

A young woman wearing a black hijab and a school uniform (black sweater over a white collared shirt and a blue and white striped tie) is seated at a keyboard, smiling as she plays. A woman in a teal turtleneck sweater stands behind her, also smiling. The background shows a music room with a guitar on a shelf and orange geometric wall decorations.

# GCSE MUSIC

## YOUR GUIDE TO SWITCHING TO EDUQAS

[EDUQAS.CO.UK/MUSIC](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/music)

# WHY SWITCH TO EDUQAS FOR GCSE MUSIC?

Eduqas is the most popular GCSE Music course in England. It focuses on studying the elements of music, and their application to performing, composing, and appraising. Teachers are encouraged to integrate the three activities to deepen understanding, and to make lessons engaging.

With only two set works, there will always be familiar extracts in the listening exam, but teachers are free to choose the repertoire they use for other listening activities, allowing learners to develop their understanding of musical concepts and to apply these to all pieces they hear, rather than rote learning facts about a limited repertoire. This prepares them for future study, as well as creating well-rounded musicians.

Repertoire for performing can be chosen to suit the candidate, with the standard level of difficulty being equivalent to Grade 3, and again the assessment is based in the elements of music, with all pieces recorded separately in the year of assessment.

Composing activities provide another opportunity to reinforce the use and understanding of the elements of music. Two compositions are required, one to a set brief and one free, so learners can work to their strengths and personal tastes.



## More reasons to choose Eduqas

- Accessible, reliable assessment
- Easy access to subject expert support
- Free high-quality teaching resources
- Expert-led training opportunities



# ALL THE SUPPORT YOU NEED TO TEACH WITH CONFIDENCE

## Easy access to subject experts

Our subject experts are just an email or call away. Eduqas teachers can also access free advice and guidance both online or in-person from our Regional Support Team.

## Free high-quality teaching resources

Our free online teaching resources are designed by an expert team to help guide teachers and learners through our specifications, and include:

- Exam Walkthroughs
- Knowledge Organisers
- Analyses of the set works
- Classroom performance packs of the set works
- Composing activities linked to the set works

## Expert-led training opportunities

Our comprehensive programme includes both free online exam feedback sessions and paid face-to-face training opportunities.

## Comprehensive Assessment Feedback

Eduqas centres can access our free post-exam [Assessment Feedback Package](#), including access to marked scripts, Principal Examiner reports and online feedback sessions.

[Access to our nationwide network of experienced Eduqas Music teachers.](#)

# SUMMARY OF ASSESSMENT

## Component 1: Performing (30% of the qualification )

A minimum of two pieces, one of which must be an ensemble performance of at least one minute duration. The other piece(s) may be either solo and/or ensemble. One of the pieces performed must link to an area of study of the learner's choice.

- Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated
- Total duration of performances: 4-6 minutes (penalties applied to under time performance submissions.)
- All performances must be recorded separately, in the presence of the teacher, during the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken

## Component 2: Composing (30% of the qualification )

Two compositions, one of which must be in response to a brief set by WJEC. Learners will choose one brief from a choice of four, each one linked to a different area of study. The briefs will be released during the first week of September in the academic year in which the assessment is to be taken. The second composition is a free composition for which learners set their own brief.

- Non-exam assessment: internally assessed, externally moderated
- Total duration of compositions: 3-6 minutes (recommended)

## Component 3: Appraising (40% of the qualification)

This component is assessed via a listening examination.

Eight questions in total, two on each of the four areas of study.

- Area of study 1: Musical Forms and Devices
- Area of study 2: Music for Ensemble
- Area of study 3: Film Music
- Area of study 4: Popular Music

Assessment is based on the understanding of the elements of music, the context and the language of music.

Two of the eight questions are based on extracts set by WJEC.

- Written listening examination: 1 hour 15 minutes (approximately)
- All questions refer to audio extracts.

# HOW TO SWITCH TO EDUQAS

Switching to Eduqas is a straightforward, three-step process:

1

## Register your interest in teaching with Eduqas

Visit [eduqas.co.uk/switch](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/switch) and complete the Register Your Interest form. This helps us better support you through the switching process.

