



The ukulele curriculum is a new addition for A Common Approach 2022 and has been produced for Programmes of Study 1, 2 and 3 in recognition of the fact that the ukulele is most commonly used as an ensemble instrument rather than a solo instrument, often to accompany singing. The ukulele and guitar curricula have been designed in such a way as to complement each other.

Each Programme of Study has its contents grouped under the following Areas:

- A** Listening and internalising
- B** Making and controlling musical sounds
- C** Creating and developing musical ideas
- D** Playing music
- E** Playing music with others
- F** Performing and communicating

# Programme of Study 1

## A Listening and internalising

### P1 - A1

## Listen and respond to music in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them

Introduce learners to a wide variety of music during lessons.



Listening should be an enjoyable, active experience. As well as enhancing musical learning, it supports the development of lifelong skills of enjoying and appreciating music as a listener/audience member.

Encourage and plan for a range of responses when listening to music: movement, actions, discussion, writing, drawing, etc.

Encourage learners to share and talk about music that they enjoy listening to.



This helps to develop an inclusive lesson culture where learners feel that their music is valued and respected.

Encourage learners to develop their verbal responses through structured activities that include questions to focus their listening, e.g. how would you describe the character of this melody/rhythm?

Ask learners to listen and respond to different pieces of music in their own time and then describe them in the lesson, including aspects of dynamics, instrumentation, character, etc.



Learners should be encouraged to listen to music from a wide variety of styles and cultures.

### P1 - A2

## Have some aural perception of the music to be played

Perform a piece to be learnt. Ask learners to describe its character using appropriate questions to unlock their creative response, e.g. Before listening to the music: 'How do you feel right now?' And afterwards: 'Did listening to the music change your mood at all?'



It is important that listening is approached in a relaxed and enjoyable way.

**P1 - A3**

## **Recognise and discriminate between the musical elements of pulse, pitch, rhythm, tempo, dynamics and texture**

Encourage learners to mark the pulse of music played by the teacher or other learners by clapping, tapping different parts of the body, walking around the room etc.



Listening games can be linked to all the pieces being learnt in the early stages.

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Ask learners to respond physically to music being played, i.e. moving in time or beating time to music with a regular pulse. Repeat at different tempi.

Go through the piece again with learners, using gestures or actions to indicate rests.



Ensure that learners understand the difference between tempo, pulse and rhythm. There are many online tools for exploring these elements, such as Chrome Music Lab (Rhythm and Song Maker).

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Help learners to sing/play short, simple rhythmic/melodic phrases by ear.

Ask learners simple questions about pulse, pitch, rhythm, dynamics, etc.



Further ideas in developing aural acuity can be found in the approaches of Kodaly and Dalcroze (Eurhythmics).

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Ask learners to sing songs they know well, singing some phrases in their heads at a given signal from the teacher. When learners sing aloud again, they should be singing at the correct pitch and pulse.



The main aim is to internalise the sound before relating it to a symbol.

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Ask learners to sing the final note to complete a melodic phrase played/sung by the teacher.



In the first instance, it helps if the penultimate note is either the leading note or the supertonic.

**P1 - A4**

## **Recognise and convey in their playing simple melodic patterns, e.g. repetition of main tune**

Ask learners how many phrases there are in a short piece. Where do they start and finish?



Encourage learners to match physical movements to the structure when listening to the piece, e.g. tap the pulse on their knees for the first phrase, their heads for the second phrase, etc.

Listen to other short pieces and ask learners to indicate when the main tune is repeated: count the number of times it is repeated and describe what happens in between.



There are many opportunities to use a wide range of musical styles from around the world.

**P1 - A5**

## **Using appropriate notation, make links between sounds and symbols, e.g. shape of the melody, repetition**

Encourage learners to create graphic scores of music they listen to.



Instead of using paper, this activity can also be done on an interactive whiteboard or tablet, either using a drawing app or a specific graphic score app.

Display two or more rhythms. Perform one and ask learners to identify which they heard.



In group or whole-class lessons, learners can lead this activity. Notation can also be dragged into position to create different rhythms on an interactive whiteboard or tablet, using a presentation program such as PowerPoint or Google Slides. Learners can then create their own rhythms to work with.

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Using notation, ask learners to clap/play/sing/say short phrases of a piece and count silent bars in their heads, e.g. bars 1–2 clapped/ played/sung/said, bars 3–4 counted and bars 5–6 clapped/played/sung said.

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Using notation, ask learners to describe the main features of a piece before playing/singing it – e.g. shape of melody and obvious repetitions.

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Play a familiar piece incorrectly. Ask learners to spot the mistakes.



Notation must be appropriate and take into consideration the learner, the instrument and the genre.



Notations may include staff notation, rhythm grids, dot notation and graphic scores.



Music from all parts of the world is appropriate for these activities.

# Programme of Study 1

## B Making and controlling musical sounds

### P1 - B1

## Posture and freedom of movement

- Develop an appropriate relaxed posture and hand position when sitting:
  - supporting and balancing the instrument comfortably
  - ensuring that both hands can move freely

Demonstrate an appropriate sitting and standing posture. With guidance, ask learners to imitate, experiment and adjust their posture.



Reinforce the importance of always taking a moment to ensure that posture is correct before starting to play, whether in the lesson or in individual practice.



Try chairs of different heights in order to find the most comfortable one. (Chairs with arms are inappropriate for ukulele playing.)



Creating effective exercises and drills to enable learners to adopt appropriate posture is invaluable in large-group and whole-class teaching. It promotes independence, giving learners the necessary skills to recreate the desired posture in their individual practice.

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Encourage learners to explore holding the ukulele in different ways in an effort to find the most comfortable and practical posture. Take into account the need for the left arm and right forearm to move freely while the instrument remains secure.



Be aware of learners' individual physical characteristics and make adaptations as appropriate. Those learners with a dominant left hand generally find it comfortable to play with the ukulele in the standard position, as the use of each hand is comparatively equal. If however a learner does need to play the other way round, the ukulele will need to be restrung.

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Encourage learners to use a mirror to help evaluate their posture.



Video-recording could also be used for this purpose, but it is vital to check the policy of the school or other organisation you are working in with regards to any form of recording. Children must never be videoed without parental consent and all policies regarding use and storage of recordings must be adhered to.

Invite learners to play a few notes or a short phrase individually. Ask other learners to observe and comment on the player's posture, suggesting how improvements can be made.



Encouraging positive observations and constructive suggestions help to build confidence.

If learners have photographic permission, encourage them to take photos of themselves and annotate them to identify elements of good posture. This can be done with a photo editing app or presentation programs such as PowerPoint or Google Slides.

**P1 - B2**

## Tuning

- Understand the procedure for tuning the instrument, e.g. turning the machine heads

With beginners, ask them to explore the sound of each string – how do they sound different?

Devise games to help learners recognise the sound of different strings. Play two strings, one after the other. Can learners identify which is higher and which is lower?

Teach learners the pitch names of the strings. Compare to other instruments as an introduction to timbre – does G on the ukulele sound the same as G on the piano?

Show learners how the instrument is tuned.



Using a tuning app can be useful to provide a visual explanation of tuning.

Set up a tuning game, where learners are asked to identify which string is out of tune.



Large differences in pitch can be gradually reduced as learners' aural awareness develops.

Demonstrate to learners how to tune the strings of the ukulele and the amount of turning required on the machine heads to provide a significant change in pitch. Ask them to experiment by gently tightening and loosening the machine heads.



This activity aims to develop an awareness of the mechanics of the tuning process, and also offers an opportunity to explore the science of pitch – what happens to the string when we turn the machine head? It is important to mention that over-tightening of the machine heads can damage the instrument.

## P1 - B3

### Right hand

- Develop a clear sound at two or more dynamic levels:
  - plucking strings with free right-hand and arm movements, using downstrokes
  - using the plectrum as appropriate
  - strumming patterns using downstrokes

Ask learners to listen to a clear tone, either produced by the teacher or recorded. Encourage them to imitate and discuss what affects tone quality.



Relate the concept of tone quality to other instruments and voices.

Demonstrate how to vary the tone quality by changing the right-hand position, e.g. playing forward of the sound hole or nearer to the bridge. Ask learners to copy and experiment.



Find descriptive ways to refer to different tone qualities, e.g. 'melted chocolate sound' or 'eating cornflakes sound' or 'fluffy clouds'.

Emphasise that right-hand fluidity comes from the wrist action.



There is a tendency for some learners to keep the wrist rigid and move from the elbow. Liken the desired wrist action to that when painting a picture.



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Ask learners to play appropriate single-string notes at a regular pulse while the teacher plays simple chord progressions.

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Demonstrate to learners how to achieve a rest by stopping the string with either the left or right hand. Encourage them to experiment using open strings, and to comment on the musical effect created by a rest.

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Teach learners some simple strumming patterns, using the thumb brush strum.



Simple strumming patterns can be used to play along with well-known songs.

**P1 - B4**

## Left hand

- Develop an appropriate free left-hand shape which facilitates accurate placement of the fingers
  - developing strength of finger action
  - playing in a single position

Ask learners to listen to a clear tone, either produced by the teacher or recorded. Encourage them to imitate and discuss what affects tone quality.

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Show learners how to establish a free left-hand shape that facilitates accurate placement of the fingers. Help them to find an appropriate and comfortable left-hand position, ensuring that:

- the wrist is pushed forward
- learners can clearly see their fingernails
- the fourth string can be reached easily
- each individual string can be played clearly
- other strings are not touched by accident



Be aware of learners' individual physical characteristics and make adaptations as appropriate.

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Demonstrate how to fret a note cleanly. Ask learners to copy.



Encourage learners to fret the string close to the fret wire, developing an awareness of the degree of pressure that is required when the left hand is operating correctly.

**P1 - B5**

## Articulation and coordination

- Coordinate the right and left hands at a regular pulse:
  - beginning to develop some clarity and fluency
  - using simple rhythmic patterns

Teach learners to play short, simple phrases to a regular pulse using three notes G/A/B on the fourth (G) string.



A backing track can make this exercise more interesting and musical, and also act as a metronome.

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Demonstrate to learners ways of minimising the movement of left-hand fingers. Ask them to imitate and to discuss the advantages.

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Ask learners to experiment with playing short, simple phrases using different dynamics. Discuss how the different dynamics are achieved, and why we need to use different dynamics.



Link to speech and the way that we vary the dynamics of our voice depending on the situation.

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Demonstrate different kinds of articulation, using some simple phrases. Ask learners to imitate them. Discuss how the different sounds are produced, and their musical effects.

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Teach simple exercises and tunes that use rests and staccato. Show learners how to make rests and staccato effects by touching the string with the right-hand thumb or appropriate finger, or a combination of both.

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Ask learners to make up some simple variations by using different rhythmic patterns on each note.

# Programme of Study 1

## C Creating and developing musical ideas

### P1 - C1

## Improvise by exploring different sounds and creating repeated musical patterns or phrases

Ask learners to explore different ways of making musical sounds on the instrument in response to an imaginative or pictorial idea.



The teacher can promote learners' confidence by:

- demonstrating how to experiment with musical ideas
- providing step-by-step assistance with models, patterns and procedures
- emphasising the open-ended nature of the activity – all outcomes are valued and enjoyed

Help learners to make up short and simple rhythmic/melodic patterns from suggested musical starting points, e.g. pentatonic phrases, drones, ostinati. Abstract or pictorial ideas could also be used.



Rather than starting with complete scales, it may be more appropriate to choose two notes from a scale, increasing the number of notes gradually.

Repeat the process, selecting and discarding ideas and aiming for musical coherence.

Lead learners in a discussion about the musical effect of their improvisations.

Play 'Follow my Leader': one player plays three or four notes, then the next player plays three or four more, starting on the last note of the first player, and so on.

### P1 - C2

## Make use of instrumental skills when beginning to compose

Ask learners to compose short pieces from a given starting point, e.g. a story, poem, theme, picture, or one of the musical techniques suggested in C1. Discuss the outcomes. Initially, this could consist of asking

learners to write down their improvisations as an aid to memory, perhaps using their own forms of shorthand as a precursor to staff notation.



Through composing, learners are able to explore the music from the inside. Composing is valid in its own right, but it can also be used to develop performing skills, knowledge and understanding.



It may be necessary to score ideas for them since their creative imagination may run ahead of their ability to write down their ideas, at least where staff notation is concerned.



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

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Provide opportunities for learners to perform their compositions to others.

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Encourage learners to use their instruments in creative activities in the classroom, applying technical skills already acquired.



Productive links with general classroom work should be made wherever possible.

# Programme of Study 1

## D Playing music

### P1 - D1

## Work out by ear how to play short, easy phrases or patterns from well-known tunes

Choosing appropriate starting notes, play short, simple tunes with a limited range of notes, e.g. television jingles, folk-tunes, nursery rhymes. Ask learners to select one and explore it away from the instrument by:

- singing the melody
- drawing the melodic contour in the air
- clapping the rhythm

Next, ask learners to work out separate phrases by ear on their instrument, gradually building up the complete tune.

Ask learners to play the complete tune expressively to others.

As an extension activity, ask learners to teach the tune to other learners.



Many learners experiment with tunes they know before starting formal instrumental lessons.



Teachers should select tunes carefully, bearing in mind the implications of starting on different notes.

### P1 - D2

## Repeat short, easy rhythmic and melodic patterns by playing back from memory

Perform a piece and ask learners to respond to the music by clapping, tapping or moving with a regular pulse and at a variety of tempi.

Repeat, with learners substituting a different sound, gesture or action to indicate rests.



