in Artistic Performance which gives students the opportunity to engage in the arts through the planning of, and participation in an artistic performance.

The Junior Cycle Music specification aims to contribute to the development of artistic awareness, understanding, self-expression, self-esteem, imagination and multicultural sensitivity. Students develop the knowledge, skills and understanding necessary to create, perform and appraise music that is both their own and the music of others. Student learning in Junior Cycle Music is achieved through three interconnected strands which enable students to explore fully their musical imagination, creativity, potential and understanding of music in context. There is an emphasis on integrating creating and exploring, participating and music-making and appraising and responding, which are essential to students learning to become musicians and realise their musical selves.

### Beyond senior cycle

The competencies which students develop through engagement with Leaving Certificate Music benefits them in their adult lives in a number of ways. Students can actively contribute through participation in their local community, society and through employment. Through the two years of study, students develop many valuable transferable skills such as creativity, teamwork and communication which highlight the versatility and broad applicability of learning in Music. The study of Leaving Certificate Music can provide students with a foundation for pursuing many exciting and rewarding careers in music and the arts. These include a composer, songwriter, music educator, performer, sound engineer, conductor,



events promoter, music therapist and musical director. Other potential career areas include technology, production, marketing and creative media.

## Student learning in senior cycle

Student learning in senior cycle consists of everything students learn **within** all of the subjects and modules they engage with **and** everything students learn which spans and overlaps **across** all of their senior cycle experiences. The overarching goal is for each student to emerge from senior cycle more enriched, more engaged and more competent as a human being than they were when they commenced senior cycle.

For clarity, the learning which spans **across** all of their senior cycle experiences is outlined under the heading 'key competencies'. The learning which occurs **within** a specific subject or module is outlined under the heading 'strands and learning outcomes'. However, it is vital to recognise that key competencies and subject or module learning are developed in an integrated way. By design, key competencies are integrated across the rationale, aims, learning outcomes and assessment sections of specifications. In practice, key competencies are developed by students in schools via the pedagogies teachers use and the environment they develop in their classrooms and within their school. Subjects can help students to develop their key competencies; and key competencies can enhance and enable deeper subject learning. When this integration occurs, students stand to benefit

- during and throughout their senior cycle
- as they transition to diverse futures in further, adult and higher education, apprenticeships, traineeships and employment, and
- in their adult lives as they establish and sustain relationships with a wide range of people in their lives and participate meaningfully in society.

When teachers and students make links between the teaching methods students are experiencing, the competencies they are developing and the ways in which these competencies can deepen their subject specific learning, students become more aware of the myriad ways in which their experiences across senior cycle are contributing towards their holistic development as human beings.

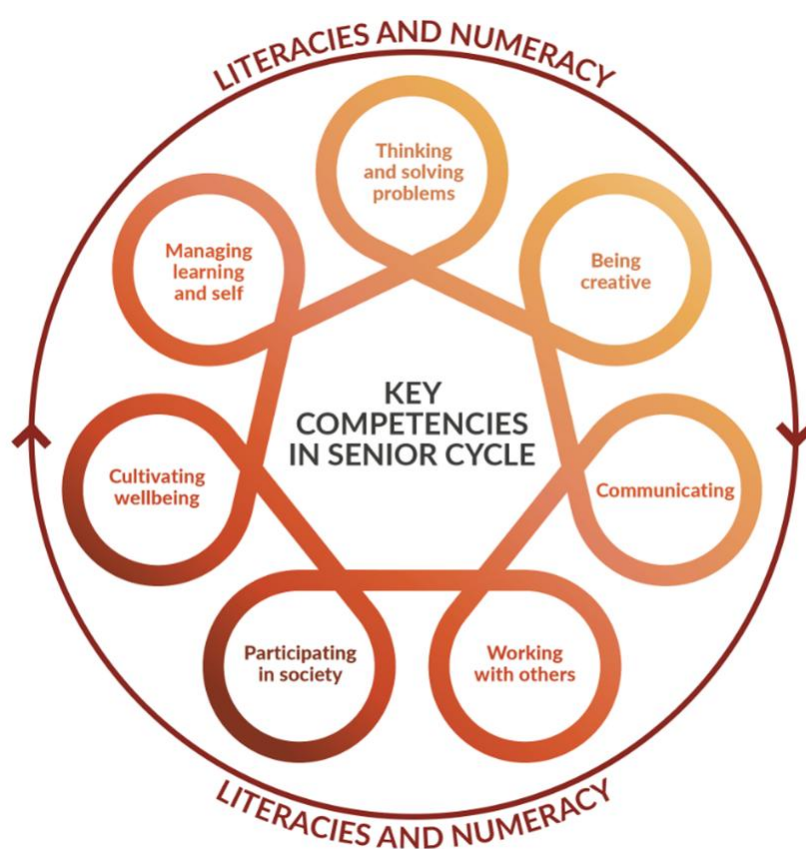
## Key competencies

Key competencies is an umbrella term which refers to the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions students develop in an integrated way during senior cycle.



**Figure 1:** The components of key competencies and their desired impact.

The knowledge which is specific to this subject is outlined below under 'strands of study and learning outcomes'. The epistemic knowledge which spans across subjects and modules is incorporated into the key competencies.



**Figure 2:** Key Competencies in Senior Cycle, supported by literacies and numeracy.

These competencies are linked and can be combined; can improve students' overall learning; can help students and teachers to make meaningful connections between and across different areas of learning; and are important across the curriculum.

The development of students' literacies and numeracy contributes to the development of competencies and vice-versa. Key competencies are supported when students' literacies and numeracy are well developed and they can make good use of various tools, including technologies, to support their learning.

The key competencies come to life through the learning experiences and pedagogies teachers choose and through students' responses to them. Students can and should be helped to develop their key competencies irrespective of their past or present background, circumstances or experiences and should have many opportunities to make their key competencies visible. Further detail in relation to key competencies is available at <https://ncca.ie/en/senior-cycle/senior-cycle-redevelopment/student-key-competencies/>

The key competencies can be developed in Leaving Certificate Music in a range of ways.

**Being Creative** and making creative decisions is central to the student experience of Leaving Certificate Music. Students are being creative by participating in cultural experiences and learning from creative musical works. Students combine musical ideas that already exist to enhance their own musical concepts, ideas and creative processes. The subject provides students with a variety of opportunities to turn their ideas into actions, creating new ideas, creative works, performances, processes and artefacts.