2

## Ask your Exams Officer if your centre is registered with Eduqas

If not, they will need to contact us at [centres@wjec.co.uk](mailto:centres@wjec.co.uk) to register. Once your centre is registered, your Exams Officer can provide you with access to our Portal, which you will need to complete key processes and access exclusive resources.

3

## Visit your qualification page for everything you need to get started

You can find this by going to [eduqas.co.uk/qualifications](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications) and searching for your subject. Here you'll find links to everything you need to start teaching with Eduqas:

- Your specification
- Guidance for teaching
- Contact details for your Subject Officer
- Free digital teaching resources
- Training opportunities
- Key dates for your qualification
- Past Papers and Mark Schemes

Now you're ready to start teaching with Eduqas – but if you need more guidance, contact our Support Team on [hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk](mailto:hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk), or discover training opportunities at [eduqas.co.uk/professionallearning](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/professionallearning).

# A GUIDE TO SWITCHING BOARDS

Whichever board you are swapping from, the NEA requirements will be similar. The regulators require that there is an ensemble performance of at least a minute, and a total submission of at least four minutes for performing; and that two compositions are submitted, one to a brief and one free. All exam boards should require the submission of a score for each piece performed.

There are also parts of the Appraising Component which will be similar in terms of the content as well as the skills of analysis and aural discrimination. Three quarters of the Eduqas exam is based on unfamiliar listening, with questions focusing mostly on the elements of music, so any study of other set works will have set down a useful foundation for this. Again, the regulators have directed the exam boards towards specific assessment types, including dictation, and a balance of longer and shorter responses.

## If you are switching from Edexcel

All study of set works will be relevant to the Eduqas specification, in particular the following:

- J S Bach: 3rd Movement from Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D major
- L van Beethoven: 1st Movement from Piano Sonata no. 8 in C minor 'Pathétique'
- H Purcell: Music for a While (Links to AoS 1)
- S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from the album of the cast recording of Wicked) (Links to AoS 2)
- J Williams: Main title/rebel blockade runner (from the soundtrack to Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope) (Links to AoS 3)
- Queen: Killer Queen (from the album Sheer Heart Attack) (Links to AoS 4)

## If you are switching from OCR

- The Concerto through time will support Eduqas AoS 1
- Film Music links to Eduqas AoS 3.
- Conventions of pop links to Eduqas AoS 4.

# A GUIDE TO SWITCHING BOARDS

## If you are switching from AQA

- Beethoven: Symphony No.1 , Movement 1: Adagio molto – Allegro con brio (Links to AoS 1)
- Queen – the following three tracks: Bohemian Rhapsody, The Seven Seas of Rhye, Love of my Life (Links to AoS 4)
- Esperanza Spalding – the following three tracks: I Know You Know, Little Fly, I Adore You (Links to AoS 4)

All other music you have used in the classroom will also support general aural recognition of elements.

How do we compare with other boards?

**Assessment Comparison Tool** included at the end of this guide

Thinking about switching?  
[eduqas.co.uk/switch](https://eduqas.co.uk/switch)



# OUR FREE ONLINE RESOURCES



## Teacher Guidance

On the main [Eduqas Music page](#) there are a number of guidance documents for teachers which cover the important points regarding how to prepare and submit NEA and how to conduct the examination, as well as amplifications of the NEA criteria and guidance for choosing performance repertoire.

These documents provide additional clarity on assessment expectations, support consistent marking, and help teachers select appropriate material so learners can effectively demonstrate their musical skills.

## Exam and NEA Walkthroughs

The GCSE Exam and NEA walkthroughs contain advice for learners from the Principal Moderators (NEA) and the Principal Examiner.

They address the interpretation of the NEA assessment criteria, and the types of response which are appropriate to different exam questions, along with common pitfalls to avoid.





## Resources linked to the set works

For each set work there is a package of resources including an analysis written by the Principal Examiner who sets the questions, an annotated score or lead sheet, a classroom performance arrangement, and linked composing activities.

