

Your guide to the changes for 2021

Following an [Ofqual consultation](#), we have made changes to a number of our qualifications.

The changes are designed to reduce the pressure on teachers and students in the 2020/21 academic year, and to safeguard against ongoing public health concerns.

Please use the [specification on our website](#) alongside this document which shows how our qualifications will differ in summer 2021.

Overview of changes for A Level Music (H543)

Ofqual have confirmed that students taking A Level Music in summer 2021 will have a reduction in NEA requirements for performing and composing.

- Only one performance piece is required (instead of two) for Performing A (Component 01) and Section 1 of Performing B (Component 02) so long as the minimum duration is met
- The externally set brief has been removed from both Composing Components (03 & 04)
- The minimum durations will be reduced for both performance and composition
- We are extending the set assessment window for the recording of all performances to provide more flexibility. We will communicate the updated assessment window to centres as soon as possible
- There will be no change to the written paper Listening and Appraising.

A Level Music (H543) for academic year 2020/21

Students must complete Components: 01, 03, and 05 or 02, 04 and 05.

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<p>Recital - minimum of one piece, of 2.5 minutes</p> <p>Choice of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solo piece(s) on one or more instruments or voice • ensemble performance (including accompanying) • realisation using music technology 	<p>Performing A (01)</p> <p><i>Recital</i></p> <p><i>Non-exam assessment – externally assessed via audio-visual recording</i></p>	<p>25% of total A Level</p>
<p>Recital – minimum of two contrasting pieces of 3.5 minutes</p> <p>Choice of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • solo piece(s) on one or more instrument or voice • ensemble performance (including accompanying) • realisation using music technology <p>Section 1: Free Choice</p> <p>Section 2 (focussed study)</p>	<p>Performing B (02)</p> <p><i>Recital</i></p> <p><i>Non-exam assessment – externally assessed via audio-visual recording</i></p>	<p>35% of total A Level</p>

Content Overview	Assessment Overview	
<p>Compositions with a combined duration of at least 4 minutes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One to a brief written by the learner Three short technical exercises 	<p>Composing A (03)</p> <p><i>Compositions accompanied by a score, lead sheet or written description</i></p> <p><i>Non-exam assessment – externally assessed via audio recordings</i></p>	<p>35% of total A Level</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Composition with a duration of at least 2 minutes One composition to a brief written by the learner 	<p>Composing B (04)</p> <p><i>Composition accompanied by a score, lead sheet or written description</i></p> <p><i>Non-exam assessment – externally assessed via audio recordings</i></p>	<p>25% of total A Level</p>
<p>Listening and appraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysing and evaluating music Familiar and unfamiliar pieces Prescribed works Questions based on aural extracts 	<p>Listening and appraising (05)</p> <p><i>Written exam including aural extracts</i></p> <p><i>2 hour and 30 minutes written exam</i></p>	<p>40% of total A Level</p>

All NEA will continue to be externally assessed.

There will be no change to form of assessment and minimal changes to the wording of the marking criteria – please continue to refer to the criteria on the website and guidance in the main specification.

What has changed – Specification	Detail
<p>Performing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in minimum number of pieces Reduction in minimum duration 	<p>Performing A:</p> <p>The minimum requirement is the performance of one piece (instead of two). The minimum duration is reduced to 2.5 minutes.</p> <p>Performing B:</p> <p>Section 1 (free choice): the minimum requirement is the performance of one piece (instead of two).</p> <p>Section 2 (focussed study): no change to the requirements.</p> <p>The combined minimum duration is reduced to 3.5 minutes.</p> <p>Learners must still meet these reduced minimum durations. Learners may still perform multiple pieces to meet the minimum performance duration. (You are still able to submit performances that are longer than the stated minimum duration) The score/lead sheet must still be submitted with the recording.</p>
<p>Composing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of composition to OCR-set brief Reduction in minimum duration 	<p>Composing A:</p> <p>Section 1 (composition to OCR-set brief): this section has been removed.</p> <p>Section 2 (composition to learner-set brief): no change.</p> <p>Section 3 (technical exercises): no change.</p> <p>The combined minimum duration of the compositions has been reduced to 4 minutes.</p> <p>Composing B:</p> <p>Section 1 (composition to OCR-set brief): this section has been removed.</p> <p>Section 2 (composition to learner-set brief): no change.</p> <p>The minimum duration of the composition has been reduced to 2 minutes.</p>

What has changed – Specification	Detail
	<p>Learners must still meet these reduced minimum durations.</p> <p>The score/lead sheets must still be submitted with the recording.</p>

What has changed - Forms	Detail
Candidate coversheets for Performing and Composing	The candidate coversheets for Performing and Composing will be updated to reflect the changes.

Support

OCR's team of expert Subject Advisors has created videos, webinars, and other resources to guide you through these changes and help you prepare your students for their exams in summer 2021.

These resources can be found [here](#).

Contact Us

If you would like to contact us, you can do so at:

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