Year 12 Music Summer Work

Edexcel A Level Music

A Level Music helps you develop as a performer, composer, and musical thinker. You'll explore a wide range of styles, from classical to film music and contemporary genres.

Task 1: Performance Preparation (Ongoing Task)

Choose and prepare a piece at **Grade 5/6 standard or above**

- Select 1–2 pieces you'd like to perform this year (solo or ensemble)
- Practise regularly (at least twice a week)
- Keep a **performance log** including:
    - Piece title & composer
    - Practice goals and reflections
    - Technical challenges
    - Links to musical elements (e.g. dynamics, articulation)

Extension: Record a performance at the end of summer and bring it to your teacher for feedback

Task 2: Composition Kick-Starter

Develop basic creative and harmony skills

- Compose a **16–24 bar melody** for an instrument or voice of your choice
    - Include phrasing, dynamics, and articulation
    - Add a simple chord progression underneath (I, IV, V, vi)
- Use MuseScore, Sibelius, or Noteflight for notation (or manuscript paper)
- Focus on a clear key and time signature

Extension: Try harmonising a short melody in four parts (start learning basic SATB rules)

Task 3: Set Work Listening Tasks

Familiarise yourself with the style and sound of set works

Listen to **one piece from each area of study** and complete a **listening journal** for each:

Overview of areas of study and set works

Area of study	Set works
Vocal Music	• J. S. Bach, Cantata, Ein feste Burg • Vaughan Williams, On Wenlock Edge
Instrumental Music	• Clara Wieck-Schumann, Piano Trio in G minor, Op. 17: movement 1 • Berlioz, Symphonie Fantastique
Music for Film	• Danny Elfman, Batman Returns • Bernard Herrmann, Psycho
Popular Music and Jazz	• Kate Bush, Hounds of Love • Beatles, Revolver • Courtney Pine, Back in the Day
Fusions	• Debussy, Estampes • Anoushka Shankar, Breathing Under Water
New Directions	• Kaija Saariaho, Petals for Violoncello and Live Electronics • Stravinsky, The Rite of Spring

For each:

- Composer and title
- Year and context
- Instruments used
- 3 musical features (e.g. melody, texture, harmony)
- Personal reflection: How does this piece make you feel? Why?

Task 4: Theory Top-Up

Brush up on music theory to ABRSM Grade 5 level

- Work through **Grade 5 Theory** topics:
    - Key signatures up to 6 sharps/flats
    - Chords and cadences (I, IV, V, vi)
    - Intervals and scales (major, minor)
    - Time signatures (simple and compound)
    - Transposition

Resources:

- Free online practice: www.musictheory.net