These resources help embed the features found within the pieces and allow learners to use them as a stimulus for their own work.

[Explore our full range of resources:](http://www.eduqas.co.uk/resources)  
[www.eduqas.co.uk/resources](http://www.eduqas.co.uk/resources)



# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Eduqas offers a comprehensive range of professional learning opportunities to help you teach with confidence.

Our expert-led training programme provides all the support you need to enhance your teaching and successfully deliver our qualifications.

## Assessment Feedback Package

Our Assessment Feedback Package is an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how assessments are marked or moderated.

This integrated suite of resources and training includes:

- Free access to Principal Examiner reports
- Free Online Assessment Feedback sessions
- Paid face-to-face training events
- Free access to scripts

Learn more: [www.eduqas.co.uk/professionallearning](https://www.eduqas.co.uk/professionallearning)



# WHAT TEACHERS SAY ABOUT EDUQAS



We found the level of support provided by Eduqas to be very good. The quick responses to our queries are always appreciated, and for the online resources available the downloadable knowledge organisers are a great help.

**Patricia Blanch**  
**Calthorpe Park School**

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Our learners have responded well to having a 'fresh' new exam, and feedback from staff has been good too. We've found assessment to be consistent, and the free resources are useful.

**Darren Coogan**  
**Cambridge Regional College**

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After moving to Eduqas there was an immediate improvement in outcomes, and our attendance rose to 92%, the highest it's ever been, compared to often being in the 80s before.

**Mark Bellworthy**  
**Harlow College**

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The support from Eduqas has been excellent. Their staff are easily accessible and provide logical responses, and we've benefitted a lot from the resources available, such as past papers, mark schemes and examiner reports.

**Ali Wareham**  
**Peter Symonds College**

# ACCESSING SUPPORT

Our **Regional Support Team** operates across the UK, and is available to help you teach Eduqas qualifications with confidence.

As an Eduqas teacher, you can access their support for free online or in-person at a time and place that suits you.

Each member of the team is an experienced former teacher who understands the challenges of the classroom.

They can provide you with all the support you need to help your learners succeed, including:

- help switching to Eduqas
- expert insight into your specification
- answers to your questions on assessment
- guidance on accessing our free digital resources, and more.

Contact the team:  
[hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk](mailto:hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk)

# MEET YOUR GCSE MUSIC REP



## Hayley Sheard

Hayley Sheard has over 15 years of teaching experience at a large Sixth Form college, where she also worked as Head of Department. She has examined, moderated and delivered CPD, and has also served as a Subject Advisor at Eduqas.

Hayley has supported centres with a wide range of qualifications in her role as an Eduqas Regional Representative:

“My work involves helping teachers transition to Eduqas and supporting centres as they deliver our specifications in both face to face and online meetings.

The most fulfilling part of the role is hearing that my guidance has helped teachers feel confident in preparing learners for assessment.

If I had to sum up what makes Eduqas special, it is the supportive team and the commitment to giving teachers the resources they need to help learners achieve.”

Thinking of switching? Contact Hayley at [hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk](mailto:hereforyou@eduqas.co.uk) or [request an informal online chat through our booking page](#).

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A photograph of a music classroom. In the foreground, a young woman wearing a black hijab and a school uniform (black sweater over a white collared shirt and blue tie) is smiling as she plays a black digital keyboard. A female teacher in a teal turtleneck sweater stands behind her, smiling and looking at the student's hands. In the background, another student with long blonde hair is playing a keyboard, and another student in a black hijab is partially visible. The room has several guitars hanging on the wall and a large acoustic guitar on a shelf to the left.