There is always scope to design new musical games in order to develop learners' short-term memory. These can often be invented together as the activity proceeds, building on prior learning.

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Engage learners in 'copycat' exercises, either with or without notation, maintaining a secure pulse and rhythm. Incorporate different musical effects, such as contrasts of dynamics and articulation.

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Ask learners to sing easy intervals and match them to notes on their instruments where appropriate.



At first, limit the phrase to be copied to possibly two bars of 2/4 or equivalent, using only two notes.

## P1 - D3

### Play short, easy pieces from appropriate notation/symbols



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Ask learners to strum some chord rhythms from a chord chart, maintaining a regular pulse.

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Select pieces for learners from a range of different times and places, and in a variety of styles. Take into account:

- the musical and technical skills that will be needed
- opportunities to develop musical ideas
- learners' prior experience
- their personal response to the music
- their general musical interests

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Show learners how to practise their pieces and make improvements.



Adopt the holistic approach to teaching and learning.

## P1 - D4

# Memorise with accuracy selected short, simple pieces from their repertoire

Help learners to memorise selected pieces from their repertoire by:

- building up short sections at a time
- identifying and remembering rhythmic patterns and the shape of the melody
- noting where repetitions and contrasts occur
- focusing on expressive details

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From time to time, teach a short piece away from the music, only referring to the notation once it is learnt.

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Encourage learners to play from memory to other learners.



Promote confidence by making memorisation of whole pieces a natural part of the learning process. Bear in mind that they are unlikely to be memorised properly until the performance is technically fluent. Some objectives are:

- to strengthen learners' confidence
- to focus on the expressive qualities of the music
- to enable learners to communicate more freely without having the constraints of notation

## P1 - D5

# Read and play at sight short, simple phrases at a regular pulse; begin to make links between sound and symbol



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Play short, simple rhythmic/melodic patterns and ask learners to copy them.

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Using flash cards, help learners to:

- recognise different note values and their rests
- clap, sing and play simple rhythmic/melodic patterns, maintaining a regular pulse, perhaps at different tempi
- name notes and find them on the instrument (note recognition)
- read and play simple dynamics



Presentation programs such as PowerPoint or Google Slides can be used to make flash cards to display on a tablet or interactive whiteboard. These have the advantage of being easily editable, so new rhythms and melodic patterns can be created as required by either the teacher or the learners.



The maxim 'sound before symbol' is as important now as ever. Reading notation is a means to making music, not an end in itself. Different forms of notation can be used, e.g. staff, graphic, tablature, chord charts, as an aid to learning. Consider carefully whether notation is a help or hindrance in learning music from aural/oral traditions.



The overall aim is to help learners to develop instant recall of notes and rhythms, thus heightening musical memory. Help learners to gain enthusiasm for learning pieces, using notation when appropriate. Ensure that its use is encouraging rather than discouraging.

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Devise a variety of games to explain staff notation to young beginners, e.g.:

- use a large staff with movable notes (in the shape of small, furry toys)
- space permitting, play 'note jumping': mark out five lines on the floor with masking tape and ask learners to step or jump between them, calling out the note names and perhaps singing them as well
- play the 'musical alphabet' game: a learner says/sings a note name, the next learner says/sings the next one, and so on, up and down. Do the same missing out a note – G/B/D, etc.

## P1 - D6

**Begin to interpret music with some expression and with a sense of its intended effect; talk about its mood and how it is sung or played and suggest improvements to convey the character of the music**

Show learners how to experiment with different ways of playing pieces, perhaps in relation to dynamics and tempi. Ask them to listen and decide which way of playing is most appropriate to the character of the music.

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Involving all learners in the group, discuss ways of improving the interpretation, particularly in pieces that



have few expressive indications.



Interpretation is the creative dimension of performing. At the earliest stage, learners should be encouraged to make expressive musical decisions, either intuitively or by evaluating their work. The teacher can help by being an informed listener, giving feedback and encouragement.

# Programme of Study 1

## E Playing music with others

### P1 - E1

## Play with the teacher and/or other learners, demonstrating some basic ensemble skills by listening, watching and keeping in time with the group

Create opportunities for learners to:

- play with an accompaniment, provided either by the teacher or by recorded means
- play in a small ensemble



In addition to their lessons, all learners should be provided with opportunities for participation in ensembles. By playing with others, they are likely to:

- increase their motivation and interest
- quicken their rate of progress
- widen their performing skills
- improve their personal and social skills



With carefully differentiated parts, even those at the earliest stages of learning can enjoy the sense of achievement of playing as part of an ensemble.

Ask learners to follow someone beating time.



This can be a fun activity, with the teacher or learners beating time at a variety of tempi.

### P1 - E2

## Explore and discuss the character of the music and the expressive possibilities

Discuss the mood of the music and how it can be conveyed.

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With learners, assess their ensemble playing, identifying strengths and areas for further development. Make a recording for this purpose, if appropriate.

# Programme of Study 1

## F Performing and communicating

### P1 - F1

## Perform music to others, e.g. parents/carers, teachers, fellow learners and friends, demonstrating an awareness of the mood of the music

Organise opportunities for informal performances in lessons and for parents/carers, relatives and friends at home.



Performance is a key skill that should be a natural part of the learning process from the earliest lessons. Simulated performances in instrumental lessons are particularly beneficial, helping learners gain confidence. For young learners, performing to teddy bears can be an excellent first step to build confidence.

Ask learners to revise pieces already learnt and to perform them with expression.



Allow plenty of time so that the music is thoroughly prepared. Learners should be well prepared for every performance so that it is a positive experience for everyone.

Encourage learners to perform from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.



Pieces need to be chosen with care so that they are well within learners' capabilities.

Demonstrate to learners where and how to stand or sit, and help them to practise walking on and off stage. If notation is used, ensure that stands are appropriately placed and at the correct height.



References to nerves can be counter-productive. If learners are thoroughly prepared, however, nerves can be viewed as an aid to concentration. Encourage learners to have a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

## Discuss the quality of their playing and, with guidance, learn from their performance

Help learners to evaluate each performance and suggest ways of making improvements and building up confidence. Promote self-evaluation as much as possible.



Ensure feedback is balanced, with an expectation that positives will be found. It can be very effective to sometimes focus only on what went well.

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Where appropriate, use technology to make audio or video recordings during lessons so that learners can listen/watch back and evaluate their performance.



It is vital to check the policy of the school or other organisation you are working in with regards to any form of recording. Children must never be videoed without parental consent and all policies regarding use and storage of recordings must be adhered to.

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Encourage learners to develop their own library of pieces that can be repeated in future.

# Programme of Study 2

## A Listening and internalising

### P2 - A1

#### **Listen to music with concentration and understanding in and out of lessons, enjoying their experiences and building on them**

Engage learners in a wide variety of structured listening activities during lessons, continuing to encourage a range of responses as in Programme of Study 1 (e.g. physical, verbal, written or pictorial).

Ask learners to listen with concentration to different pieces of music in their own time and then describe them in the lesson, including aspects of dynamics, instrumentation, character, etc.



Support learners in their own listening by modelling questioning and other exploratory activities during lessons.

Continue to ask learners to share music that they enjoy with other learners.



Encourage learners to discuss their feelings about music they have chosen through questioning, e.g. 'Why are you drawn to this music?' 'Why is this music meaningful to you?'

Referring to the musical elements, ask learners to describe what they liked and disliked about the music they have listened to.

### P2 - A2

#### **Have some aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling of the expressive characteristics**

Perform pieces to be learnt and ask learners to discuss appropriate features, e.g. tempo, rhythm, range of melody, dynamics, in relation to the character of the music.



When teaching musical vocabulary it is important that the focus is on understanding the concept rather than simply recalling a word. Musical understanding must be developed for the terminology to be meaningful.

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Perform pieces in different ways, e.g. with different tempi, dynamics and articulation. Ask learners to discuss the effect on the mood and character.



Playing to learners provides an immediate way of modelling, i.e. demonstrating musical ideas and techniques, as well as developing aural skills. Learners can also experiment with the effect that tempo has on the mood and character of music by using a tempo changing app, either using pre-recorded music or making their own recording for this purpose.

**P2 - A3**

## **Recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including aspects of articulation, phrasing and quality of tone**

Play short rhythmic phrases from pieces to be learnt and ask learners to clap back the pulse and/or rhythm.



Other body percussion sounds can be substituted for clapping for variety. These activities also work well on instruments, e.g. performing the rhythm on one note.

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Ask learners to identify note lengths aurally, e.g. crotchets and minims or quavers and crotchets.

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In groups or whole classes, ask some learners to tap the pulse of simple phrases while others tap the rhythm. Different body percussion sounds can be used, e.g. stamping, tapping knees, clapping etc.

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Help learners to sing/play short melodic phrases of pieces by ear, and to identify the differences either between half steps and whole steps or between different types of larger intervals.



A virtual keyboard can be a useful tool for exploring pitch and intervals with all instrumental and vocal learners. Some allow multiple learners to collaborate, such as the Shared Piano on Chrome Music Lab.

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Perform pieces to learners and ask simple questions about the musical elements, including articulation, phrasing and quality of tone.

## P2 - A4

### Recognise and convey simple structures in their playing, e.g. repetition of rhythmic and melodic phrases

Ask learners questions on the phrasing and structure of pieces.



Recording instruments live using a digital audio workstation such as Audacity provides a way of splitting up and re-ordering phrases to further explore structure.

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Improvise some rhythmic patterns with learners, perhaps related to the pieces being learnt.

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Contrast long and short notes and link to a mood, occasion or story.



All musical activities, including improvisation, are interrelated and can therefore be taught simultaneously.

## P2 - A5

### Hear some elements of the music internally when using notation/symbol, e.g. tempo, pitch, rhythm, dynamics

Using notation, ask learners to work out the rhythm of phrases in their heads, then clap it.

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Using notation, help learners to trace the contour of phrases, then compare it with the actual sound when played.

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Ask learners to clap/hum/sing/say simple phrases at sight.



Music examples for all these activities can easily be created with online notation tools, such as Flat or Noteflight.

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Using notation, perform pieces with some deliberate mistakes or deviations inserted. Ask learners to identify the differences.





This activity can be adapted to an aural one only, by asking learners to memorise the main melody and then asking them to identify any deviations.



Music from all parts of the world is appropriate for these activities.

# Programme of Study 2

## B Making and controlling musical sounds

### P2 - B1

#### Posture and freedom of movement

- Develop an appropriate relaxed posture and hand position, both sitting and standing (adjusting the strap appropriately):
  - supporting and balancing the instrument comfortably (without the hands)
  - ensuring that both hands can move freely

Help learners continue to develop a relaxed posture through the length of the fingerboard, playing chromatic scales on individual strings. Encourage learners to keep their 'waiting' fingers above the fretboard ready to play, rather than moving them away or hiding them behind the fingerboard.

Ask learners to observe each other's posture and suggest how improvements can be made. Discuss elements of successful posture with learners.



This can be done both sitting and standing, experimenting with the length of the strap or the height of the chair.

### P2 - B2

#### Tuning

- Tune each string separately with guidance, using an external sound source or electronic tuner

Continue to help learners tune their instruments using a tuning app, to encourage them to link the aural with the visual.

Ask learners to experiment with tuning. Encourage them to listen carefully, ensuring that their open strings match the notes of a keyboard, backing track or other external source.



Learners develop this skill at different stages and therefore it is not an expectation that all learners will be able to do this by Programme of Study 2. Encourage collaboration between learners when leading this exercise with groups.

## P2 - B3

### Right hand

- Play with a clear sound more consistently at two or more dynamic levels:
  - plucking strings with free right-hand and arm movements
  - using the plectrum as appropriate
  - developing the use of palm-mute
  - strumming patterns using downstrokes and upstrokes

Devise arpeggio exercises for learners, involving plucking strings with the thumb and fingers, using bigger jumps.



Backing tracks are invaluable for exercises such as these. There are many backing tracks freely available online.

Show learners how to use the palm mute in some simple chord exercises. Ask them to imitate.



Learners should develop this technique to a point where they can quickly change back to a clean sound. A well-known example on guitar is 'Foot Tapper' by The Shadows.

Teach learners simple chord sequences using simple down/up strumming patterns with the first finger. Encourage learners to make up a variety of rhythmic patterns.



Support learners in notating strumming patterns using agreed symbols (e.g up and down arrows) so that patterns can be repeated and added to in individual practice.

Help learners to make audio recordings of their playing as a tool for evaluating their tone, using an audio recording app.

## P2 - B4

### Left hand

- Maintain an appropriate free left-hand shape which facilitates accurate placement of the fingers
  - developing speed, strength and flexibility of finger action
  - playing in a single position and developing awareness of other positions

Continue to model an appropriate left-hand shape and engage learners in evaluating their own left-hand technique. Ensure that:

- the wrist is pushed forward
- learners can clearly see their fingernails
- the fourth string can be reached easily
- each individual string can be played clearly
- other strings are not touched by accident



Be aware of learners' individual physical characteristics and make adaptations as appropriate.

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Provide learners with appropriate pieces/exercises to develop more finger dexterity, gradually increasing the tempo at which they are performed.

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Demonstrate how to play a simple scale or pattern in first position, then demonstrate in another position. Ask learners to try in order to develop their understanding of positional playing.

## P2 - B5

### Articulation and coordination

- Coordinate the right and left hands at a regular pulse:
  - playing with more clarity and fluency
  - using simple rhythmic patterns

Ask learners to play short, simple pieces, using different dynamics. Invite them to comment on the musical effect.



This can be linked to real-life situations, e.g. 'Play the phrase as if it is the ice-cream van a long way away, or really close, or arriving from a distance (crescendo), then disappearing again (diminuendo)'.

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Play simple songs with learners that require left-hand muting techniques for the chordal accompaniment. Discuss the various ways in which this can be done.

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Using a familiar tune, demonstrate left-hand staccato. Ask learners to play the tune using staccato and legato articulation for alternate phrases.

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Draw attention to the relevant markings for staccato and legato when using notation.

---

Ask learners to improvise some simple variations on a familiar tune, illustrating staccato and legato articulation.

# Programme of Study 2

## C Creating and developing musical ideas

### P2 - C1

## Improvise rhythmic and melodic phrases freely or within given structures, individually or as part of a group

Ask learners to improvise musical sounds and phrases freely in response to a picture or story.

Introduce learners to improvising melodic phrases by selecting patterns and phrases over diatonic harmony and common chord schemes:

- demonstrating the idea to learners
- selecting a range of notes that will fit a simple chord scheme
- playing the chord scheme on the ukulele, piano or using an appropriate backing track
- helping learners to select notes that fit each chord
- asking learners to play one of the appropriate notes as each new chord is sounded, trying different options when the chord comes round again
- continuing by adding passing notes that lead through the bar from one chord change to the next
- exploring the effect of moving in step and by larger intervals

Some simple chord patterns in a major key are:

- I III IV V
- I VI II V
- 12-bar blues

There are many backing tracks freely available online, as well as apps that will generate a backing track if you enter a sequence of chords, such as iReal Pro.

As the ear develops, learners will realise that a 'wrong' note is never more than one scale degree away from the 'right' one; moving quickly to a higher note therefore turns a 'mistake' into an accented passing note! If a keyboard or backing track is unavailable, the activity can be done without an accompaniment: learners play question-and-answer phrases with each other and/or with the teacher.

Encourage learners to build up melodies from pentatonic patterns to blues and other scales by:

- experimenting with patterns

- shaping improvisations within a developing simple structure
- discussing the results
- performing to each other

As an extension activity, learners can create their own patterns or build on melodic and rhythmic patterns taken from pieces being learnt.

---

Ask learners to improvise modal/blues melodies using call and response, with increasing expectation of accuracy in terms of rhythm, dynamics and articulation.

---

Introduce a simple structure by asking learners to improvise a 'sandwich' rondo. Swap roles: teacher plays rondo and learner improvises episodes.

**P2 - C2**

## **Compose by developing musical ideas within simple given structures and applying instrumental skills**

Show learners how to build on ideas from pieces and improvisations and develop individual or group compositions. Starting points can be musical devices, structures found in repertoire, e.g. ostinati/riffs, ABA patterns, pieces listened to, or literary or visual stimuli.



Whilst instrumental/vocal lessons are not a substitute for curriculum music, they do provide opportunities for learners to extend ideas that originate from classroom lessons. Instrumental/vocal teachers have particular expertise that helps learners to explore the technical and expressive potential of the instrument.

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Ask learners to explore musical ideas using their instruments, jotting down the main points.

---

Ask learners to create a multi-layered piece by using technology to create a beat then adding an instrumental/vocal part over the top.



Song Maker on Chrome Music Lab would work well for this.

---

Encourage learners to evaluate their work during their lessons. Give specific feedback about musical details

and help them to overcome particular problems.

---

Help learners to refine and notate their compositions, possibly using technology if appropriate.



Notation programs and digital audio workstations are useful tools to support the recording and refining process. Structural coherence and balance are more important than how many notes or bars a piece contains. What matters most, however, is that musical creativity becomes a habit – and one that learners enjoy.

---

Promote opportunities for learners' compositions to be performed alongside other pieces that they are learning.

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Set activities over a number of weeks. These can be undertaken as part of learners' practice and reviewed in each lesson.



# Programme of Study 2

## D Playing music

### P2 - D1

#### **Work out by ear how to play short, easy well-known tunes or accompaniments using a limited range of notes**

Show learners how to work out the notes and rhythms of simple, well-known pieces by ear and ask them to play them to others.

Ask learners to work out straightforward scale patterns, arpeggios and broken chords by ear, giving them a suitable starting note.

### P2 - D2

#### **Repeat short, easy rhythmic and melodic phrases by playing back from memory**

Play a simple piece and ask learners to recall the melody by humming or singing it. At this stage, melodies can include simple leaps, e.g. the notes of a tonic triad, but aim to keep the overall range within an octave.

Engage learners in more extended 'copycat' exercises, i.e. more notes, longer phrases, greater expressive detail.

### P2 - D3

#### **Play a variety of short, easy pieces from notation/symbols**



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Building on the musical skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in Programme of Study 1, extend the range of pieces to be taught, ensuring that the chosen repertoire relates to the full range of learning

objectives.

---

Encourage learners to apply their own creative ideas, e.g. using ideas in the piece to generate their own improvisations or compositions.

---

Show learners how to practise their pieces and make improvements.



Continue to use the holistic approach to teaching and learning. Choose a wide range of repertoire that:

- consolidates and extends technical skills and knowledge
- uses simple key signatures
- possibly includes compound time
- includes a larger variety of rhythmic groupings
- includes a more extended pitch range

**P2 - D4**

## **Play from memory, and to others, selected contrasting pieces from their repertoire**

Help learners to learn selected pieces from memory, showing them ways to remember the music by:

- encouraging them to identify overall shapes and structures and important 'crossroads' in pieces
- encouraging them to associate ideas or images with particular passages
- asking them to identify 'safety net' points in pieces being memorised



Build up memorisation skills regularly and systematically so that learners gain confidence and are able to perform to others from memory.

**P2 - D5**

## **Read and play at sight short, easy pieces at a regular pulse, beginning to hear some of the elements internally and attending to expressive details, including articulation and dynamics**



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Encourage learners to read short, simple passages/pieces at sight, using chord symbols, tablature or standard notation, making sure that they are well within their technical range.

Before playing through passages/pieces for the first time, help learners to hear in their heads the overall sound of the music by asking them to:

- identify important notational features of the music, e.g. time signature, key signature, accidentals, dynamics
- clap or tap rhythmic patterns
- tap the pulse while other learners tap the rhythm, and vice versa
- note the shape of the melody and the melodic range
- identify, from the notation, intervals larger than a second
- sing/hum the larger intervals, having given them one of the two pitches



There are many online tools for practising interval recognition, such as Teoria.

Emphasise the importance of steady, fluent reading, i.e. maintaining a regular pulse, and of allowing mistakes to pass without hesitating.

Ask learners to sight-read in small groups (in unison) or in parts, perhaps with simplified filler lines.



Point out to learners that when first playing a piece of music from notation, they are always 'sight-reading' it. Sight-reading, therefore, should not be regarded as a separate activity, but rather as an integral part of learning new music.

