# Scheme of work: Pointers for success

Introduction

This resource provides pointers for success for the GCSE Music (8271) specification. It should be used alongside the two year scheme of work.

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## Vocal and Instrumental Performance

* Attend your instrumental/vocal lessons regularly.
* Talk to your teacher(s), listen to their advice.
* Don’t play pieces that are too difficult.
* Level of demand marks are out 6.
* Accuracy marks are out of 15 (more than double the demand marks) with 15 more for expression and interpretation.
* Don’t forget about the ensemble. It is worth as much as the solo.
* Keep an eye on the time. The combined total needs to be not less than four minutes and the ensemble must be at least one minute in length.
* Don’t add in extra repeats, or finish half-way through. Perform the piece as it was intended.
* Do start making recordings early and get feedback on how to improve from your teacher.

**Composition**

* Have a plan. This should include a clear structure such as ABA or verse/chorus format etc.
* Use your strengths; the instruments and music you know about.
* Show that you understand the elements you have chosen from the two different groups. Eg if you have chosen rhythm, change the rhythmic patterns in the different sections. Use a variety of note lengths.
* It is important to have a good sense of style. It’s alright to copy a style, but not alright to copy someone else’s idea.
* Do not use pre-recorded loops or automatic functions in the software. You have not created these and they will not gain you any marks.
* If you need a drum kit groove, you must programme it yourself. Explain in the programme notes how you have done this.
* If you decide to copy and paste a section, make sure you add in some variety to hold the listener’s attention.
* Don’t forget to listen to every edit and save your changes.
* You need to keep an eye on the time. Together the two compositions must be at least three minutes.
* Remember the end goal is an audio recording, a guide/score/annotation and programme notes.

**DJing Performance**

* Attend your instrumental lessons regularly.
* Talk to your teacher(s), listen to their advice.
* Know which DJing skills and sound sources you have used.
* You need a minimum of two tracks.
* Write a timeline. Add your tracks, DJing skills (basic, intermediate and/or advanced) and sound sources.
* Level of demand marks are out 6.
* Accuracy marks are out of 15 (more than double the demand marks) with 15 more for expression and interpretation.
* Don’t forget about the ensemble. It is worth as much as the solo.
* For your ensemble you can DJ with another DJer and/or another live performer.
* Keep an eye on the time. The combined total needs to be not less than four minutes and the ensemble must be at least one minute in length.

**Production via Technology Performance**

* Talk to your teacher(s), listen to their advice.
* Use at least three tracks for your solo. Only you can perform. One track must be recorded live.
* Don’t forget about the ensemble. It is worth as much as the solo.
* Use at least four tracks for your ensemble. At least one must be recorded live by you, and another by one other person.
* Include a variety of texture, dynamics and rhythm.
* Write an annotation about your performances and include screenshots.
* Write about the processes, devices and production techniques you have used.
* Level of demand marks are out 6.
* You are also marked out of 5 for accuracy, expression, balance, panning and stereo separation, appropriate use of effects and sense of style. Make sure you have covered all of these in your production piece.
* Keep an eye on the time. The combined total needs to be not less than four minutes and the ensemble must be at least one minute in length.

**Pointers for success in Section A**

* Read the questions carefully.
* Check how many parts there are.
* Where are you being asked to focus – beginning, middle or end?
* Look at the marks. One mark questions should have one point. If you put alternatives and one answer is wrong you will end up with zero. The same goes for intervals. Only give a number.
* On the multiple choice questions check how many items to circle. Do the exact amount.
* In the feature questions underline the elements you are to write about. You don’t need to do one from each. All your answers can be from one element.
* Try to write something for every question. A blank space is always worth zero.
* Don’t give up if you come across a difficult question. There are easier questions across the paper.

**Pointers for success in Section B**

* + You must answer Question 9. It has 4 parts.
  + For the 2 mark questions, a guess is better than a blank space.
  + Really read the 8 mark question (9.4). Underline/highlight the key points.
  + Is it the whole movement or which part of it (Rondo theme, 1st Episode, 2nd Episode)?
  + Which elements? (No marks for mentioning other elements)
  + Tick off the elements as you use them.
  + Do not write out the question – it wastes time.
  + You can make a heading, you can use bullet points.
  + You must answer one more complete 4-part question on your other study piece.
  + Choose the piece you have studied.
  + For each part check which song/piece the question is asking about. Highlight it.
  + For the long answer question, double check the song/piece and the elements.