Contemporary music

The sample unit of work provides teaching strategies and learning experiences that facilitate students’ demonstration of the dimensions and objectives of Music in Practice.

This sample demonstrates:

- organisation and development of a unit that could be used within a course of study
- aspects of the underpinning factors particular to this unit
- a focus for the unit, that outlines a purpose developed from an elective
- identification of the relevant concepts and ideas, and associated subject matter, from the core topics
- a teaching and learning sequence that:
  - outlines effective teaching strategies
  - supports achievement of the objectives described in the dimensions of this syllabus
  - shows alignment between core subject matter, learning experiences and assessment.
Overview

Unit overview

Title of unit: Contemporary music

Unit description (focus):
The purpose of this unit is to explore contemporary music genres and styles through composing, producing and performing. Students create a music work in a contemporary genre or style, contribute to the production of a CD of student works and performances, and prepare and present an event for the school community.

Time allocation:
Unit 3, Semester 3, 55 hours

Identified curriculum from the syllabus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions and objectives</th>
<th>Knowing and understanding</th>
<th>Applying and analysing</th>
<th>Creating and evaluating</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• identify and explain music principles and practices</td>
<td>• apply technical and expressive skills to performance and production of music works</td>
<td>• plan and modify music works using music principles and practices to achieve purposes</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• interpret music principles and practices</td>
<td>• analyse the use of music principles and practices in their own and others’ music works</td>
<td>• create music works to communicate music ideas to audiences</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• demonstrate music principles and practices</td>
<td>• use language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information about music, according to context and purpose</td>
<td>• evaluate the application of music principles and practices to music works and music activities</td>
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Elective

• Contemporary music
### Core topics

#### Core 1: Music principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concepts and ideas</th>
<th>Knowledge, understanding and skills</th>
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</table>
| **Functions and purposes of music**  
The power of music lies in its ability to fulfil or satisfy many functions and purposes. The functions and purposes are the reasons for experiencing and engaging with music and why music works are created, performed and listened to. They communicate the intentions of the maker or interpreter of the work and include audiences'/listeners' interpretations and responses (C1.1). | functions and purposes of music:  
– explore and understand the reasons for experiencing and engaging with music  
– understand how music both reflects and affects societies and represents ideas and experiences |

| **Elements of music, structural devices and symbols**  
Music is an aural art form based on the organisation of sounds in time, through the application and manipulation of elements of music and structural devices (C1.2). | elements of music are the fundamental parameters, aspects, properties or characteristics of sound and music and underpin all music activity:  
– duration, expressive devices, pitch, structure, texture, timbre  
structural devices help to create a sense of continuity and cohesiveness; these foundational procedures are used in the manipulation and organisation of the elements of music:  
– unity, repetition, variety, contrast, balance, acoustics, tension, resolution, transition  
recognition of verbal, aural and visual symbols relating to music:  
– understanding the meaning of words, sounds and other symbols, e.g. notation, graphs, pictures, letters, characters, numbers, signs |

| **Music conventions, forms, styles, genres and terminology**  
An understanding of music conventions, forms, styles, genres and subject-specific terminology helps develop an appreciation of music (C1.3). | a range of conventions, forms, styles, genres and terminology, appropriate to the electives chosen |
## Core 2: Music practices

### Concepts and ideas

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Knowledge, understanding and skills</th>
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</table>

### Music skills, techniques and processes

The application and manipulation of music principles through the use of music skills (including listening skills), techniques and processes helps students develop their creative thinking as they follow processes from conception to realisation and work to create, represent, express, respond to and communicate music ideas of personal significance (C2.1).

- **music skills, techniques and processes:**
  - listening skills, the aural skills necessary for discriminating, identifying, interpreting and applying music principles
  - creative and compositional skills, techniques and processes, e.g. creating, improvising, arranging
  - practical music skills, techniques and processes, e.g. playing instruments, singing, improvising, directing, manipulating sound sources, solo and ensemble work
  - performance skills, techniques and processes, e.g. practising, rehearsing, presenting and performing
  - notating skills, e.g. facility with conventional, graphic, symbolic and digital methods

### Music industry practices and cultures

Gaining awareness of and experience with current music industry practices and cultures in authentic scenarios is important preparation for roles, career opportunities and pathways in the music industry (C2.2).

- **music industry practices and cultures:**
  - entertainment management and live music practices, e.g. licensing and copyright procedures and arrangements, planning, building and environmental considerations, venue acoustics, sound and lighting, sound/noise management
  - legal and ethical issues, e.g. legal rights and responsibilities, contractual negotiations and arrangements, plagiarism, intellectual and cultural property, appropriation, privacy issues, copyright procedures and arrangements
  - WHS considerations, e.g. safe use of electrical equipment (sound and lighting equipment, cabling and computers), props, staging and special effects, the nature of floor surfaces, noise and lighting levels

### Using digital technologies

Developing skills in the use of digital technologies is essential for working in the contemporary music industry (C2.3).

- **understanding digital technologies:**
  - performance technologies, music software programs, compressed vs uncompressed audio files, mobile technologies, online music-making and sharing services, e.g. SoundCloud

- **skills in working with digital technologies:**
  - using performance and mobile technologies
  - recording skills, e.g. setting up microphones and MIDI equipment to record a music demo
  - using music software programs, e.g. Adobe Audition, Pro Tools, Logic Pro or Audacity, to create and edit audio files

### Problem solving

Developing problem-solving, analytical, reasoning and reflective skills in a music context fosters creativity (C2.4).

- **problem-solving processes include:**
  - identifying, defining and interpreting the problem
  - creative and lateral thinking, and thinking artistically
  - creating or choosing a strategy; making decisions
  - testing, monitoring and evaluating solutions
### Awareness of self and others

Developing awareness of self and others is essential when engaging in music activities (C2.5).

- individual and teamwork considerations:
  - collaboration and cooperation
  - work ethic
  - developing and understanding personal attributes and dispositions, e.g. resilience, enthusiasm, persistence
  - trust activities
  - problem-solving and decision-making skills
  - reflecting on practice
  - ethical behaviour
  - cultural and community sensitivity and appropriateness
  - confidentiality and disclosure
  - emotional safety
  - equity and inclusivity

### Assessment

#### Assessment 1: Contemporary music performance

<table>
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<th>Assessment technique</th>
<th>Project</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensions assessed</strong></td>
<td><strong>Knowing and understanding</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Analysing and applying</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Creating and evaluating</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Description of instrument</strong></td>
<td>Students plan and present a performance for a school community event, e.g. Arts night, Music Showcase, school open day. There are two assessable components.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• A performance component: students prepare and present a live performance/s in a contemporary music genre or style at a community event.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A written, spoken or multimodal component: students maintain a written, visual or audio journal that documents and evaluates the effectiveness of the processes used to produce a concert performance.</td>
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#### Assessment conditions

- **Performance component**
  - A minimum of two minutes
- **Written, spoken or multimodal**\(^2\) component
  - **Written:** 500–900 words
  - **Spoken:** 2 ½–3 ½ minutes
  - **Multimodal**
    - presentation: 3–6 minutes
    - non-presentation: 8 A4 pages max (or equivalent)

**Variable conditions**

Schools provide students with a set period of in-class time to rehearse the performance/s and develop the product component/s of their project.

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2. Multimodal components can be presentations or non-presentations. Examples of presentations include delivery of a slide show, a short video clip, a biographical narrative or webinar. An example of a non-presentation is a webpage with embedded media (graphics, images, audio or video).
Assessment 2: Producing a contemporary music work

Assessment technique | Composition
---|---
Dimensions assessed | Knowing and understanding
| Analysing and applying
| Creating and evaluating
Description of instrument | Students create, arrange or record and produce a composition in any genre that would be suitable for performance in a school concert.

