



New College: National Extended Certificate in Music (Performance)

Summer Independent Learning Task

This summer independent learning task is designed to help you explore the fundamental elements that contribute to a successful musical ensemble. By engaging with this task, you will develop a deeper understanding of ensemble dynamics, performance skills, and collaborative teamwork, all crucial for your BTEC Level 3 National Extended Certificate in Music.

Task: Unpacking the Successful Musical Ensemble

Objective: To demonstrate your comprehensive understanding of the elements that contribute to the success of musical ensembles, by creating an engaging presentation for aspiring young musicians.

Instructions:

1. **Choose Your Ensemble:** Select a musical group or ensemble that you believe best showcases the different elements that make up a successful musical ensemble. This could be a specific band, orchestra, choir, or any other musical group you admire.
2. **Create Your Presentation:** Develop your presentation using one of the following formats:
 - **PowerPoint**
 - **SWAY (Microsoft)**
 - **Video Presentation**

3. **Content Requirements – What Makes Them Successful?** Your presentation must clearly demonstrate your understanding of the elements that contribute to a successful musical group. Include the following key areas, providing specific examples from your chosen ensemble:

○ **A. Personal Ensemble Management Skills:**

- **Attendance and punctuality:** How does the ensemble manage this?
- **Personal organisation:** How do members handle their instruments, equipment, and music?
- **Awareness of health and safety issues:** Any examples of how this is addressed?
- **Learning material:** How do members learn and prepare their parts?
- **Personal practice between rehearsals:** How vital is individual practice to their collective success?
- **Encouragement and positive feedback:** How do members support each other?
- **Rehearsal etiquette:** What behaviours contribute positively during rehearsals?

○ **B. Ensemble Performance Skills:**

- **Listening to others:** How do members ensure they are actively listening within the group?
- **Accuracy of rhythm and pitch:** How do they achieve precision?
- **Playing in time and playing in tune:** Discuss techniques or examples that highlight this.
- **Adjusting to other members:** How do they adapt their playing?
- **Following direction:** How do they respond to a conductor or leader?
- **Balancing own part in the ensemble:** How do they ensure their individual contribution fits the overall sound?
- **Awareness of own part:** How well do they understand their role?
- **Reading music:** If applicable, how does music reading contribute to their performance?

○ **C. Teamwork and Collaboration:**

- **Giving and taking instruction and direction:** How do they effectively communicate?
- **Trust and cooperation:** Provide examples of these qualities in action.
- **Contributing ideas and problem-solving:** How do they collectively overcome challenges or innovate?
- **Receptiveness and responsiveness to the ideas of others:** How open are they to new ideas?
- **The impact of unprofessional behaviour:** Briefly discuss how negative behaviour could affect an ensemble.

4. **Support Your Analysis with Evidence:**

- Your presentation should include **photographs, video, and/or audio clips** to visually and audibly evidence these elements and highlight key points in the musical career or specific performances of your chosen ensemble.
- Using carefully chosen **video clips**, analyse performances to support your reasons as to what makes a successful musical ensemble.
- Include **musical examples** from your chosen group/ensemble type to back up your understanding of these elements.

Going Further (Stretch & Challenge Ideas):

To deepen your analysis and achieve a higher level of understanding, consider these additional challenges:

- **Elaborate & Reference:** Beyond explaining the elements, elaborate on *why* each element is important, referencing specific video performances, biographical materials, or interviews with artists.
- **Compare and Contrast:** Discuss the **relative importance of each element** and its unique contribution to the success of *different types* of musical ensembles.
 - Can you compare a rock band to an orchestra?
 - Is the order of importance for these elements still the same, or do they differ? Why might they be different?
 - Cross-reference with other musical ensembles to support your arguments.