

Course Overviews MYP Music, UWC Thailand 2026-2027

All units taught in grades 6 to 10 are continuously being developed and improved to best meet the needs of the students at UWCT. Therefore, the following overview only reflects current plans for the course. Some changes to these course overviews may occur due to planning done throughout the academic year.

Grade	Unit Number and Title	Key and Related Concepts	Global Context	Statement of Inquiry	Inquiry Questions	Approaches To learning skills taught / learnt / developed in this unit	Content (topics / knowledge/ subject specific skills)	Summative Assessment and MYP Criteria Assessed
6	Unit 1 Building Bricks (DocuMantaray & The Elements of Music)	Communication Interpretation and Composition	Personal and Cultural Expression Creation	Interpretation of the Elements of Music helps to create and communicate a message	Factual: - What are the elements of music? - What is the role of the elements of music in communication? - What is descriptive music? Conceptual: - How do we interpret music created by different composers? - How can music be used in communication? Debatable: Can different compositions convey the same message?	Communication: I. Communication Skills Self-Management: III. Organisation Skills V. Reflection Skills	In this unit, students will learn about <i>Pitch, Dynamics, Duration, Tempo, Texture, Timbre/Sonority, Articulation</i>, and <i>Silence</i>. They will also be introduced to Graphic Notation and Graphic Scores through the interrelated musical strands of Performing, Creating, Listening, and Appraising. This will develop their understanding of the Elements of Music and provide them with a foundation of musical vocabulary. During this unit, students will develop individual control of a range of sounds, placing them into a musical context. They will explore how the elements of music can be adapted and manipulated to create a composition in order to convey a message. They will also look at how art can provide the inspiration and stimulus for composition and how we can communicate through art. Mussorgsky's work "Pictures at an Exhibition" is based on his close friend, the painter and architect Victor Hartmann's paintings at an exhibition mounted shortly after his death. Students will explore how Mussorgsky captures the mood of some paintings through sounds and how the elements of music are used to create different effects. Finally, students will compose their own piece of descriptive or background music inspired by the DOCUMANTARAY they are working on. For this final composition, students will use and record sounds and sound sources by playing classroom instruments and pre-recorded loops on the GarageBand application.	Criterion Ci: Documentary music composition Criterion Di, ii: Written Evaluation and Reflection
6	Unit 2 Keyboard Skills	Communication Expression and Presentation	Personal and Cultural Expression Creation	Written communication can be expressed and presented in various creative ways	Factual: - What is an effective way to communicate music? - What is a chord progression? - How do you create a chord? Conceptual: - Can reading music notation help express one's musicality? - How did the keyboard develop from other keyboard instruments? Debatable: To what extent does music need to be written down to present and express a composer's message?	Communication: I. Communication Skills Research: VI. Information Literacy Skills	This unit is all about effective keyboard performance techniques, including basic treble clef staff notation. The unit begins with a general introduction and a "Keyboard Treasure Hunt" around a standard classroom keyboard. This is a good chance to navigate basic keyboard functions, establish good playing routines, and rectify and troubleshoot any potential technical problems. Students learn about other keyboard instruments such as the Harpsichord, Celesta, Accordion, Organ, Clavichord, Piano (upright and grand), and Synthesizers before establishing the importance of correct playing position and posture and keyboard warm-ups. Students move on to learn about using keyboard fingering for better playing skills, built through a range of exercises such as scales and simple right-hand melodies in the key of C Major. Students explore the keyboard's layout in terms of white and black keys and their note names, sharps, and flats as enharmonic equivalents. They also explore how to "read music" in the form of simple melodies and melodies from popular songs in treble clef staff notation. They then add a second part of basic chords with the left hand. Since this unit is primarily performance-based, there are optional pathways to perform and compose either a round for keyboard ensemble or to explore short musical clichés for keyboard. The final lesson(s) have been left as "Independent Practice", where it is hoped that through their skills, knowledge, and understanding of 'good keyboard practice and playing technique', students will take responsibility for their learning of either a solo, paired or small ensemble keyboard piece which can be performed at the end of the unit. If the unit is being delivered before Christmas, then the final "Independent Practice" lesson(s)	Criterion Ai, ii: Research and Presentation on Keyboard Skills Criterion Bi, ii: Process Journal (written entries supported by screen-shots of the performance development)