# GCSE MUSIC

ASSESSMENT COMPARISON TOOL

Performing		Composing	Appraising
Eduqas GCSE		Eduqas GCSE	
Grade 3 standard level. No compulsory solo. Each piece can be recorded on separate occasions. Candidates must perform an ensemble lasting at least one minute, and as many other solo or ensemble performances as needed to make up the 4 minute minimum time. Online submission.	2 compositions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in response to a brief</li> <li>• 1 free composition</li> </ul> Online submission. Compositions can be completed with or without supervision but must be monitored at least three times.	Listening exam Only 2 set works Questions assess understanding of the elements of music, use of musical language and its context, and are based on what the learner can hear in the music, rather than what they have memorised. Both set works will always feature, giving candidates reassurance. 1 question will include a dictation exercise. 1 longer answer question.	
AQA GCSE		AQA GCSE	
Grade 5 standard required to score full marks. Must be just 1 solo and 1 ensemble totalling 4 minutes minimum.	2 compositions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in response to a brief</li> <li>• 1 free composition</li> </ul> Teacher must authenticate the work.	Listening exam. Required to study 4 areas of study (one must be WCT); 8 set works in total.  Examination based around two sections with some short answer questions, dictation and longer answer questions.	
OCR GCSE		OCR GCSE	
Performing and composing are each assessed across two components. Levels of difficulty are not linked to graded exam standards. Level of difficulty is calculated as the lowest level piece and applied to the whole submission. No compulsory solo. 2 compositions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in response to a brief</li> <li>• 1 free composition</li> </ul> Compositions must be completed under controlled conditions.		Listening exam. No set works but suggested repertoire for study. Examination based around musical elements, context and language. Includes dictation, longer and shorter answer questions.	
Edexcel GCSE		Edexcel GCSE	
Grade 4 standard level. Must include 1 solo and 1 ensemble.	2 compositions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 in response to a brief</li> <li>• 1 free composition</li> </ul> Compositions must be completed under controlled conditions	Listening exam. Required to explore 4 areas of study; 8 set works in total. Two sections. Section A: Six questions related to six of the eight set works. One short melody/rhythm completion exercise. One question on an unfamiliar piece. Section B: One comparison and/or evaluation question on the musical elements.	

# ASSESSMENT COMPARISON TOOL

Helping You Make the Switch: Comparing Set Works Between Specifications

Exam Board	Area of Study	Set Works / Notes
<b>Eduqas GCSE</b>	Musical Forms and Devices (Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910)	J S Bach: Badinerie from Suite No. 2 in B minor
	Music for Ensemble	Suggested styles, no set works
	Film Music	Suggested styles, no set works
	Popular Music	Toto: Africa (released 1982)
<b>AQA GCSE</b>	Western Classical Tradition 1650-1910	Mozart: Clarinet Concerto in A, K622, movt. 3
	Popular Music	Little Shop of Horrors (1982 off-Broadway version): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prologue/Little Shop of Horrors (Overture)</li> <li>• Musnik and Son</li> <li>• Feed Me</li> </ul>
	Traditional Music	Paul Simon - Graceland album: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Graceland</li> <li>• Diamonds on the Soles of Her Shoes</li> <li>• You Can Call Me Al</li> </ul>
	Western Classical Tradition since 1910	Orchestral music of Copland; British music of Arnold, Britten, Maxwell-Davies and Tavener; orchestral music of Zoltán Kodály and Béla Bartók; minimalist music of John Adams, Steve Reich and Terry Riley.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoltán Kodály: Battle and Defeat of Napoleon and Intermezzo from Háry János</li> </ul>



Exam Board	Area of Study	Set Works / Notes
<b>OCR GCSE</b>	My Instrument	Suggested repertoire, no set works. Specification notes teachers are free to choose composers and styles.
	The Concerto Through Time	
	Rhythms of the World	
	Film Music	
<b>Edexcel GCSE</b>	Instrumental Music 1700–1820	J S Bach: 3rd Movement from Brandenburg Concerto No. 5 in D major L van Beethoven: 1st Movement from Piano Sonata No. 8 in C minor 'Pathétique'
	Vocal Music	H Purcell: Music for a While Queen: Killer Queen (from Sheer Heart Attack)
	Music for Stage and Screen	S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from Wicked) J Williams: Main Title / Rebel Blockade Runner (Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope)
	Fusions	Afro Celt Sound System: Release (Volume 2: Release) Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio