VCE Music 2017–2022

Study summary

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| **Please Note: This study summary includes excerpts from the VCE Music Study Design. The summary is not a substitute for the VCE Study Design. Users are advised to view the full accredited study design and other resources on the VCAA website.** |

Scope of study

VCE Music is based on active engagement in, and considered response to, all aspects of music. Students develop and refine musicianship skills and critical awareness of their relationship with music as listener, performer, composer, consumer and user of music technologies. They study music styles and genres from diverse cultures, times and locations and analyse and evaluate live and recorded performances and learn to incorporate, adapt and interpret musical elements and ideas from the work of leading practitioners. Through study and practise ways of effectively communicating and expressing musical ideas to an audience as performer and/or composer students develop competence in the use of digital music technologies and equipment as creative tools, broadening their versatility as music practitioners.

Rationale

Music is an integral part of all cultures from the earliest of times, expressing and reflecting human experience. A study of music enables students to strengthen their own relationship with music and to be personally enriched as they develop greater control of their own musical expression. Music learning requires students’ active engagement in the practices of listening, performing and composing. As they learn in music, students apply critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and critique the work of contemporary and historical practitioners and develop their understanding of the diverse ways in which music ideas can be shaped to communicate artistic and expressive intent. VCE Music equips students with personal and musical skills that enable them to follow pathways into tertiary music study or further training in a broad spectrum of music related careers. VCE Music also offers students opportunities for personal development and encourages them to make an ongoing contribution to the culture of their community through participation in life-long music making

Structure

The study is made up of 10 units:

**Music Performance**

**Units 1-2**

**Music Style and Composition**

**Units 1-2**

**Music Performance**

**Units 3-4**

**Music Investigation**

**Units 3-4**

**Music Styles and Composition**

**Units 3-4**

Students may enrol in all units or select specific combinations of units that cater for their interests and intended pathways.

Entry

There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 and 3. Students must undertake Unit 3 prior to undertaking Unit 4. Music Performance Units 1–4, Music Investigation Units 3–4, and Music Style and Composition Units 1–4 are designed to a standard equivalent to the final two years of secondary education. All VCE studies are benchmarked against comparable national and international curriculum. At least four to five years’ experience in learning an instrument/s is recommended before commencing VCE Music Performance and Music Investigation.

Music Performance

Music Performance Units 1 to 4 aims to broaden and enrich students’ musical experience and involves synthesis of knowledge of the music work/s being performed including their structure, style and context and their expressive qualities. Performers use musicianship skills along with instrumental techniques to present musically engaging performances. Through research and analysis of performances by leading practitioners, students become aware of ways that performance conventions, musical nuance and effective communication between performers and audience can facilitate engaging, exciting and meaningful performances. Information about selecting instruments and works for study is provided in the Study Design.

Music Performance Unit 1

Music Performance Unit 1 focuses on building students’ performance and musicianship skills to present performances of selected group and solo music works using one or more instruments. They study the work of other performers and explore strategies to optimise their own approach to performance work to address technical, expressive and stylistic challenges relevant to works they are preparing for performance. Students also develop their listening, aural, theoretical and analytical musicianship skills.

Music Performance Unit 2

Music Performance Unit 2 focuses on building performance and musicianship skills. Students present performances of selected group and solo music works using one or more instruments and take opportunities to perform in familiar and unfamiliar venues and spaces. They study the work of other performers and refine selected strategies to optimise their own approach to performance. They continue to develop their listening, aural, theoretical and analytical musicianship skills and apply this knowledge when preparing and presenting performances.

Music Performance Unit 3

In Music Performance Unit 3 students build and refine their performance and musicianship skills. Students focus on either group or solo performance and begin preparation of a performance program they will present in the end-of-year examination. As part of their preparation, students will take opportunities to perform in familiar and unfamiliar venues and spaces. They study the work of other performers and refine selected strategies to optimise their own approach to performance. Students develop, refine and focus their listening, aural, theoretical and analytical musicianship skills and apply this knowledge when preparing and presenting performances.

Music Performance Unit 4

In Music Performance Unit 4 students focus on further development and refinement of performance and musicianship and continue preparation of a performance program they will present in the end-of-year examination. Through analyses of other performers’ interpretations and feedback on their own performances, students refine their interpretations and optimise their approach to performance. Students continue to address challenges relevant to works they are preparing for performance and to strengthen their listening, aural, theoretical and analytical musicianship skills.

Assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher’s assessment of the student’s performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

Levels of achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4. In the study of Music Performance students’ level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed coursework, a Performance examination and an Aural and Written examination.