							could be spent rehearsing and performing a keyboard arrangement of a Christmas song or arrangement.	
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7	Unit 1 African Drumming	Culture Composition and Presentation	Identities and Relationships Community connections	Composition and presentation promote cultural identity and foster community connections	Factual: - What is cultural identity? - What features represent African music and culture? - What are some types of composition and performance techniques used in African music? Conceptual: - How can music be used to support cultural identity? - How can music performances foster community connections? Debatable: To what extent can culture and its music bring together a community ?	Communication I. Communication Skills Self-Management: III. Organisation Skills IV. Affective Skills	This unit explores the main rhythmic musical features and devices used in African music, particularly the African drumming tradition of West Africa. They will consider how music is used to support African cultural identity. Students will learn three of the techniques in African drumming for producing different sounds, and they will explore how these techniques can be combined. They will practice performing them using African "djembe" drums. They will look into the ways how drumming can be used for communication and how music-making can bring people and communities together. Students will learn how “cyclic rhythms” and “polyrhythms” are used in African drumming and perform a group polyrhythmic texture. They will learn about syncopation as an offbeat rhythmic feature and its effect on a regular beat. They will explore “call and response” as a feature of African music, and they will “improvise” and compose different call and response rhythms. Students will use their knowledge of African music to create, rehearse and perform an ensemble piece of African-inspired music.	Criterion Ai, ii: African Music Presentation (Google Slides) Criterion Bi, ii: Performance of an African-inspired Piece
7	Unit 2 Feeling the Blues (Blues Music)	Identity Genre and Style	Personal and Cultural Expression Ways of life	Genre builds its identity and style around the ways people live and express themselves personally or culturally	Factual: - What is Blues? - What identifies a genre of music? - What is the difference between genre and style? Conceptual: - How is the Blues genre identified through people's lives? - How do the Blues musicians express themselves and their lives in their music? Debatable: Does freedom lead to free expression or does free expression leads to freedom?	Research: VI. Information Literacy Skills Thinking: IX. Creative Thinking Skills X. Transfer Skills	This unit will develop students' understanding of bass lines and chords as a harmonic foundation upon which a melody can be constructed and as a foundation for improvisation. Students will begin by learning about the history, origin, and development of the Blues and its characteristic 12-bar Blues structure, exploring how a walking bass line is developed from a chord progression. They will practice performing the simple bass line, chords, and walking bass line parts of the 12-bar blues chord sequence. Students will also explore the effect of adding a melodic improvisation using the blues scale and the effect that “swing” rhythms have as used in jazz and blues music. They will learn to combine the above blues features to create a performance with improvisation sections, using the blues scale notes and a jazz feel to the music. They will be introduced to seventh chords, their formation, and their characteristic sound in jazz and blues music.	Criterion Ci: Process Journal (written entries supported by sound and/or video recordings of the performance development) Criterion Di, ii: Voice and/or Video recorded Reflection and Evaluation
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8	Unit 1 Living in Harmony (Chords and Bass Lines)	Identity Genre and Structure	Personal and Cultural Expression Creation	The identity of a genre can be created and expressed through its structure	Factual: - What is Rock ‘n’ Roll? - What is the usual structure of Rock ‘n’ Roll genre? - What is the difference between horizontal and vertical structure? Conceptual: - Why is the understanding of structure important when identifying as well as creating music in a certain genre? - How can we use the Rock ‘n’ Roll genre to express our creativity? Debatable: Is the genre of Rock ‘n’ Roll already dead?	Social: II. Collaboration Skills Self-Management: V. Reflection Skills	This unit examines Rock ‘n’ Roll as a musical genre developed in the 1950s by combining country and western and rhythm and blues styles. Students will learn about the origins and key features of Rock ‘n’ Roll music by listening to a variety of Rock ‘n’ Roll songs and performing bass lines, which are developed into a chord progression and finally into the Twelve-Bar Blues, upon which Rock ‘n’ Roll music is based. They will learn about Triads and 7th Chords and construct and perform different chords with a bass line. Students will take part in a class performance, with an awareness of the harmonic structure in the bass line and chord progression and the overall structure of the song, including sections such as the introduction, verse, chorus, solo improvisation, and coda. To wrap up their learning, students will work in small groups and create a performance of a well-known Rock ‘n’ Roll song of their choice, which they will showcase to the audience.	Criterion Ci: Creating/Performing (written entries supported by sound and/or video recordings of the performance development) Criterion Di, ii: will be evidenced through the student’s performance task and their responses to the questions.
8	Unit 2 Soundtracks	Communication Presentation and Boundaries	Orientation in space and time Constraints and Adaptation	Adapting presentations within the boundaries of time and space enhances communication	Factual: - What is a soundtrack? - What musical features make a good soundtrack presentation? - What is the role of communication in soundtracks? Conceptual:	Thinking: X. Transfer Skills	This unit aims to give students the experience of being “<i>film soundtrack composers</i>.” It explores the challenges and musical devices used in film soundtrack composition. The unit focuses on three <i>genres</i> of film soundtracks: <i>Action/Thriller Soundtracks</i>, <i>Western Soundtracks</i>, and “<i>Horror Movie Soundtracks</i>.”	Criterion Ai, ii: Responding to the guiding questions and statements for music soundtracks Criterion Bi, ii: Composition of a Soundtrack to “No Time To Die” Trailer