Assessment conditions
- Manipulating existing sounds — minimum of 2 minutes
- Arranging or creating — minimum of 32 bars
- Producing — variable conditions

Teaching and learning sequence

Teaching strategies and learning experiences

Introduction to the unit and assessment tasks
Teacher:
- explains the learning goals for the unit in the context of the topic
- introduces the concepts and ideas inherent in contemporary trends in music and popular styles and genres including an exploration of the:
  - features of contemporary music genres and styles (C1.3)
  - relevance to students’ lives (C1.1)
  - reasons for experiencing and engaging with music (C1.1) within the school community
  - role of music in creating a sense of community (C1.1)
- clearly outlines the assessment, a Project (Assessment 1) and a Composition (Assessment 2), where students are required to:
  a. compose a contemporary music work (Assessment 2)
  b. plan, rehearse and present a performance of their music for the school Arts night (Assessment 1)
  c. document and evaluate the processes use to produce the concert (Assessment 1)
  d. record their contemporary music work to produce a CD (Assessment 2)

Students:
- engage with unit content including:
  - music principles and practices related to contemporary trends in music and popular styles and genres
  - the role music plays in creating a sense of community
  - entertainment management and live music practices
- **identify and explain** the characteristics of contemporary music styles and genres, showing recognition of particular characteristics, and demonstrating understanding of principles and processes in contemporary music (C1.3)
- **identify and explain** the reasons for experiencing and engaging with contemporary music within the school community, and the role that music plays in creating a sense of community (C1.1)
- book or organise the venue for the music event.

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Note: highlighted key verbs relate to the dimensions
Developing composing and performing skills

Teacher:
• revisits elements of music, structural devices and symbols such as tablature, chord windows, music notation (C1.2)
• demonstrates the music skills, techniques and processes associated with contemporary music styles and genres (C2.1)
• demonstrates how to listen to and analyse contemporary music works and performances
• models principles and techniques of composing, especially melody writing, word setting and song sections
• explores the use of rehearsal techniques with students and shows them how to work together in ensemble
• provides adequate time for students to experiment with composition techniques, to develop and refine composing skills, and to rehearse performances
• provides feedback on students’ compositions and performances
• discusses the use of digital technologies in contemporary music (C2.3)
• models the operation of music technologies, e.g. software, mixing consoles
• explains the importance of journaling music ideas, creative processes and reflections
• models appropriate ways of providing constructive feedback to others.

Students:
• listen to and analyse contemporary music works and performances to understand and develop skills in composing, performing and responding (C2.1, C2.4)
• interpret, demonstrate music principles and practices by performing a variety of music works in contemporary styles and genres, both solo and in ensemble (C2.5)
• create sections of songs, e.g. verses, choruses, bridges (C1.2, C2.1, C2.4)
• interpret, demonstrate and experiment with chord progressions, melody writing and word setting (C1.2, C2.1, C2.4)
• plan and modify ideas for the contemporary music work (C2.1, C2.4)
• maintain a journal of music ideas, creative processes and reflections to analyse the use of music principles and practices in their own music works (C2.1, C2.4)
• interpret verbal, aural and visual symbols relating to music (C1.2)
• analyse the use of music principles and practices involved in own and others’ contemporary music works (C1.1, C1.2, C2.1, C2.4)
• rehearse and refine technical skills on instrument and/or voice to demonstrate music principles and practices (C2.1, C2.4)
• reflect on and evaluate own and others’ class music performances and compositions, and provide explicit feedback (C2.4, C2.5).

Compose a contemporary music work (Assessment 2 — Composition)

Teacher:
• revisits the task requirements, reminding students that the music work will be recorded, produced and assessed after the community music event
• revises the features of contemporary song
• provides opportunities for students to workshop and share their music ideas.