Music encourages students to be curious, open-minded, adventurous and imaginative. The subject asks students to be playful and willing to take appropriate risks in the pursuit of learning. Students try different things to respond to tasks and situations. As students develop their competency in being creative, they learn to become comfortable with ambiguity and uncertainty, while still finding ways to move forward. Students develop internal standards about how good their own work, and the work of others, is, and they regularly reflect on their own creativity and creative process.

**Communicating** with music, and through music is a fundamental aspect of learning in the subject. Music exists to be performed, listened to, and shared with others. Music has the ability to communicate an idea, emotion, mood or atmosphere in ways that words alone often cannot. In Leaving Certificate Music, students communicate and develop their **literacies and numeracy** through a deepening understanding of words, symbols, numbers, language, sounds,

movement, tools, media and texts. Students are engaged in active listening, viewing and reading attentively and responding meaningfully.

Music involves students communicating through the use of a variety of tools including instruments, voices, equipment, materials and technology. Students further develop their competency in communicating by being aware of the purpose and the target audience for their music and by creating, designing and composing texts, artefacts and performances for these audiences.

Exposure to a variety of music and communicating music in a variety of styles encourages students to be adaptable and open to diverse perspectives. Students develop an understanding of how tone, gestures, body language and emotions affect communication. Students are encouraged to reflect on what they do well and what they could do better when communicating.

In the music classroom, students are encouraged to work with others in a range of contexts. **Working with others** involves deciding things as a group and working together to achieve shared goals. Students take on different roles, including taking the lead on occasion and they contribute meaningfully to the work of the group. This may be through creative tasks, appraising and responding activities, through performing as a member of a group, or as an audience member.

Working with others deepens understanding of group dynamics, being able to give and take, and navigating differences of opinion and approach. This competency works closely with communicating as students learn to interact ethically, understand the emotional involvement needed to work well with others and manage emotional challenges which may arise.

Leaving Certificate Music fosters the development of competencies related to **thinking and solving problems** by getting musical knowledge, ideas, theories and concepts from different places and putting them to use in their own work. Students explore information, patterns, trends, connections and relationships in music to gain deeper understanding and form better explanations. They think and solve problems through understanding, analysing, synthesising, evaluating, interpreting and creating. Students are open minded, speculating, looking for different points of view and exploring multiple possibilities.

Leaving Certificate Music supports students in developing the key competency **participating in society** in their schools, communities and wider society. Music offers students the opportunity to develop and express their own ideas, to investigate and explore historical,

personal, political, social and cultural issues, to listen to works, and create their own musical ideas which have been inspired by personal or societal challenges.

Music encourages students to develop competencies related to **managing learning and self** and **cultivating wellbeing**. Students engage with activities which require them to make choices and set personal learning goals. Students are managing learning and self by figuring out ways to respond to complexity and uncertainty and by being flexible, adaptable and willing to learn from mistakes. The Leaving Certificate music classroom provides an inclusive and supportive space where students have a sense of meaning and purpose and can develop their self-confidence.

## Strands of study and learning outcomes

The Leaving Certificate Music specification is designed for a minimum of 180 hours of class contact time. The structure of the specification is set out in two interconnected strands:

- Exploring and Expressing Musical Ideas and
- Music in Context: Past and Present.

The strands are interwoven and should be studied concurrently, rather than in isolation or in a linear order. The learning from the two strands is mutually reinforcing. Learning experienced in Strand 1: Exploring and Expressing Musical Ideas, will help to support and develop the learning in Strand 2: Music in Context: Past and Present, and vice versa.

Learning outcomes specified under both strands will not be achieved in a single learning experience. Students will build their competencies through repeated and varied encounters with different styles of music throughout their two years of study.

There are three integrated modes of engagement identified in the specification. These are:

- Creating and Experimenting
- Performing and Music-making and
- Listening, Appraising and Responding

Each mode of engagement holds equal importance, and they are interwoven throughout the learning in the two strands. Collectively they ensure that students experience their learning in Leaving Certificate Music in an integrated way. By integrating these modes of engagement, students learn to develop and apply their competencies through the varied and flexible roles of being a musician.

Figure 3 illustrates the two interconnected strands and the three integrated modes of engagement.



**Figure 3:** Structure of the Leaving Certificate Music specification.



## Modes of Engagement

Throughout their learning in Leaving Certificate Music, students experience what it means to be a musician in today's world through three integrated modes of engagement:

- Creating and Experimenting,
- Performing and Music-making, and
- Listening, Appraising and Responding.

This integration provides students with opportunities to experience the complexity of roles with which a musician engages and fosters the development of a musical mindset. Together they promote deeper understanding and provide opportunities for students to learn to become musicians and realise their musical selves.

### Creating and Experimenting

Creating and Experimenting focuses on the development of understanding of how music is created, constructed and communicated. Empowering communication through sound and music and nurturing the creative voice are central to learning in this specification.

Throughout their learning, students explore and experiment with musical elements by adapting, combining, and manipulating them. Musical elements include pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure, style, tonality and instrumentation<sup>1</sup>. Students develop original ideas both individually and by working with others.

When creating and experimenting, students explore how rhythm, melody and harmony are constructed, and how sounds are layered and work together to create texture, structure and harmonic relationships. Students listen to and appraise existing music, developing an insight into, and an understanding of the composers' intentions. They experiment with ideas from this music to create and develop their own compositions.

Creating and experimenting with music does not happen in a vacuum. As students develop their ideas, they continually listen to what they are creating - by playing an instrument, singing or vocalising, using digital technology, or a combination of these. Learning in this way supports students to develop their ideas in real-time, mirrors the practices of professional composers and supports students in refining their musical thinking.

Creating and experimenting involves appraising, reflecting, refining, modifying and making changes to their ideas. Through this iterative process, students' ideas evolve and take shape.

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<sup>1</sup> These elements are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, nor do they form a checklist.

## **Performing and Music-making**

Performing and Music-making supports students to develop competencies to understand and communicate music effectively. Students perform and music-make to an audience<sup>2</sup>. They engage in performing and music-making both individually and with others.

Students communicate their own original creative ideas and experience, interpret, adapt and arrange the music of other composers, arrangers and performers. Students develop performance skills, technical fluency and expressive control on their instrument(s) and/or voice(s) and apply these skills in rehearsed and improvised contexts.

Through performance, students interpret musical elements and communicate them with technical control and accuracy. They demonstrate an understanding of the musical context, including the musical style and the purpose and intention of composers and creators.

Students gain a deeper understanding of the demands of performing as they rehearse and refine their music, reflecting on their strengths and areas for improvement. This learning supports the development of their musical perspectives, enhances performance skills, and builds confidence and resilience.