Percentage contributions to the study score in Music Performance are as follows:

* School-assessed Coursework
* Unit 3: 20%
* Unit 4: 10%
* End-of-year Performance examination: 50%
* End-of-year Aural and Written examination 20%

Music Investigation

In Music Investigation Units 3-4 students research performance practices relevant to a music style, tradition or genre of their choice. The music style, tradition or genre selected for study may be representative of music practice in a specific time, place or culture, and/or the work of a particular performer or composer. Students design an Investigation Topic as the basis for study of performance techniques and conventions, interpretative possibilities and contextual issues. Through this study they develop listening, aural, theoretical, interpretative and technical musicianship skills and demonstrate findings through performance of established repertoire, music they have composed, improvised or arranged, and commentary about issues that have informed their interpretation of a representative program of works.

Music Investigation Unit 3

In Music Investigation Unit 3 students design and conduct an investigation into performance practices that are characteristic of a music style, tradition or genre. Students begin by researching a selected Investigation Topic and its practices through analysis of a representative sample of music and related contextual issues. They develop their knowledge and understanding of techniques and ways of achieving expressive outcomes and other aspects relevant to performance practice in the style, tradition or genre they are investigating. Students develop and maintain a portfolio to document evidence of their research and findings, composition exercises, sketches or recorded improvisations. Concurrently, students select, rehearse and prepare to perform a program of works that are representative and characteristic of their Investigation Topic.

Music Investigation Unit 4

In Music Investigation Unit 4 students refine the direction and scope of their end-of-year performance program. They also compose, improvise or arrange and perform a work that is characteristic of the music style, tradition or genre they are investigating and continue developing their understanding of relevant performance practices. Students continue to listen to the work of other performers and develop their ability to execute technical and expressive demands and apply performance conventions to realise their intended interpretations of each work.

Assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher’s assessment of the student’s performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

Levels of achievement

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4. In the study of Music Performance students’ level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed coursework, a Performance examination and an Aural and Written examination.

Percentage contributions to the study score in Music Investigation are as follows:

* Unit 3 School-assessed Coursework: 30%
* Unit 4 School-assessed Coursework: 20%
* End-of-year Performance examination: 50%

Music Style and Composition

In Music Style and Composition Units 1 to 4 students explore ways sound can be organised in music to create expressive outcomes. Through critical listening, analysis and composition, students develop understanding of ways music is organised, created and performed in a range of styles and traditions. Study of music works in diverse styles and traditions involves aural and visual analysis and consideration of the organisation and context of each work. Students’ analysis and knowledge of how composers use ideas, stimuli and creative processes becomes a starting point for creating their own music.

Music Style and Composition Unit 1

In Music Style and Composition Unit 1 students explore and develop their understanding of the diverse practice of music creators working in different times, places and traditions. Students analyse selected works from three distinct music styles including music that is not from the Western art music or popular repertoires, and consider the role that context plays in the creation of these works. They compose and/or arrange brief creative exercises in response to their understanding of the music and the creative processes they have studied.

Music Style and Composition Unit 2

In Music Style and Composition Unit 2 students extend their understanding of the diverse practices of music through a study of music created for works in multi-disciplinary forms. As students listen and respond to music from a wide range of music styles, they improve their familiarity with elements of music and ways composers/music creators treat these elements and use compositional devices to create specific effects. Students compose and/or arrange music for a multi-disciplinary work of their choice in response to their understanding of the music and the creative processes they have studied.

Music Style and Composition Unit 3

In Music Style and Composition Unit 3 students explore music works in a range of styles and genres to develop an understanding of the diverse practices of music creators working in different times, places and stylistic traditions. They expand their knowledge of ways composers/music creators manipulate elements of music and use compositional devices to create style and elicit responses. Students apply this knowledge to make critical responses to music excerpts, study the music characteristics and style of music works and compose brief creative exercises.

Music Style and Composition Unit 4

In Music Style and Composition Unit 4 students consolidate their understanding of the diverse practices of music creators working in different times, places and stylistic traditions. They expand their knowledge of the ways composers/music creators manipulate elements of music and use compositional devices to create style, structure music works and elicit subjective responses. They formulate and present critical responses to music excerpts and study music created since 1950, and develop understanding of the role that context has played in the creation of this work. Students create an original music work and document their creative processes from initial intention to final outcome.

Assessment

Satisfactory completion

The award of satisfactory completion for a unit is based on a decision that the student has demonstrated achievement of the set of outcomes specified for the unit. This decision will be based on the teacher’s assessment of the student’s performance on assessment tasks designated for the unit.

Levels of achievement

Units 1 and 2

Procedures for the assessment of levels of achievement in Units 1 and 2 are a matter for school decision.

Units 3 and 4

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority will supervise the assessment of all students undertaking Units 3 and 4. In the study of Music Performance students’ level of achievement will be determined by School-assessed coursework, a Performance examination and an Aural and Written examination.

Percentage contributions to the study score in Music Performance are as follows:

* School-assessed Coursework
* Unit 3: 15%
* Unit 4: 15%
* Externally-assessed Task: 30%
* End-of-year Aural and Written examination 40%