Students:
• choose the type of music work they wish to compose
• organise and apply music principles and practices related to contemporary music styles and genres to compose a song (C1.2, C1.3, C2.1, C2.4)
• apply problem-solving processes in creating the song (C2.4)
• create the contemporary music work for the school event (C2.1, C2.4).
Preparing for the school community event (Assessment 1 — Project)

Teacher:
- ensures students understand the requirement to document their music ideas and reflections throughout the process of organising and realising the community music event
- provides opportunities for students to research music industry practices and cultures (C2.2)
- provides opportunities for students to create and implement advertising for the event
- discusses and demonstrates safe WHS practices in preparing for and presenting the school event (C2.2)
- revisits technical requirements related to the venue
- provides opportunity for technical rehearsal at the venue
- discusses individual and teamwork considerations (C2.5) and the importance and benefits of collaborative working relationships
- provides adequate time for students to refine performance and presentation skills for the school event.

Students:
- plan and prepare for the live music performance, considering entertainment management and live music practices (C2.2, C2.4, C2.5)
- create and implement an advertising plan
- set up and practise the technical rehearsal and make any modifications to the sound design or performances as a result of technical considerations
- recognise and apply safe WHS practices in preparing for the school event, e.g. safe use of electrical equipment (sound and lighting equipment, cabling and computers), props, staging and special effects, the nature of floor surfaces, noise and lighting levels (C2.2)
- apply problem-solving processes in preparing for the music event, including creating or choosing strategies and making decisions (C2.4)
- work collaboratively to prepare for the music event (C2.5)
- refine performance and presentation skills for the school event (C2.1, C2.4, C2.5).

Presenting the school community event (Assessment 1 — Project)

Teacher:
- reviews the logistics for the event
- considers contingency plans for unexpected problems
- provides opportunity for students to:
  - identify the technical requirements for the venue
  - identify potential problems of the venue and provide solutions
  - make decisions about the running order of the performance.

Students:
- apply problem-solving processes in presenting the music event, including:
  - identifying, defining and interpreting problems
  - creative and lateral thinking
  - thinking artistically
  - creating or choosing strategies
  - decision-making
  - testing, monitoring and evaluating solutions (C2.4)
- apply safe WHS practices in presenting the school event
- present the live music event using appropriate music skills, techniques, processes and performance technologies (C2.1, C2.3, C2.5).
Documenting and evaluating the processes to produce a concert performance (Assessment 1 — Project)

Teacher:
- reviews the music event with students and the music works performed and provides feedback opportunity for students
- explains evaluation skills and models methods of presenting reflections on, and evaluations of, the processes and outcomes of the assessment tasks
- explains appropriate use of language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information.

Students:
- reflect on and evaluate the application of music principles and processes involved in creating the music work and realising the community music event (C2.4)
- use language conventions and features to communicate ideas and information in and about contemporary music, according to context and purpose (C1.2, C1.3, C2.1)
- submit their journals that document their music ideas and reflections on the processes involved in creating and realising the event. Journals must also include an evaluation of the processes and outcomes of the tasks (C1.2, C1.3, C2.1).

Producing a contemporary music work (Assessment 2 — Composition)

Teacher:
- revisits and demonstrates technology and recording processes for the production of the previously composed music work (C2.3)
- allocates recording time for students
- provides opportunities for students to create a cover design for the CD or to run a competition for best cover design
- provides opportunities for students to create and implement an advertising campaign for the CD.

Students:
- apply problem-solving processes in producing the CD, including:
  - identifying, defining and interpreting problems
  - creative and lateral thinking
  - thinking artistically
  - decision-making (C2.4)
- produce a CD of their contemporary music work using appropriate technologies, e.g. music software (C2.1, C2.3)
- merchandise the CD.

Resources
- Equipment: recording and sound equipment, music instruments
- Repertoire: a variety of works from contemporary artists and trends, including contemporary works by Aboriginal artists and/or Torres Strait Islander artists; Aria charts, iTunes, Triple J Hottest 100
- Venue: school or local community hall