## **Listening, Appraising and Responding**

Listening to music widely for understanding, and for pleasure is one of the fundamental aspects of music that this specification seeks to embed. Through this mode of engagement, students develop an understanding of musical styles; composers' and arrangers' musical intentions; and the historical, personal, political, social and cultural context within which music was created. Students listen, appraise and respond to music, developing and demonstrating their growing knowledge and understanding of musical elements, musical contexts, and musical language.

Students develop critical listening skills when appraising and responding to music which is both their own and the music of others. They formulate, develop, express and justify their opinions about existing and original music using appropriate musical terminology.

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<sup>2</sup> An audience can consist of fellow students/peers or teacher(s).

An overview of each strand is provided below, followed by a table. The right-hand column contains learning outcomes which describe the knowledge, skills, values and dispositions students should be able to demonstrate after a period of learning. The left-hand column outlines specific areas that students learn about. Taken together, these provide clarity and coherence with the other sections of the specification.

Learning outcomes should be achievable relative to students' individual aptitudes and abilities. Learning outcomes promote teaching and learning processes that develop students' knowledge, skills, values and dispositions incrementally, enabling them to apply their key competencies to different situations as they progress. Students studying at both Ordinary level and Higher level will critically engage with music, but the context, information and results arising from that engagement will be different.

**Table 1:** *Design of learning outcomes at Ordinary Level and Higher Level.*

Ordinary level	Higher level
Students engage with all of the learning outcomes listening carefully and thinking critically when recognising different musical styles, appraising and responding to music which they study and encounter.  Students will make well informed judgements and decisions about music throughout their learning using accurate and appropriate musical terminology.	Students engage with all of the learning outcomes undertaking critical listening and thinking critically when recognising different musical styles, appraising and responding to music which they study and encounter.  Students will make highly informed judgements and decisions about music throughout their learning using accurate and appropriate musical terminology.
Students engage with a broad range of musical knowledge, demonstrating understanding of musical elements and skills in creating and notating their own music. Students apply this knowledge effectively when creating and arranging music.	Students critically engage with a broad range of musical knowledge, demonstrating deep understanding of musical elements and skills in creating and notating their own music. Students apply this knowledge highly effectively when creating and arranging music.
Students demonstrate performance skills competently when communicating music. Student understanding is supported by an awareness of the musical style, the audience and purpose of the music.	Students demonstrate performance skills proficiently when communicating music. Student understanding is supported by an in-depth awareness of the musical style, the audience and purpose of the music.

Appendices 1 and 2 set out a Glossary of Action Verbs used in the specification and a Glossary of Terms used in the Learning Outcomes.

## **Strand 1: Exploring and Expressing Musical Ideas**

In this strand students develop their creative voice and realise their musical selves. Students do this by exploring, developing and expressing original musical ideas in a variety of musical styles. Students explore and express their musical creativity and imagination in both solo and group contexts. They develop a range of aural, analytical, technical, digital and notational skills as they learn to construct, organise and shape their musical ideas in response to a variety of stimuli and performance contexts.

Creating musical ideas involves exploring and experimenting with musical elements including pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure, style, tonality and instrumentation<sup>3</sup>. Prescribed and unprescribed music act as a rich source of stimulus material from which students explore, select, adapt and incorporate compositional and instrumental devices, in their own work. Students learn to draft, redraft and edit their musical ideas.

When exploring and expressing musical ideas, students perform and play back their ideas using instruments, voices, sound sources, digital technology or a combination of these. Realising their learning in this way develops aural awareness and ensures the creative process is engaging, meaningful and authentic for all students.

Throughout their learning, students' instrumental, vocal and digital literacy evolve in sophistication. Students make more informed and considered decisions about their creative direction, justifying and articulating their compositional choices with increasing confidence. Students develop their musical literacy and use appropriate musical language and notation practices to describe, document and communicate their ideas. Students develop an understanding of the ethical and responsible practices relevant to their music.

Students engaging with Ordinary Level are expected to be able to create music in key signatures of up to two sharps and two flats in both major and minor keys. Students engaging with Higher Level are expected to be able to create music in key signatures of up to four sharps and four flats in both major and minor keys. These parameters are not intended to constrain students' musical engagement throughout the two years of study. Students undertaking both Ordinary Level and Higher Level should be encouraged to create, experiment, perform, listen, appraise and respond to music which extends beyond these parameters where appropriate. In addition, all students will be expected to engage with all prescribed music, including music which extends beyond these parameters.

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<sup>3</sup> These elements are neither prescriptive nor exhaustive, nor do they form a checklist.

## Strand 1 Learning outcomes

Students learn about	Students should be able to
<p>Considerations when performing, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pitch accuracy and consistency</li> <li>• rhythmic accuracy and consistency</li> <li>• appropriate tempo</li> <li>• technical dexterity</li> <li>• control of an instrument and/or voice</li> <li>• intonation</li> <li>• tone quality</li> <li>• expressive techniques and articulation</li> <li>• how to perform a rhythm, melody and harmony to an accompaniment</li> <li>• musical communication and interpretation with an appropriate sense of style</li> <li>• opportunities and challenges in solo performance</li> <li>• how to reflect and refine a performance</li> </ul> <p>Additional considerations when performing as part of a group, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unison performance</li> <li>• performing in two or more parts</li> <li>• how to contribute meaningfully, and musically, to a group</li> <li>• how to maintain balance, blend and tuning</li> <li>• how to take initiative or lead a group on occasion, starting or stopping a piece or guiding transitions between pieces</li> <li>• opportunities and challenges when performing as part of a group</li> </ul>	<p>1.1 Demonstrate a range of performance skills.</p> <p>1.2 Outline performance skills that are necessary to communicate music effectively.</p>
<p>How to construct a single line melody for instrument(s) and voice(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in simple time signatures and in compound time signatures</li> <li>• in major and minor key signatures</li> <li>• for a variety of instruments and voice types</li> <li>• using the appropriate range and capabilities of instrument(s) and voice(s)</li> <li>• using appropriate word setting/word painting</li> </ul>	<p>1.3 Create and perform or play back a single line melody for instruments and voices.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with added performing and expressive techniques</li> <li>• which includes a modulation<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• using traditional and digital notation formats</li> <li>• using established structures and forms</li> <li>• using compositional devices from prescribed and unprescribed music</li> </ul>	
<p>How to improvise using:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• voice(s), instrument(s), body percussion or other sound sources</li> <li>• rhythmic patterns in a variety of time signatures</li> <li>• pitches, melodic ideas or short motifs in a variety of key signatures</li> <li>• chord progressions</li> <li>• established structures</li> <li>• stimulus material</li> </ul>	1.4 Improvise to create a musical piece which incorporates rhythm, melody and harmony.
<p>How to sightread rhythmic phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in simple and compound time signatures</li> </ul> <p>How to sightread melodic phrases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in simple and compound time signatures</li> <li>• in major and minor keys</li> <li>• for a variety of voices and instruments</li> <li>• with performing and expressive techniques</li> </ul> <p>How to sightread chords:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in simple and compound time signatures</li> <li>• in major and minor keys</li> <li>• with performing and expressive techniques</li> </ul>	1.5 Perform music at sight through playing, singing or clapping rhythmic and melodic phrases and chords.
<p>Single line melody writing in the style of Irish Traditional dances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reel</li> </ul>	1.6 Create and perform or play back a single line melody in the style of a given Irish Traditional dance rhythm, metre, or form.

