

# GCSE Music Appraising

Your **Appraising** exam will be worth 40% of your GCSE. It is a Listening exam, made up of 8 questions, each with extracts of music to listen to. Each question is worth 12 marks but will be broken down into parts.

- Questions 1 and 2 will be on **Area of Study 1, Musical Forms and Devices**.  
Question 1 will be on the set work
- Questions 3 and 4 will be on **Area of Study 2, Music for Ensemble**.
- Questions 5 and 6 will be on **Area of Study 3, Film Music**
- Questions 7 and 8 will be on **Area of Study 4, Popular Music**  
Question 7 will be on the set work

To answer the set works questions you will need to have studied the pieces very carefully, and revised things such as the form/structure of the piece, important chord patterns and any interesting features. You should also learn about the background – who was the composer? When was it written? Was it written for a specific purpose? Etc. The set work for AoS 1 includes a viola, so in question 1 only you are expected to be able to work out the notes written in the alto clef.

There is a list of terms in Appendix C of the specification which contains all of the words you need to know, apart from anything specific relating to the set works for use in Questions 1 and 7. You should be able to understand these terms and use them yourself. You will also need to learn any specific terms relating to the set works, for questions 1 and 7. If you already know other musical terms you can use them to answer a question correctly in the exam.

Questions in your music exam will be testing your knowledge in three areas:

**Elements of Music** – melody, harmony, tonality, form and structure, dynamics, sonority, texture, tempo, rhythm, metre

**Context** – the time or place for which the music was written, or if it describes something like a story or emotion

**Language** – reading **and** writing in the treble **and** bass clef simple time, reading in the treble **and** bass clef in compound time, Roman numerals for chords I, ii, iii, IV, V and vi in a major key, contemporary chord symbols for chords within a major key e.g. C, Dm, Em, F, G(7) and Am, reading and writing key signatures to four sharps and flats, and musical vocabulary from Appendix C.

One question in the exam will require a longer response. This could be in any area of study, but will not be based on a set work.

One question will require you to notate the pitch or rhythm of a short part of the music.

The best practice for this examination is to listen to a wide variety of music and focus on how the elements of music are being used. For example, is the melody conjunct or disjunct? Is the tonality major or minor? How is the rhythm made up? Practice using the words which apply to each element of music.