**P2 - D6**

**Interpret music by making choices in relation to tempo, dynamics, phrasing, articulation, colour, etc. in order to achieve an intended effect and convey the expressive characteristics; describe and evaluate the music using appropriate musical vocabulary**

When learning new pieces, encourage learners to make independent decisions about expressive features, such as dynamics, tempi, phrasing, articulation, and tone quality.

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Show learners how to apply their listening skills and respond to the musical features of the music.

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Tease out learners' understanding in questions about the music.

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Encourage learners to perform the music intuitively and to explore different interpretations, even at a simple level.

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Demonstrate alternatives for learners to discuss and evaluate.



Some learners interpret music intuitively, with little intervention from the teacher. Others need a more structured approach. All learners should be encouraged to analyse how they make their musical decisions.

# Programme of Study 2

## E Playing music with others

### P2 - E1

#### Play with others, helping to maintain a separate part and showing awareness of their role within the ensemble

Ask learners to play a variety of ensemble pieces together, maintaining a regular pulse and listening to the other players.

Remind learners to sit/stand so that they can clearly watch the leader or conductor.

Ask learners to play different parts of a piece (with differentiated levels of difficulty) in turn, discovering which part is the most significant in any particular passage and noting how the parts fit together.

Encourage different learners to take a lead, perhaps by counting in, selecting the tempi or suggesting expressive contrasts.

Encourage learners to participate in an appropriate ensemble, playing in unison with others initially, later maintaining a separate part.



Regular ensemble experiences provide a focus for making music. Taking part in a group promotes quicker progression and increased motivation and helps learners to develop social and personal skills.

### P2 - E2

#### Explore, discuss and convey the character of the music

Ask learners to discuss the character of the music and how this influences the choice of tempi, dynamics, etc.

Discuss with learners how further improvements can be made to their playing.

# Programme of Study 2

## F Performing and communicating

### P2 - F1

#### **Perform to others with a sense of occasion, e.g. in a concert, school assembly, examination, projecting the character of the music and acknowledging audience applause**

Organise opportunities for performances with others of a similar standard in lessons, and occasionally for parents/carers, relatives and friends.



Performance enables learners to convey their music to others, building on a range of acquired skills, knowledge and understanding. Simulated performances in lessons help to develop these skills before playing to larger audiences.

Using their growing library of pieces, prepare learners so that they are able to perform with fluency and expression.



Allow plenty of time so that the music is thoroughly prepared. Learners should be well prepared for every performance so that it is a positive, enjoyable experience for everyone – performer(s) and audience.

Encourage learners to perform from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.



Fluency is key to developing confidence in performing. Pieces therefore need to be chosen with care to ensure that they are well within learners' capabilities.

Remind learners where and how to stand or sit to perform. If notation is used, ensure that stands are appropriately placed and at the correct height.

Show learners how to respond to applause and walk on and off stage.

Refine pieces through simulated performances during instrumental lessons.



Aim to give understanding and meaning to the music. Stimulate creative thinking in preparing for performance. Learners should consider different ways of communicating the character of the music.



It should be remembered that people respond differently to the idea of performing. It is important to look out for signs of performance anxiety and support learners in developing strategies to address this. Learners should be encouraged to have a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

## P2 - F2

# Evaluate the quality of their performance in relation to the character of the music, suggesting improvements and commenting on how the intentions were achieved

Lead learners in reflecting on and evaluating each performance. Help them to build confidence and make further improvements.

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Discuss strategies for overcoming nerves and solving problems.



References to nerves can be counter-productive. If learners are thoroughly prepared, however, nerves can be viewed as an aid to concentration. Encourage a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

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Encourage learners to revise pieces from their repertoire.

---

Continue to use technology where appropriate to make audio or video recordings so that learners can listen/watch back and evaluate their performance.



It is vital to check the policy of the school or other organisation you are working in with regards to any form of recording. Children must never be videoed without parental consent and all policies regarding use and storage of recordings must be adhered to.

# Programme of Study 3

## A Listening and internalising

### P3 - A1

#### **Listen with attention to detail, responding to the expressive character of music, using their experiences to inform their playing**

Ask learners to listen to music in a variety of styles and then describe the expressive character of the music with reference to the musical elements.

Ask learners to listen to music that is similar in period, genre, etc. to pieces they are learning. Ask them to point out similarities and differences.

### P3 - A2

#### **Develop their aural perception of the music to be played, including some feeling and understanding of the expressive characteristics**

Perform pieces to be learnt. Ask learners to describe the overall character using appropriate vocabulary.

Ask learners to compare and contrast new pieces with pieces already known.

Perform pieces in different ways. Ask learners to describe how changes to the dynamics, articulation, phrasing, tone quality, etc. affect the expressive character of the music.



As their knowledge increases, learners are able to use a larger musical vocabulary.



### P3 - A3

## Recognise and discriminate between the musical elements, including more refined aspects of articulation, phrasing, quality/variety of tone

Play appropriate rhythms from pieces. Ask learners to clap them back and identify the note values.

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In groups or whole classes ask some learners to tap the pulse of phrases while others tap the rhythm. As an extension, ask learners to tap the pulse with one hand and the rhythm with the other, or the pulse with the feet and the rhythm with the hands.

---

Help learners to sing/play by ear short phrases from pieces to be learnt. Ask them to analyse some of the melodic intervals.



There are many online tools for practising interval recognition, such as Teoria.

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Play phrases in major and minor keys, ending on the tonic, dominant or submediant. Ask learners to identify the mode of the music and the finishing note.

---

Perform pieces to learners and ask questions about the musical elements, including more detailed focus on articulation, phrasing and quality of tone.

### P3 - A4

## Recognise and convey structural features and compositional devices in their playing, e.g. A A B A, sequence

Ask learners to identify the main sections of more extended pieces. Ask further questions on rhythmic/melodic features, use of sequence, tonality, modulations, etc.

---

Ask learners to prepare short pieces using various compositional techniques as appropriate, e.g. glissandi, suitable scales or modes such as pentatonic or whole-tone, and describe their effect.

---

Encourage learners to improvise short pieces using similar techniques.

**P3 - A5**

## **Hear simple music internally when using notation/symbols, including repetitions, contrasts, changes to melodic and rhythmic patterns**

Using notation, ask learners to work out in their heads:

- the rhythm of phrases
- the sound of melodies, e.g. hum/sing simple phrases and then compare with the actual sound when played.

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Using notation, ask learners to describe the main characteristics of pieces to be learnt: refer to musical elements, articulation, phrasing, use of sequence, tonality, structure, expressive features, etc.

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Ask learners to clap/hum/sing/say appropriate phrases at sight.

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Using notation, perform pieces with a range of deliberate mistakes, e.g. rhythmic, melodic, dynamic. Ask learners to identify the differences.



Music from all parts of the world is appropriate for these activities.

# Programme of Study 3

## B Making and controlling musical sounds

P3 - B1

### Posture and freedom of movement

- Develop an appropriate relaxed posture and hand position, both sitting and standing:
  - supporting and balancing the instrument with more ease
  - ensuring that both hands can move freely

Continue to ensure that learners adopt an appropriate posture in both standing and sitting positions.