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<sup>4</sup> All students engaging with Leaving Certificate Music should develop an understanding of modulation and its effect on musical structure and harmony. Students engaging with Ordinary Level will not be required to include a modulation in composition tasks. Students engaging with Higher Level are required to create single line melodies that demonstrate modulation to dominant, relative major and relative minor keys in composition tasks.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Double jig</li> <li>• Slip jig</li> </ul>	
<p>Ways to add accompaniment to a single line melody including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a rhythmic accompaniment</li> <li>• accompaniment which uses compositional devices: descant, ostinato, canon, sequence, imitation</li> <li>• a countermelody</li> <li>• supporting voices</li> <li>• a bass line in keeping with the musical style</li> <li>• suitable chords in keeping with the musical style</li> <li>• accompaniment styles as used in prescribed music</li> </ul>	<p>1.7 Compose, perform and play back rhythmic, melodic and harmonic accompaniment to a single line melody.</p>
<p>How digital technology can be used to create, edit, record, share and play back music including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recording live audio/instrument(s)/voice(s)</li> <li>• microphone techniques and microphone placement</li> <li>• feedback and how to prevent it</li> <li>• importing sounds</li> <li>• imputing sounds</li> <li>• building a track(s)</li> <li>• making edits to audio: cut, move, loop and adjust sounds to improve the track</li> <li>• finding, importing sounds including samples and loops.</li> <li>• responsible use of sampling and permissions</li> <li>• adjusting volume levels, equalisation (EQ) and balancing parts</li> <li>• exporting and sharing music in a digital format</li> </ul> <p>Establishing a balanced, clear and controlled audio environment.</p> <p>The opportunities, limitations and challenges offered by technology in sharing music.</p>	<p>1.8 Demonstrate, using digital technology, a range of techniques for creating, editing, recording and sharing a piece of music.</p> <p>1.9 Rehearse and perform a rhythm, melody and harmony to a backing track.</p>
<p>Processing effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reverb</li> <li>• Panning</li> <li>• Delay</li> </ul>	<p>1.10 Identify and describe processing effects in live and recorded music through auditory perception.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equalisation</li> <li>• Compression</li> <li>• Distortion</li> <li>• Chorus</li> <li>• Effect Automation</li> </ul>	1.11 Apply processing effects to original music or recordings and evaluate the impact of the effects used.
Appropriate musical language to justify their creative compositional decisions.	1.12 Provide a brief description of the role of the music they create and justify their creative compositional decisions.
<p>Music copyright and how it applies to the sharing and publishing of music:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is copyright</li> <li>• What does copyright protect/not protect</li> <li>• Performance rights</li> <li>• Music and reproduction rights</li> <li>• Public domain</li> <li>• Professional organisations in Ireland who manage copyright for musicians</li> <li>• Revenue streams for musicians and royalties</li> <li>• Copyright infringement</li> </ul>	<p>1.13 Explain what copyright is and why it matters in the music industry.</p> <p>1.14 Outline the steps that are needed to copyright original music.</p>



## **Strand 2: Music in Context: Past and Present**

In this strand, students develop an understanding of the key features and contextual influences of a wide range of musical styles. This understanding helps to shape students' ability to create, perform, appraise, and respond to music meaningfully.

Students investigate music associated with emotions, feelings, times, places, and social groups. Students share and discuss examples of music experienced at home, at school and in the wider community. They come to understand the historical, personal, political, social, and cultural dimensions of music and gain insights into the purpose, intent, and impact of music across different contexts and environments.

This strand aims to foster the curiosity, enjoyment, and pleasure that listening to, performing, and engaging with music can bring. Students engage with music from both historical and contemporary contexts. They listen to, appraise, and respond to music from a prescribed music list, as well as repertoire selected collaboratively by students and teachers. The prescribed music list will introduce students to music from a wide variety of musical styles, types, and genres. In addition to the prescribed music list, students will engage with other music in the classroom which will expose students to additional musical styles, types, and genres, and to music which reflects the students' own interests. Students listen to, appraise and respond to music they engage with; select and perform short extracts from this music; and use this music as stimulus material in creative tasks which are outlined in learning outcomes in this strand and also in Strand 1: Exploring and Expressing Musical Ideas.

Engagement with music repertoire should begin through aural perception. Students develop a deeper and more intuitive understanding of music repertoire by focusing on critical listening, internalising sounds, structures, and patterns, learning to imitate, perform and experiment with what they hear. Students will explore, investigate, and compare how stylistic features, musical elements, composition, instrumental and vocal techniques are applied in different ways for different purposes across different musical styles. As students learn to appraise and respond to music, they formulate responses using appropriate musical language.

In this strand, students critique both live and recorded performances and use their learning to reflect upon, inform, and improve their own music practices. It is expected that students engaging with Leaving Certificate Music would attend at least one live musical performance(s) during their study of the subject.

