

Summer Newsletter 2026 - Eduqas Music

Welcome back to the new term. I hope all teachers and students have had the chance to rest over the Easter break in preparation for the summer term and the exam season, and the other school events such as concerts, shows and prom.

This newsletter is a quick round-up and a few reminders for you, including a repeat of the information already published regarding AS and A Level set works.

Key dates:

GCE performing visits began – **2nd March**

GCSE Performing and Composing NEA marks and sample submission deadline – **5th May**

AS exam – **Wednesday 13th May, pm**

AS and A Level Composing submission deadline – **15th May**

GCSE exam – **Friday 5th June, pm**

A Level exam – **Monday 8th June, pm**

AS and A level results day – **13th August**

GCSE results day – **20th August**

General news

Please remember that there is a lot of information available on the [Eduqas Music website](#) including answers to frequently asked GCSE questions, everything you need for NEA submission (including the 2026 guide to the process), how to administer extra time, and a guide to the administration of the whole qualification, which may be useful for your exams officers too. We love receiving your emails and do our best to respond as quickly as we can, but sometimes you may be able to find the information you need yourself, and avoid any delays.

CPD

We are just about to start the planning for our 2026-7 CPD events, so if there is anything you feel we need to cover, please feel free to contact us and let us know via music@eduqas.co.uk

Circulars

Please be aware that circulars are not “sent out” to anyone. They are uploaded to Portal around the 20th of each month. Centre staff should check each month to ensure that no important information is missed.

GCSE

In line with other JCQ awarding organisations, from summer 2026 we will increase the initial sample size collected from centres as per the following table.

Number of candidates entered for the NEA component	Number of candidates included in the NEA sample
Up to 15	All
16-100	15
101-200	20
Over 200	25

The sample will be generated electronically when you submit your marks on Portal.

There is no change to the moderation process; collecting a slightly larger sample on the NEA submission deadline date means that we are less likely to contact you later during the moderation period to request additional samples. However, we do still reserve the right to request the whole cohort should we deem it necessary. Therefore, centres must ensure that all candidate work and relevant NEA forms are stored securely in the centre.

Remember that the samples are generated separately for Components 1 and 2, so they may not be the same.

The deadline remains 5th May every year, regardless of bank holidays, weekends etc. We do not expect you to work outside school hours, and as such you are able to start submitting marks and uploading work from 10th March.

This information was also communicated on Eduqas Circular 9.

Please remember that all NEA work must be accompanied by a signed declaration (it is part of the marksheet) and that work cannot be accepted without the signatures of the teacher and the candidate. Typed signatures are acceptable.

Component 1 Performing

We receive many requests for confirmation of levels of difficulty and ensemble requirements. You are welcome to send these to music@eduqas.co.uk, but please review the guidance in Appendix A of the [specification](#) first (for Levels of Difficulty) and the [ensemble guidance](#) and [flowchart](#) on the website before you send anything and include in your email what you consider to be the correct LoD, with a justification. The Principal Moderator will confirm or correct this for you. This generally

takes a few days, but as we approach submission time the volume of requests increases, so we cannot guarantee you will receive a response immediately. You must include a score **as an attachment** with every request, not a link, and please do not attach any recordings of candidates, as we are not permitted to listen to these or provide any feedback ahead of the actual submission.

There was a summary of the requirements for Component 1 included in the [January newsletter](#), so if you are unsure, please check there, or refer to the [GCSE NEA Processes for 2026](#), which is available on the website. The Component 1 [mark sheet](#) and the form for [timing penalties](#) are also both available on the website. Please remember that a score is required for every performance – we do not accept “reference recordings” as this is not a fair way to assess. Files should be uploaded as separate items – we do not accept Zip files for any music qualifications. Finally, please remember there is an [amplification of the criteria](#) available on the website to assist you when you are marking candidates’ work.

Component 2 Composing

We receive many emails with questions regarding the set briefs and how they should be interpreted. The simplest way to explain is to say that if there is a specific genre, instrumental combination or structure given then the candidate must follow that to achieve well under the “response to a brief” part of the criteria. If there is no genre given, then any style can be used. If there is no stated instrument/voice requirement, then any combination may be used.

