

## 9 Composition and Musicology Portfolios in Stage 6 Music

Internal assessment of a submitted work in Composition or Musicology will be based on material drawn from a portfolio rather than the final work. The final compositions and final musicology essays will be marked in the Higher School Certificate examination. In addition, the portfolio can be used to document progress in various teaching and learning activities. Please refer to Stage 6 syllabuses in Music 1, Music 2 and Music Extension.

### Why have Composition and Musicology portfolios?

- To document the development of students' skills, knowledge and abilities in composition and musicology
- To facilitate student reflection on their own work as it develops over time
- To provide a tool for internal assessment of a submitted work in composition and musicology
- To validate authorship of a submitted work.

### What is the difference between a process diary and a portfolio?

A portfolio documents a student's development of compositional or musicological skills, knowledge and abilities over a period of time. It highlights the influences a student has been exposed to, things that the student has recognised as being significant for their intentions and the musical turning points that have contributed to the original ideas and techniques used in the development of these skills. Therefore, it has a broader focus than that of a process diary.

The previous syllabus stated that a process diary:

- is a chronological record of all the activities, research, listening, experimenting, performing, reflecting, revising, recording and notating that have taken place in order to complete a specific composition or musicology component of the HSC course.

A portfolio builds on the previous syllabus requirements in the following ways:

- it may include the activities undertaken for development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the styles, periods or genres in which the student is working
- a portfolio documents skills and knowledge and their development in the compositional or musicological research process. It may contain activities in research, listening, experimenting, performing, reflecting, revising, recording and notating that have taken place in order to complete a specific composition or musicology component of the HSC course
- it may include a form of a process diary for a specific work or works.

**For a student, the portfolio is a:**

- tool for reflection on their own processes and works in developing compositions and/or musicology activities
- record of the planning involved in developing compositions and/or musicology essays
- record of ideas, used and unused, in developing compositions and/or musicology essays
- record of resolutions to musical problems.

**Teachers and the portfolio**

While the portfolio is a record of students' independent work, teachers should take an active role in facilitating student use of portfolios in composition and musicology. There are four key areas in which the teacher can assist: planning, providing directions, providing feedback and formally assessing. The following guide demonstrates some of the ways in which a teacher could assist students with these four key areas of portfolio development.

*Planning:*

- facilitate experimentation and formulation of ideas
- facilitate the gathering of resources
- provide a broad base of composition or musicology activities
- provide a broad base of activities relating to the development of the submitted work.

*Providing Directions:*

- provide regular meeting with students to discuss their compositional and musicological ideas
- monitor student development of ideas and work/s in progress
- provide activities for the exploration in different styles, periods and genres
- discuss a range of ways that suggest how the work could be developed
- assist with performance/score conventions
- assist with research methods.

*Providing Feedback:*

- provide comments on works in progress
- discuss the effectiveness of directions taken in work under development
- comment on portfolio development and contents
- provide both formal and informal responses highlighting strengths and weaknesses of the work.

*Formally Assessing:*

- ensure that assessment of activities relate to syllabus outcomes
- devise appropriate assessment tasks that allow students to demonstrate their skills, knowledge and understanding in composition and/or musicology
- provide feedback to students on assessment results.

## **What does a composition portfolio document?**

A developmental record of compositional skills, knowledge and abilities.

- Class-based exercises to develop skills and knowledge in composition.
- Specific exercises undertaken that show knowledge of, or skills in, particular compositional techniques.
- Exercises that explore the concepts of music and the relationship between them in various styles, periods and genres.

A record of the planning involved with developing a composition.

- Gathering of background information on compositional style, processes and compositional techniques relevant to the submitted work.
- A journal of the development of a work in progress.

A record of ideas, used and unused.

- Draft versions of compositions at various stages.
- Annotated fragments of compositional ideas that have been used.
- Annotated fragments of compositional ideas that have been rejected.
- Experimentations and improvisations within selected styles, periods and genres.

A record of resolutions to musical problems.

- Journal entries detailing the use of material.
- Annotated work showing the development of thematic, harmonic materials etc and the alterations made to ideas.

Reflections of their own work and the work of others.

- Annotated evaluations of own work detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the work.
- Annotated reflections of the compositions of other composers.
- Analysis of other composers' use of the concepts of music and compositional techniques.
- Aural analysis of musical works through listening, concert attendance, etc.

Influences on compositional style.

- Detailed descriptions of the intent of the compositions.
- Details of compositional influences, eg listening works, compositions, performance repertoire.
- Annotations of background reading in compositional techniques and practice in various styles, periods and genres.