## Strand 2 Learning outcomes

Students learn about	Students should be able to
<p>Forming an articulate and informed response to a piece of music.</p> <p>Appropriate musical language to appraise and respond to music.</p> <p>How to appraise, respond and compare music through aural and visual perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stylistic features</li> <li>• compositional techniques</li> <li>• instruments and instrumental techniques</li> <li>• voices and vocal techniques</li> <li>• performance techniques</li> </ul> <p>How to support their responses with evidence and reference to the music.</p>	<p>2.1 Listen to, appraise and respond to music using appropriate musical language.</p>
<p>The relationship between music and its context, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant historical, personal, political, social or cultural contexts</li> <li>• stylistic features</li> <li>• styles which may have influenced composers/arrangers/performers</li> </ul>	<p>2.2 Explore the relationship between music and its context.</p>
<p>The main characteristics and distinguishing features of Irish Traditional dance, music and song including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stylistic features</li> <li>• instruments and instrumental techniques</li> <li>• vocal techniques</li> <li>• rhythmic, melodic and harmonic features</li> </ul> <p>How to identify and describe Irish Traditional dance, music, and song through aural and visual perception.</p> <p>Relevant historical, personal, political, social or cultural contexts.</p> <p>How Irish Traditional dance, music, and song shares connections with other music.</p> <p>Song types to be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sean Nós singing tradition</li> <li>• Irish folk songs</li> </ul> <p>Dance types to be explored:</p>	<p>2.3 Identify and describe the main characteristics, and distinguishing features of Irish Traditional Dance, Irish Traditional Music, and Irish Traditional Song.</p> <p>2.4 Explore how Irish Traditional Dance, Irish Traditional Music, and Irish Traditional Song is influenced by, and influences other music.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reel</li> <li>• Double jig</li> <li>• Slip jig</li> <li>• Single jig</li> <li>• Hornpipe</li> <li>• March</li> <li>• Polka</li> </ul>	
<p>The purpose of music in media, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to convey a feeling, mood or emotion</li> <li>• to tell a story</li> <li>• cultural significance</li> <li>• social and/or political purpose</li> <li>• use of leitmotif</li> <li>• use of symbolism</li> </ul> <p>Media to be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Film and television</li> <li>• Musical theatre</li> <li>• Video games</li> <li>• Incidental music</li> </ul>	<p>2.5 Identify the role and purpose of music in a variety of media.</p> <p>2.6 Create and present a short piece of original music which illustrates a character, mood or atmosphere suitable for use in a media context.</p>
<p>Types of stimuli which can be used to inspire a musical response.</p> <p>Stimulus to be explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a work of art</li> <li>• a mood</li> <li>• an event</li> <li>• film and television</li> <li>• a personal experience</li> <li>• a piece of music</li> <li>• prescribed music</li> <li>• words or literature</li> </ul>	<p>2.7 Create and present rhythmic, melodic and harmonic ideas in response to stimulus material.</p>
<p>Considerations when critiquing a musical performance including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• musical accuracy</li> <li>• technical dexterity</li> <li>• expression and interpretation of the music</li> <li>• timbre</li> <li>• ensemble and balance</li> <li>• musical communication to an audience</li> <li>• musical style</li> <li>• instrumentation</li> <li>• technological features or use of technology in a performance</li> </ul>	<p>2.8 Devise and apply criteria to evaluate live and recorded performances.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• relevant historical, personal, political, social or cultural context</li> </ul>	
<p>Musical activities in their local community/school community and where musical activities/events take place.</p> <p>Local musician(s) or groups of any style who create and/or perform in the local community/school community.</p>	<p>2.9 Research and explore musical activities available in the local community.</p> <p>2.10 Discuss how music has contributed to a local community event which the student has attended and/or participated in.</p>
<p>How to notate through aural perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rhythmic phrases up to four bars</li> <li>• Melodic phrases up to four bars</li> </ul> <p>How to indicate through aural perception:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common chord progressions and cadences.</li> </ul>	<p>2.11 Transcribe through aural perception rhythmic and melodic phrases, and chord progressions.</p>
<p>The influence of musical styles and/or musicians/composers on music which the student creates.</p> <p>How to recognise and acknowledge musical influences.</p>	<p>2.12 Describe how the work of other musicians or composers has informed and influenced the student's musical ideas.</p>
<p>How to adapt musical features in an existing piece of music or song including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• melodic, rhythmic and harmonic ideas</li> <li>• established structures</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• time signature</li> <li>• tonality</li> <li>• underlying harmony</li> <li>• structure</li> </ul> <p>The impact of making changes to a piece of music.</p>	<p>2.13 Collaborate with others to adapt and perform an extract from an existing piece of music or song.</p>

## Teaching for student learning

Leaving Certificate Music is student-centred in its design; it emphasises practical music-making experiences for all students. The learning in this subject is experienced through approaches which support both individual and collaborative creative music-making activities. Working with others to create, perform and appraise music, helps to expand students' musical ideas and their ability to recognise and appreciate multiple perspectives.

Signature pedagogies of the music classroom are student-centred, foster creativity, critical thinking and communicative competence. The three modes of engagement form the foundation of all experiences in Leaving Certificate Music.

The music classroom is a safe space where relationships are grounded in trust and respect so that students feel encouraged to express themselves and their ideas confidently and competently. Creativity thrives in the music classroom when students feel confident to experiment with a variety of approaches when creating, improvising and performing in ways that promote originality and personal expression. By facilitating creativity, students feel supported to propose alternative ideas, challenge conventions and take risks, embracing uncertainty and innovation.

Engagement in performance activities requires strategies which foster confidence, communication and inclusivity. Gradual exposure to diverse performance settings, performing individually and as a member of a group and scaffolded reflective practice help to build confidence and motivation. Accommodating student choice, interests and existing talents in the selection of repertoire helps to support students to engage meaningfully in their learning.

Throughout their studies, students engage with, listen, appraise and respond to a wide range of music. All interaction with music begins with the development of aural awareness and critical listening skills. This foundation is deepened through exploration and analysis of notated music, where available, thereby fostering a more comprehensive understanding of musical structure, musical elements and expression.

Music encountered in the classroom is a rich source for exploration. This music is actively listened to, critically examined and used as inspiration for students' own creative work. Pedagogies which provide students with ample opportunity to explore and manipulate musical elements when creating their own original music will foster creativity, critical thinking and problem solving. Students use instruments, voices, digital technology or a combination of these, to explore and experiment with compositional techniques and features of musical

styles, listening to and sharing their ideas and reflecting and refining them in real-time. Ongoing teacher and peer feedback, as well as structured opportunities for reflection and refinement, are woven into the learning process and promote student autonomy.

The nature of the support required to achieve success in the music classroom will vary from student to student as they imagine and conceive different ideas and bring their own level of understanding and prior learning to an activity. Strategies to promote and foster inclusivity include accommodating varying levels of competency, adjusting the amount of teacher intervention, and differentiating the pace and sequence of learning. Universal design for learning allows students multiple and varied opportunities to perform and present their work. By designing engaging and relevant tasks, students are motivated to learn.

