

# Decisions on Conditions and guidance for AS and A level music technology



In December 2015 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance we proposed to put in place for new AS and A levels in music technology.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions, requirements and guidance which would apply to all new AS and A levels in these subjects.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses alongside this document.<sup>1</sup>

## AS and A level music technology

### Compliance with content requirements

We proposed that all reformed AS and A levels in music technology should comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,<sup>2</sup> and with our assessment objectives.

All the respondents who commented on this proposal supported it, noting that it would help ensure comparability between different specifications. No respondents raised any concerns with this aspect of our proposals.

We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals in this area.

### Non-exam assessment

We have previously confirmed that reformed AS and A levels in music technology will be assessed through a combination of 60 per cent exams, and 40 per cent non-exam assessment.

In our consultation, we proposed that:

- the non-exam assessment should comprise a two tasks:

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-music-technology>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-music-technology>

- one (weighted at 20 per cent of total marks) covering skills related to production of recordings, assessing only assessment objective AO1 (Recording Assessment); and
- one (weighted at 20 per cent of total marks) covering skills related to creating technology-based compositions, assessing only assessment objective AO2 (Composition assessment);
- for the recording task, students are required to produce a recording of at least two minutes at AS, and at least three minutes at A level;
- for the composition task, students are required to produce a technology-based composition of at least three minutes at AS, and four minutes at A level;
- for both the recording and composition tasks, students must also produce whatever other evidence is specified by the exam board to enable it to assess how well the student has met the assessment criteria, but that Ofqual should not specify what form this additional evidence must take;
- exam boards must specify conditions under which the assessments must be taken to ensure the evidence generated by the student can be authenticated;
- the briefs or tasks for each non-exam assessment are set by the exam board and designed in a way which facilitates comparability of non-exam assessments (including over time), and which minimises predictability;
- the briefs or tasks for each non-exam assessment are released no earlier than 1 September in the academic year when exams will be taken;
- non-exam assessments should be marked by the exam board.

Most respondents supported our approach, but:

- two respondents felt that the minimum durations we proposed for the Composition assessment were too long and would not be appropriate for students at this level. These respondents proposed a shorter minimum duration;
- three respondents felt that the release date for the recording assessment was too late and would pose logistical problems for centres delivering these assessments. They instead proposed an earlier release date of June in the year before the qualification is due to be awarded.

We agree with the comments made about the minimum duration for the composition assessment and the release date for the recording assessment. We have amended our requirements so that:

- for the composition task, students are required to produce a technology-based composition of at least two and a half minutes at AS level and three minutes at A level;
- the release date for the recording task is 1 June in the calendar year before the year in which the qualification is to be awarded.

We have adopted all our other non-exam assessment proposals unchanged.

### **Guidance**

We proposed to introduce guidance in relation to the recording assessment, setting out the number of instrumental parts that should be recorded. We proposed that:

- recordings should include at least four instruments and/or sounds requiring different recording techniques at AS level, and at least six at A level.

Most respondents supported our approach, but:

- one respondent commented that setting minimum requirements could make accurate assessment difficult;
- one believed that the guidance should be more detailed.

Our view remains that providing guidance on the complexity of the recording assessment is appropriate to help ensure a consistent level of demand between specifications. It is our view that it is for exam boards offering the qualification to provide any additional detail that they believe is necessary. We propose to implement this guidance as consulted on.

We also proposed guidance clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives.

One respondent, whilst not commenting specifically about the proposed guidance, said that guidance should be provided on the evidence that should be submitted to exam boards for the non-exam assessment. Our proposed conditions require exam boards to specify what evidence they require and it is therefore for exam boards to provide any additional information about the evidence for their specification.

There were no further comments on this guidance and we remain of the view that is appropriate. We have decided to adopt it in full.

### **Next steps**

We have published the following documents which formally introduce our rules and guidance for AS and A level music technology:

- *GCE Subject Level Conditions for Music Technology*<sup>3</sup>
- *GCE Subject Level Guidance for Music Technology*<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-music-technology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-music-technology)

<sup>4</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-guidance-for-music-technology](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-guidance-for-music-technology)