Candidates must not use AI in the creation of any of the music, but may use lyrics from AI, other songs, poems etc. Anything non-original must be credited in the log, and marks cannot be awarded for this material. Candidates do not have to perform their own compositions – output from software is perfectly acceptable. If other people are involved in the performance, then we will need to know how they knew exactly what to do to realise the candidate’s intentions. The easiest way to show this is by providing a full score, but if this is not possible, and annotated screenshots are to be submitted instead, a guide track recording of the candidate performing the line can be submitted too as part of the authentication.

Again, there is an [amplification of the criteria](#) for this component on the website, along with the [log/marksheet document](#) and further guidance within the [NEA upload process](#) document.

Component 3 Appraising

There is still no plan to change to the set works for this Component. Past papers, audio files and marking schemes are available to download from Portal. There is also guidance in the Principal’s Report which is published to the website each year. If you have candidates entitled to extra time, please see [this document](#) for further guidance. If you have any other access arrangements or special consideration queries, please email the music team via music@eduqas.co.uk.

GCE AS and A Level

Component 1 Performing

Centres will mostly have had their examiner visits for this year at the point this newsletter is published. We are always happy to receive feedback concerning the visits, so please do send any comments to us at music@eduqas.co.uk.

It may be a good idea to make a note in your diary now to remind you to check for the September circular for the link to the form to submit your impossible dates for 2027.

Remember that there is no longer any requirement for any of the pieces performed to be linked to areas of study.

Component 2 Composing

We also receive queries regarding the interpretation of the set briefs for AS and A Level. Please remember that all of the instructions within the brief must be followed (for example if there is a given structure, instrumentation etc.) and at these levels the composition to a brief must demonstrate an understanding of the styles and conventions of the Western Classical Tradition. There is some guidance within Appendix B of the [specification](#) to help with this.

As usual, centres will be provided with a Surpass code to upload the work of each candidate. This component is externally assessed, so you are not required to submit any marks, but there is an [amplification of the criteria](#) on the website which matches with the guidance given to the examining team. The deadline is unchanged – it is always 15th May, regardless of weekends etc. As with GCSE, we do not expect you to work outside school hours, and as such you are able to start uploading work in advance of the deadline.

There was a summary of the requirements for Component 2 in the [January newsletter](#), which you may wish to refer back to. Candidates may not use AI for any of the music creation but can use it for producing lyrics. Any non-original material must be listed in the log, and this will not receive credit. Logs must be signed by both the teacher and candidate. Typed signatures are acceptable. Log documents can be found on the [website](#), under NEA, where there is also a [Guide to the NEA Process](#).

Please remember also that since our specification update published earlier this year, candidates whose composing submissions do not meet the minimum time requirements will have their marks for this component capped at 1 mark below the maximum.

Component 3 Appraising

You will also be aware that the set works for Component 3 will be changing. The first examination of the new works will be in **Summer 2028**, for both AS and A Level. New resources for all pieces will be available on the [Eduqas Resources](#) website. Full details of the pieces are shown in this table:

Area of Study	Set work	ISBN Number
A - WCT	Haydn, Symphony 100 "Military" (AS – movements 1 and 2, A Level – all movements.)	Eulenburg score of the symphony by Haydn (ISBN 3–7957–6511–0)
A - WCT	Schubert, Symphony 5 (AS – movements 1 and 2, A Level – all movements.)	Eulenburg score of the Symphony No. 5 by Schubert (ISBN 978-3-7957-6560-6)
E – Into the Twentieth Century	Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano, Movement I: Poulenc (alternative movement from existing set work)	978-87598-0392-9
E – Into the Twentieth Century	Three Nocturnes, Number 2, Fetes: Debussy (alternative movement from existing set work)	978-3-7957-7181-2 This edition is now in the Public domain: Nocturnes (Debussy, Claude) - IMSLP
F – Into the Twenty-First Century	Concerto Grosso, Movement 2 – Errollyn Wallen	979-0-060-12910-0
F – Into the Twenty-First Century	Frieze, Movement 4 – Mark-Anthony Turnage	978-1-78454-037-1

Questions?

Please get in touch if you need to ask any questions. We are here to help.

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