Assessment in the music classroom should evaluate practical, theoretical and creative skills and should, as far as possible, integrate creating and experimenting, performing and music-making, and listening, appraising and responding. Varied formative and summative assessment strategies support student learning and provide effective feedback for student development. This dual approach to assessment recognises, acknowledges and rewards student learning and achievement. Assessment integration, whereby assessment is embedded within the learning process rather than treated as a separate task, maximises the use of available teaching time and ensures that all classroom activities contribute to both learning and evaluation.

## Assessment

Assessment in senior cycle involves gathering, interpreting, using and reporting information about the processes and outcomes of learning. It takes different forms and is used for a variety of purposes. It is used to determine the appropriate route for students through a differentiated curriculum, to identify specific areas of strength or difficulty for a given student and to test and certify achievement. Assessment supports and improves learning by helping students and teachers to identify next steps in the teaching and learning process.

As well as varied teaching strategies, varied assessment strategies will support student learning and provide information to teachers and students that can be used as feedback so that teaching and learning activities can be modified in ways that best suit individual learners. By setting appropriate and engaging tasks, asking questions and giving feedback that promotes learner autonomy, assessment will support learning and promote progression, support the development of student key competencies and summarise achievement.

## Assessment for certification

Assessment for certification is based on the rationale, aims and learning outcomes of this specification. Leaving Certificate Music has two assessment components: one written examination and one additional assessment component (AAC) comprising The Music Performance.

The written examination will be at Higher and Ordinary Level. The Music Performance AAC will be based on a common brief but will be assessed at Higher and Ordinary Level. Each component will be set and examined by the State Examinations Commission (SEC).

In the written examination, Leaving Certificate Music will be assessed at two levels, Higher and Ordinary. Examination questions will require students to demonstrate learning appropriate to their chosen level. Differentiation at the point of assessment will also be achieved through the stimulus material used, and the extent of the structured support provided for examination students at different levels.

**Table 2:** Overview of assessment for certification

Assessment Component		Level
Music Performance AAC	50%	Common brief. Assessed at Higher and Ordinary Level
Written examination	50%	Higher and Ordinary Level

## Additional Assessment Component: Music Performance

The Additional Assessment Component (AAC) in Leaving Certificate Music directly responds to the rationale and aims of the subject, which are to develop competencies in students so that they can communicate effectively as musicians. This AAC encourages students to develop a holistic understanding of what being a musician involves. The Music Performance AAC requires all students to perform a programme on an instrument/voice as follows:

- freely selected musical pieces/songs and
- an original musical piece/song and
- an unprepared musical test.

The design of the AAC facilitates students to evidence a broad range of learning as set out in the learning outcomes from both Strand 1, Exploring and Expressing Musical Ideas and Strand 2, Music in Context: Past and Present. It requires students to apply their learning in Leaving Certificate Music in ways that cannot be readily assessed by a written examination.

Table 3 presents a summary of the requirements for the Music Performance AAC at Ordinary and Higher Level.

**Table 3:** Overview of requirements for the Music Performance AAC at Ordinary and Higher Level

Ordinary Level	Higher Level
Students will perform a total of <b>three</b> musical pieces/songs on an instrument(s)/voice(s).	Students will perform a total of <b>five</b> musical pieces/songs on an instrument(s)/voice(s).
<b>Two</b> of the three musical pieces/songs will be freely selected by the student.	<b>Four</b> of the five musical pieces/songs will be freely selected by the student.
<b>One</b> of the three musical pieces/songs performed must be an original piece/song, created by the student, in response to stimulus material. The original piece/song must be minimum 1 minute duration.	<b>One</b> of the five musical pieces/songs performed must be an original piece/song, created by the student, in response to stimulus material. The original piece/song must be between 1 minute 30 seconds and 2 minutes 30 seconds duration.
During the assessment, students will participate in a reflective discussion with the examiner, demonstrating insights into	During the assessment, students will participate in a reflective discussion with the examiner, demonstrating insights into



their creative process and the musical decisions that shaped their original piece/song.	their creative process and the musical decisions that shaped their original piece/song.
Students will perform an unprepared test.	Students will perform an unprepared test.

The Leaving Certificate Music specification is designed to provide many and varied collaborative music-making and performance opportunities for students. This AAC offers students choice in whether to perform their pieces/songs (both freely selected and original) individually or as a member of a group. Where a student presents their pieces/songs as a member of a group, they will be examined and assessed on their own contribution to the group performance.

Solo and group performing may be freely mixed. In addition, the musical pieces/songs may be presented on a variety of instruments or through a combination of voice and instruments.

For the unprepared test, students will choose from aural memory (rhythmic or melodic), sight-reading (instrumental/vocal/rhythmic) or improvisation. Aural memory and sight-reading tests will be eight bars long. In the case of improvisation, students taking Ordinary Level will be required to improvise for at least eight bars duration, while students taking Higher Level will be required to improvise for at least sixteen bars duration.

The AAC provides students with practical, music-making opportunities to bring the core subject learning to life through their performance. The Music Performance AAC is intended to be integrated into the natural rhythm of classroom teaching and learning<sup>5</sup>. It is designed to be both motivating and enjoyable for students and to provide students with opportunities to explore musical areas and styles that interest them.

The assessment component provides students with an opportunity to apply key competencies they have developed through their engagement with Leaving Certificate Music, in particular being creative, communicating, managing learning and self, thinking critically and solving problems, and working with others. Students are encouraged to explore the dynamic and creative world of music. The AAC supports students to recognise the relevance of music to their lives and to their school, community and society. It has the potential to highlight future career pathways in music and in the arts more generally.

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<sup>5</sup> It is envisaged that the AAC will take up to 25 hours to complete. Further details will be provided in the Guidelines to support the completion of the Music Performance AAC.

## **The Brief**

The Music Performance AAC brief will be published annually by the SEC. The dates for the release of the brief will be set by the SEC. The AAC will be completed in term two/three of sixth year. A separate document, *Guidance to Support the Completion of the Music Performance AAC in Leaving Certificate Music*, will provide detailed guidance on the assessment process including a range of matters related to the organisation, implementation and oversight of the AAC.

In addition, the brief will:

- set out the specific requirements for the AAC for all students,
- provide stimulus material for the original music piece/song and support students in considering areas related to the stimulus material which they may wish to explore,
- support teachers in planning for learning and teaching.

## **Descriptors of quality for the Additional Assessment Component in Music**

The descriptors below relate to the learning achieved in the music classroom by students in the Music Performance AAC. In particular, the AAC requires students to:

- demonstrate control and accuracy of pitch and rhythm during the performance,
- communicate music pieces/songs to an audience with musical expression, fluency and interpretative understanding of the selected style and
- discuss and justify creative decisions made.