Encourage learners to be aware of unnecessary tension and find ways to address them. Some learners may find relaxation methods useful, e.g. yoga, Alexander Technique.

Ensure that learners' shoulders are level and relaxed by asking them to hunch them up and let them fall two or three times.

Teach learners to play various forms of barré chords. Draw attention to where the pressure is needed from the barré finger.



The left-hand position of the thumb needs to be secure so as to produce a clean sound from the instrument. Ensure that it is kept at the back of the neck of the ukulele, to provide the pressure needed for the fingers and to keep the wrist forward and fingers upright.

Demonstrate to learners the difference between positive and negative body language when performing.



Encourage learners to attend live performances where possible, and/or watch live performances online. Many different postures and presentation styles will be found among the plethora of YouTube ukulelists, which can serve as useful discussion points.

## P3 - B2

### Tuning

- Tune the instrument to itself with independence, using an external sound source or electronic tuner

Show learners how to tune up to pitch, if necessary detuning and then retuning up to the correct pitch. Ask them to experiment, offering guidance as necessary.



An electronic tuner is very useful for this exercise.

## P3 - B3

### Right hand

- Play with a clear sound more consistently, across a range of dynamics:
  - plucking strings with free right-hand and arm movements, using downstrokes and upstrokes
  - using the plectrum as appropriate, including hybrid plucking

Show learners how to play right hand arpeggio patterns across the strings, using both upstrokes and downstrokes and incorporating larger intervals

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Show learners how to pluck strings with a plectrum and one or more fingers simultaneously.

## P3 - B4

### Left hand

- Maintaining an appropriate free left-hand shape which facilitates accurate placement of the fingers
  - recognising and playing with secure intonation
  - developing speed, strength and flexibility of finger action
  - beginning elementary position work, including simple shifts
  - beginning to develop various tone colours through hammer-ons and pull-offs on open strings, slides and string bends

Teach learners to play exercises, scales and arpeggios that include left-hand positional changes.

By ear, and from notation, teach learners some pieces that incorporate positional changes.

Demonstrate how a tune can be played using several positions.

Teach some hammer-on and pull-off exercises for the left hand on open strings. Ask learners to experiment with these techniques in familiar tunes, aiming for a steady rhythm and a clear tone.

Show learners how to add slides to a well-known tune so as to embellish the melodic line.

Listen to some two- and three-note slides. Devise some exercises that incorporate them. Ask learners to play them, emphasising the need for smoothness and rhythmic accuracy.

Help learners to learn some riffs that include string bends.

### P3 - B5

## Articulation and coordination

- Coordinate the right and left hands at a regular pulse:
  - playing with more clarity and fluency at a variety of tempi
  - using a variety of articulations and rhythmic patterns
  - using a larger range of notes, incorporating simple shifts

Demonstrate how a tune can be played using different articulations. Ask learners to copy and to discuss the musical outcomes.

Using familiar tunes, ask learners to play them using different dynamics and positions. Ask them to comment on the musical effect. Reverse this activity by suggesting a scenario and style to play the tunes in.

Ask learners to make up some simple rhythmic variations on a well-known tune, combining different articulations with positional changes.

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Ask learners to suggest appropriate fingering for some of their pieces.

# Programme of Study 3

## C Creating and developing musical ideas

### P3 - C1

## Improvise in a variety of genres and styles, sustaining and developing musical ideas and achieving different intended musical effects with the instrument

Regularly ask learners to make up improvisations:

- in particular styles, e.g. rags, folk-songs, rock and pop; draw on relevant musical devices from pieces being learnt, where appropriate
- by varying a theme, exploring contrasts of elements, e.g. pitch, rhythm, tonality, dynamics
- using a free theme based on the mood or character of a piece, e.g. sense of autumn, clouds, jollity, sadness, open space, speed, night time



Improvisation provides opportunities for learners to extend their own musical ideas within the context of what they have learned. As instrumental skills and knowledge develop, so should fluency in improvisation. Improvisation enables musicians to gain a deeper insight into musical styles as well as encouraging them to express their own feelings. It should, above all, be an enjoyable activity, undertaken in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere, with the teacher joining in.

---

Accompany learners as they develop more fluency and confidence with the 12-bar blues and improvisations over given diatonic chord progressions (see Programme of Study 2).

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Discuss the results of the improvisations with learners, perhaps considering the appropriateness of style, development of ideas, use of musical elements, structure and overall outcome.

---

Suggest and demonstrate further ways of developing and refining ideas, whilst building up learners' confidence.

---

Make a recording, if possible.



It is vital to check the policy of the school or other organisation you are working in with regards to any form of recording. Children must never be videoed without parental consent and all policies regarding use and storage of recordings must be adhered to.

### P3 - C2

## Apply knowledge and understanding of the instrument in order to compose with an understanding of musical idiom

Ask learners to compose short pieces of music for their own (and perhaps other) instruments, developing the work in Programme of Study 2.



Notation is likely to be used as a memory aid, first in shorthand (or graphic form) and then for performance. Some learners may be composing for GCSE/Nationals/BTEC/RSL or other qualifications. There are many natural ways in which instrumental teachers can liaise with classroom colleagues for mutual support.

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Encourage learners to use a range of musical devices appropriate to their technical and musical understanding, e.g. repetition, sequence, contrast.

---

Literary, visual or emotional starting points can be used, but the process of composing should focus on how effectively the musical ideas are developed within the genre.

---

Help learners to refine their pieces within the chosen style, discussing their progress and suggesting ideas for improvement and development.



Some programs allow learners to share their compositions digitally with other learners, with the facility for learners to comment on each other's work. Ensure that you adhere to your organisation's safeguarding policy with regards to the use of online platforms.

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Provide opportunities for learners to perform their compositions, perhaps involving other musicians.



# Programme of Study 3

## D Playing music

### P3 - D1

## Work out by ear how to play tunes or accompaniments in straightforward keys or modes

Ask learners to work out by ear familiar tunes that are more challenging, e.g. longer, larger range, perhaps including some chromatic notes.

Playing by ear, introduce learners to different modes, scales, blues patterns, etc. Ask them to experiment with various starting notes and to work out the key, structure, etc.



Sustain opportunities for playing by ear – it brings together many skills.

### P3 - D2

## Repeat moderately short musical phrases (melodic and rhythmic) from memory

Ask learners to repeat moderately short phrases, of appropriate difficulty, performed by the teacher or other learners. Include music with a variety of time signatures, including compound time, and tunes with a wider range.

Ask learners to clap/tap the pulse while the phrases are being played and possibly identify some musical features.

Play scales in canon, e.g. the teacher or a learner starts, other learners begin two notes later – playing in consecutive thirds.

Extend a call-and-response sequence, repeating phrases or improvising new ones, always aiming for a musical performance.