The descriptors of quality for the AAC are set out in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Descriptors of quality: Music Performance AAC

	<b>Students demonstrating a high level of achievement</b>	<b>Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement</b>	<b>Students demonstrating a low level of achievement</b>
<b>demonstrate control and accuracy of pitch and rhythm during the performance</b>	The student demonstrates excellent pitch and rhythm control and accuracy throughout the entire performance.	The student demonstrates good pitch and rhythm control and accuracy for the majority of the performance.	The student demonstrates limited pitch and rhythm control and accuracy for the performance.
<b>communicate music pieces/songs to an audience with musical expression, fluency and interpretative understanding of the selected style</b>	<p>A highly musical performance which demonstrates an excellent level of musicality and fluency with a strong knowledge of the music performed.</p> <p>The student demonstrates the ability to interpret and communicate the expressive content of their performance to an excellent degree.</p>	<p>A musical performance which contains with some inconsistencies that affect the sense of musicality, fluency and understanding of the music being performed.</p> <p>The student makes a good attempt at communicating expressively, however there are moments when it is limited.</p>	<p>A performance where the musical demands are mostly beyond the ability of the candidate, there is limited understanding of the music.</p> <p>The student's ability to communicate the expressive content of the music is limited.</p>
<b>discuss and justify creative decisions made.</b>	<p>The student demonstrates comprehensive and insightful knowledge of their own original work.</p> <p>The student can confidently discuss and justify the creative compositional decisions, the originality and freshness of their ideas, technical challenges and interpretative choices made.</p>	<p>The student demonstrates adequate understanding of their own original work.</p> <p>The student makes a good attempt to discuss the creative compositional decisions, the originality and freshness of their ideas, technical challenges and interpretative choices made.</p>	<p>The student demonstrates limited understanding of, and ability to discuss their own original work.</p> <p>The student shows limited ability to discuss compositional decisions, originality and freshness of ideas, challenges encountered and interpretative choices made.</p>

## Written examination

The written examination will consist of a range of question types. The senior cycle key competencies developed through the study of Leaving Certificate Music, are embedded in the learning outcomes and will be assessed in the context of the learning outcomes. The written examination paper will include a selection of questions that will assess, appropriate to each level, the learning described in the two strands of study.

## Reasonable Accommodations

This Leaving Certificate Music specification requires that students engage with the nature of the subject on an ongoing basis throughout the course. The assessment for certification in Leaving Certificate Music involves a written examination worth 50% of the available marks and an additional component worth 50%. In this context, the scheme of Reasonable Accommodations, operated by the State Examinations Commission (SEC), is designed to assist students who would have difficulty in accessing the examination or communicating what they know to an examiner because of a physical, visual, sensory, hearing, or learning difficulty. The scheme assists such students to demonstrate what they know and can do, without compromising the integrity of the assessment. The focus of the scheme is on removing barriers to access, while retaining the need to assess the same underlying knowledge, skills, values, and dispositions as are assessed for all other students and to apply the same standards of achievement as apply to all other students. The Commission makes every effort when implementing this scheme to accommodate individual assessment needs through these accommodations.

There are circumstances in which the requirement to demonstrate certain areas of learning when students are being assessed for certification can be waived or exempted, provided that this does not compromise the overall integrity of the assessment.

More detailed information about the scheme of Reasonable Accommodations in the Certificate Examinations, including the accommodations available and the circumstances in which they may apply, is available from the State Examinations Commission's Reasonable Accommodations Section.

Before deciding to study Leaving Certificate Music, students, in consultation with their school and parents/guardians should review the learning outcomes of this specification and the details of the assessment arrangements. They should carefully consider whether or not they can achieve the learning outcomes, or whether they may have a special educational need that may prevent them from demonstrating their achievement of the outcomes, even after

reasonable accommodations have been applied. It is essential that if a school believes that a student may not be in a position to engage fully with the assessment for certification arrangements, they contact the State Examinations Commission.

## Leaving Certificate Grading

Leaving Certificate Music will be graded using an 8-point grading scale. The highest grade is a Grade 1; the lowest grade is a Grade 8. The highest seven grades (1-7) divide the marks range 100% to 30% into seven equal grade bands 10% wide, with a grade 8 being awarded for percentage marks of less than 30%. The grades at Higher level and Ordinary level are distinguished by prefixing the grade with H or O respectively, giving H1-H8 at Higher level, and O1-O8 at Ordinary level.

**Table 5:** Leaving Certificate Grading

Grade	% marks
H1/O1	90 - 100
H2/O2	80 < 90
H3/O3	70 < 80
H4/O4	60 < 70
H5/O5	50 < 60
H6/O6	40 < 50
H7/O7	30 < 40
H8/O8	< 30

## Appendix 1: Action Verbs

Action verb	Students should be able to
Acknowledge (sources)	expressly recognise sources of information.
Adapt	make something suitable for new condition, use or purpose.
Apply	select and use information and/or knowledge and understanding to explain a given situation or real circumstances.
Appraise	evaluate, judge or consider text or a piece of work.
Appreciate	recognise the meaning, value or importance of.
Arrange	to adapt or rework an existing piece of music by altering features such as instrumentation, harmony, texture, structure, style, while still retaining the original identify of the piece of music.
Assess	judge, evaluate or estimate the nature, ability, quality or value of something.
Brief description/ explanation	give a short statement of only the main points.
Collaborate	work jointly with another, or others, on an activity or project.
Compare	give an account of the similarities and (or) differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Compose	write or create a work of art, especially music or poetry.
Create	bring something into existence; to cause something to happen as a result of one's actions.
Critique	state, giving reasons, the positive and negative aspects of, for example, an idea, artefact or artistic process.
Define	give the precise meaning of a word, phrase, concept.
Demonstrate	prove or make clear by reasoning or evidence, illustrating with examples or practical application.
Describe	give a detailed account of the main points of the topic, using words, diagrams and/or images.
Develop	bring to a later or more advanced stage; to elaborate or work out in detail.
Discuss	offer a considered, balanced review that includes a range of arguments, perspectives, factors or hypotheses, grounded in

	appropriate evidence.
Distinguish	make the differences between two or more concepts or items clear.
Evaluate (data/information)	collect and examine data to make judgments and appraisals; describe how evidence supports or does not support a conclusion in an inquiry or investigation; identify the limitations of data in conclusions; make judgments about the ideas, solutions or methods.
Evaluate (ethical judgement)	collect and examine evidence to make judgments and appraisals; describe how evidence supports or does not support a judgement; identify the limitations of evidence in conclusions; make judgments about the ideas, solutions or methods.
Examine	look closely at arguments, data, information and/or stories in order to uncover origins, assumptions, perspectives, trends and/or relationships.
Explain	give a detailed account supported by reasons or causes.
Experiment	to try and test, in order to discover something new or to prove something.
Explore	systematically look into something closely; to scrutinize or probe.
Identify	recognise patterns, facts, or details; provide an answer from a number of possibilities; recognise and state briefly a distinguishing fact or feature.
Illustrate	use drawings or examples to describe something.
Improvise	create and perform music spontaneously or without prior preparation; to produce or make something from whatever is available.
Indicate	to point out or point to; to direct attention to.
Interpret (data)	use knowledge and understanding to recognise trends and draw conclusions from given information.
Interpret (non-data)	express ideas about the intended meaning of.
Investigate	observe, study or examine in detail in order to establish facts, and reach new insights and/or conclusions.
Justify	give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.
Outline	give the main points, restricting to essential pieces of information.

Perform	to carry out or execute a practical task, skill, or process to demonstrate understanding.
Play back	to reproduce or perform a piece of music accurately, using an instrument, voice, or digital technology.
Present	to bring, offer or give in a formal way; to bring before or introduce to a public forum.
Propose	offer or suggest for consideration, acceptance or action.
Provide	provide data, work or documentation that support inferences or conclusions.
Recognise (data/information)	identify facts, characteristics or concepts that are critical (relevant/appropriate) to the understanding of a situation, event, process or phenomenon.
Reflect	give thoughtful consideration to actions, experiences, values and learning in order to gain new insights and make meaning.
Refine	to improve by inserting finer distinctions or musical elements.
Rehearse	practice a play, piece of music, or other work for later public performance.
Research	inquire specifically, through collecting, organising and analysing evidence in order to draw conclusions.
Respond	react or reply to something, typically in speech, writing, or action.
Suggest	propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer.
Summarise	state briefly the main points of information.
Transcribe	put thoughts, speech, data, into written or printed form; write out what is heard into characters or sentences.
Understand	have and apply a well-organised body of knowledge.
Use	apply knowledge, skills or rules to put them into practice.
Verify	give evidence to support the truth of a statement.



## Appendix 2: Glossary of Terms

Term	Interpretation
Aural perception	Involves the ability to interpret and understand based on what can be heard.
Canon	A contrapuntal composition in which a melody is imitated exactly by one or more parts at a fixed melodic and time interval.
Chord progression	A series of chords sounding one after another.
Chorus	A processing effect that creates an illusion of multiple instruments or voices playing or singing in unison by duplicating a sound.
Compositional devices	Techniques, methods or tools used by a composer to create and shape their music
Compression	A processing effect used in mixing or recording to control and reduce the dynamic range of the music.
Countermelody	A secondary melodic line that complements the main melody in a piece of music.
Culture	The ideas, customs, practices, values and social behaviour of a particular people or society.
Delay	A processing effect used to create echoes or repetitions of sound.
Descant	A higher, independent melody sung or played above the main melody, used particularly in vocal and choral music.
Distortion	Change in the form of an electrical signal or sound wave during processing; alter the sound of amplified electric music instruments and most commonly associated with the electric guitar.
Effect Automation	The process of controlling changes in audio effects within a digital audio workstation (DAW).
Elements	Pulse, duration, tempo, pitch, dynamics, timbre, texture, structure, style, tonality and instrumentation.
Equalisation (EQ)	The process of adjusting the balance of different frequency ranges in a sound. Used in recording, mixing, and live sound to enhance clarity, remove unwanted noise etc.
Expressive techniques	The ways performers and composers shape sound to convey emotion, mood, and character in music.

Feedback	A high-pitched sound which results when a microphone or instrument picks up its own amplified output and re-amplifies it.
Imitation	The repetition of a musical idea or motif in a different voice or part, creating texture.
Improvisation	Spontaneous musical creation, often based on an existing melodic, rhythmic or harmonic fragment.
Leitmotif	A short, recurring musical idea—such as a melody, rhythm, or harmony—associated with a particular character, place, emotion, or concept in a piece of music, especially in opera, film scores, and programmatic works.
Live musical performance	A musical performance in real time at a physical venue.
Loop	A short section of music that is repeated continuously. It can be a rhythmic, melodic or harmonic. Commonly used in digital and electronic music to build structure and texture.
Media	The various platforms and formats where music is used purposefully to enhance storytelling, narrative, atmosphere, mood or meaning. Media includes film, audio and audio-visual, musical theatre, video games and incidental music.
Modulation	The process of changing from one key to another within a piece of music.
Motif	A dominant of recurring idea in a piece of music.
Ostinato	A repeated pattern that can be rhythmic, melodic or harmonic and that is maintained continually throughout a piece of music.
Panning	A processing effect which adds width to the music by spreading the sound across the left, right, or centre of the speakers.
Processing effects	A series of mechanical or technological operations on a recording process that modifies the original sound inputted.
Reverb	A processing effect where the sound produced by an amplified musical instrument is made to reverberate; an echo effect used to recreate the natural effects of room reverberation.
Sequence	A melodic, rhythmic or harmonic motif or phrase which is repeated at a higher or lower pitch.
Sound source	The means by which a sound is produced (e.g. on an instrument, by using the voice, an environmental object, an electronic device).
Stimulus	Something that inspires students to create a musical idea; a stimulus can, for example, come from a work of art, a mood, an

	event, a movie clip, a personal experience, a piece of music, words or literature.
Style	The manner in which music is organised in relation to particular conventions; it often relates to a particular historical period, genre, performer or composer.
Symbolism	The use of musical elements to represent ideas, emotions, characters, or themes.
Technical dexterity	The skill and control of a performer in executing the demands of their instrument or voice.
Texture	The 'density' of sound in a piece of music; this can range from thin (single line of melody) to thick (several layers of melodies, harmonies or timbres).
Timbre	The specific tone or sound quality of an instrument or voice, or a collection of instruments and voice.
Visual perception	Involves the ability to interpret and understand based on what can be seen.
Word painting	When the music reflects the literal meaning of the lyrics (e.g. ascending notes to represent "rising" or dissonance to convey "pain.").
Word setting	The way in which lyrics or text are matched to music in vocal compositions.