### P3 - D3

## Play a variety of moderately easy pieces from different styles and traditions



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spread and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Approach new pieces from different angles – perhaps aurally, or through improvisation, listening, notation, etc.

Ask learners to identify challenging passages and to make suggestions for solving problems.

Building on their own suggestions (if appropriate), show learners how to practise challenging passages and make improvements.

Make the process as creative as possible, always aiming to prompt learners' imagination and curiosity.



Continue to use the holistic approach, aiming for simultaneous learning through interrelated activities and processes. Choose a wide range of repertoire that builds on learners' technique, musical understanding and creativity. Ensure that it is relevant to their stage of development and interests.

### P3 - D4

## Memorise a variety of pieces from their repertoire of increasing length and complexity

Building on strategies suggested in Programme of Study 2, help learners to commit selected pieces to memory.

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Once pieces are memorised, encourage learners to try them out in front of others.

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Discuss problems and possible solutions in respect of playing from memory.

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Provide opportunities for learners to play from memory in a group. Note any new perspectives that this

brings, e.g. the opportunity to listen more acutely and to pick up visual cues more easily.



Aim to develop musical memory in a number of ways, e.g. automatic, aural, visual, cognitive, kinaesthetic. Remind learners that a performance is secure when it is learnt thoroughly from memory, but they should guard against it becoming mechanical. Beware of the tendency to increase the speed of the beat as pieces become more familiar.

### P3 - D5

## Read and play at sight a variety of short, straightforward pieces at a regular pulse, using an increasing rhythmic, melodic and tonal range



Many genres of music are traditionally learnt exclusively by ear. Where it would support learning, you may wish to create notation systems that are appropriate to your teaching context, e.g. word rhythms, symbols, numbers, or vocal sounds. However, this may not be necessary or desirable for all musics. Music passed on orally/aurally naturally evolves as it spreads and being fixed in notation can hinder this.

Develop sight-reading skills by regularly asking learners to play at sight music that is well within their technical range and in familiar keys or modes.

---

Extend the structured approach outlined in Programme of Study 2. Thus, before playing through pieces for the first time, help learners to hear in their heads the overall sound of the music by asking them to:

- identify important notational features of the music, e.g. tempo, time signature, key signature, accidentals
- note articulation, phrasing and dynamics
- clap or tap rhythmic patterns, perhaps including syncopated patterns
- tap the pulse while other learners tap the rhythm, and vice versa (and extend by challenging learners to tap the pulse with one hand and the rhythm with the other)
- notice the shape of the melody and the melodic range
- identify, from the notation, a range of intervals
- sing/hum a variety of intervals taken from the melodic line
- sing/hum the melodic line of appropriate phrases



There are many online tools for practising interval recognition, such as Teoria.

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Ask learners to sight-read in small groups, each learner maintaining a separate part individually (the parts possibly having differentiated levels of difficulty). Emphasise the importance of keeping going and maintaining a regular pulse.



Sight-reading can always be connected to learning repertoire because the skills are applied when reading pieces for the first time. Promote enjoyment and confidence by using metaphors to describe phrases and discussing the character of the music and the intended effect.

### P3 - D6

## **Interpret music with an understanding of the musical style, structure and idiom; communicate the character of the music and the intentions of the composer, making improvements to their work in the light of their knowledge about the music**

Discuss interpretative ideas with learners as pieces are being learned. Build on an intuitive response to the music.

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Encourage learners to think about the nature of performance and how they can communicate musical ideas to others. Particular strategies may include:

- listening to different interpretations of music being learnt and discussing the effects, e.g. by the teacher demonstrating and/or the use of recordings
- analysing the structure of music being learnt and the implications for communicating this in performance
- discussing mood, meaning and emotions
- making links between technique and interpretation
- emphasising expressive features



Interpretation is not a separate activity. Learners should be encouraged to make interpretative decisions in all their playing, even when learning the notes. Considerations of interpretation often inform the way passages are learnt, e.g. in relation to phrasing, fingering, articulation, tempo.

# Programme of Study 3

## E Playing music with others

### P3 - E1

#### **Play with others, independently maintaining an individual part, demonstrating awareness of their role within the ensemble and leading the ensemble where appropriate**

Increase the frequency and range of ensemble experiences. These could include both instruments and voices.

Ask learners to consider the best layout for particular ensembles, ensuring that all participants can clearly watch the leader or conductor.

Ask learners to maintain a separate part individually.



Help learners to learn their parts for new ensemble pieces by providing time in lessons.

Encourage learners to develop their listening skills, e.g. awareness of ensemble, balance, tuning, when playing with others.



Aim to extend and develop the necessary listening skills for playing with others.

Encourage learners to lead the ensemble, e.g. by counting in.

### P3 - E2

#### **Contribute to collective decisions, e.g. tempo, ensemble, tuning, balance, conveying the character of the music**

Promote more musical independence by encouraging learners to take the lead and make decisions relating

to the character of the music.

---

Ask learners to reflect on and evaluate their progress and discuss ways of making further improvements.



Adopt a creative, problem-solving approach which gives learners the responsibility for overcoming the challenges of playing with others.

# Programme of Study 3

## F Performing and communicating

### P3 - F1

## Perform to others with increasing awareness and assurance, communicating the character of the music and their musical intentions to the audience

Organise opportunities for performance with others of a similar standard at various occasions and venues.



To promote self-confidence, help learners to develop their own library of repertoire pieces, i.e. pieces which once learned and performed can be repeated.

Ask learners to perform, over time, pieces from a variety of styles.



Ensure that learners perform music from different styles and genres so that confidence and experience can be developed across a range of repertoire.

Prepare learners so that they are able to perform with fluency, expression and understanding.

Encourage learners to perform some or all of their pieces from memory where this will enhance confidence, musical awareness and communication.



Encourage learners to retain pieces that they can perform at short notice, i.e. to build up an internalised music library.

Make sure that learners know where and how to stand or sit to perform. If notation is used, check the position and height of stands.

Ensure that learners know how to respond to applause and walk on and off stage.

Refine pieces through simulated performances in lessons, during performances at school and as part of concerts to the wider community.



Aim to stimulate creative thinking when preparing for performance. Encourage learners to consider different ways of communicating the character of the music.



It should be remembered that people respond differently to the idea of performing. It is important to look out for signs of performance anxiety and support learners in developing strategies to address this. Learners should be encouraged to have a sense of anticipation and enjoyment about performing.

### **P3 - F2**

## **Evaluate with perception and some independence the quality of their performance and respond to ideas from others**

Ask learners to reflect on and evaluate each performance in order to make further improvements and build up confidence.

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Organise opportunities for learners to join and perform with directed groups, e.g. bands, orchestras, choirs, large ensembles, ensuring that their musical needs and stage of development are sensitively taken into account.

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Continue to use technology where appropriate to make audio or video recordings so that learners can listen/watch back and evaluate their performance.



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