					- How is communication enhanced through soundtracks? - How do the time and space constraints affect the presentation that a music composer makes when adapting or creating a soundtrack? Debatable: To what extent do soundtrack presentations enhance or detract from the visual on-screen action?		Students begin by exploring <i>Leitmotifs</i> and how they have been used to represent certain “characters” or “situations” in films before exploring how <i>Themes</i> have been used in film soundtracks and performing a number of “<i>James Bond</i>” <i>Themes</i>. They will also perform a famous <i>Theme</i> from a ‘<i>Western</i>’ exploring how film music composers use instruments “associated” with ‘<i>The Wild West</i>’ to create a sense of <i>Time</i> and <i>Place</i>. Students explore soundtracks to “<i>Horror Movies</i>,” learning about <i>Concords</i> and <i>Discords</i> and how “Horror Movie” composers use <i>Discords</i>, instrumentation, and extremes of <i>Pitch</i>. Finally, students will compose their own soundtrack to the new James Bond film trailer “<i>No Time To Die</i>,” using “<i>Cuesheets</i>” to create music to fit with exact timings. Students will use the GarageBand application for this final composition, in which they will work with pre-recorded loops and sound sources and record their own piano parts.	
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9	Unit 1 The Musician in Me (Performance)	Development Presentation and Structure	Personal and Cultural Expression Appreciation of the aesthetics and enjoyment of the performance	To grow as an artist , you need to develop your theoretical knowledge, personal and cultural musical skills, as well as appreciate aesthetics , to present a well-structured performance	Factual: - What does it mean to be an artist? - What personal and cultural musical skills does a good artist need to develop? - What types of artists are there? Conceptual: - How much does a musician need to prepare in order to develop a good presentation? - How can a musician develop his/her performance skills? Debatable: Can a musician create music without involving his/her personal and cultural ideas and feelings?	Self-Management: IV. Affective Skills	This unit will run as a year-long unit alongside the other units in music. It will provide an opportunity for students to focus on developing their performance skills as well as their understanding and applying the theoretical knowledge behind each piece of music. Students will be given numerous opportunities to perform their chosen music pieces during class time as well as at the music events throughout the year. This unit will continue in Grade 10 and is designed to prepare students for the Diploma Programme music course.	Criterion Ci: Performance of 2 contrasting pieces of music Criterion Di, ii: Responding to the questions and statements in the written task
9	Unit 2 Music Across the Ages (Baroque and Classical Period)	Identity Interpretation and Presentation	Orientation in Space and Time Eras	Every era can be interpreted and presented by an understanding of its identity	Factual: - What does the Baroque era mean in music? - What defines the Classical period of music? - What forms and structures are used in Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods? Conceptual: - How do the composers create and identify music specifically for different musical periods? - How does understanding musical periods' main features help us perform music? Debatable: Is it possible to interpret and present music without knowing its identity?	Communication I. Communication Skills Social: II. Collaboration Skills	In this unit, students will explore and compare two periods of music - Baroque and Classical. They will start with learning about how Western music tradition is divided into periods of music and their main features. They will then focus on the Baroque and Classical periods only. They will investigate different features, forms, structures, instruments, and development of the orchestra in both periods. They will listen to and analyse different pieces of music from both periods, focusing on the elements of music, specific features, and instruments. They will learn to identify unknown pieces of music aurally, supporting their reasoning with the acquired knowledge. Students will study the development of musical pieces in these two periods and use this knowledge when working on their performance tasks. For their final assessment, they will learn to play a piece from the Baroque or Classical periods. Each student will document their work on their rehearsal and performance in the Process Journal. They will build an artistic intention and develop their performance in line with the statement of inquiry and the global context.	Criterion Ai, ii: Listening Test on Baroque, Classical Periods of Music Criterion Bi, ii: Process Journal Criterion Ci: Performance of a Baroque or Classical period music Criterion Di, ii: Evaluation of a Baroque musical piece and a Classical period music

9	Unit 3 Time for a Change	Change Expression and Interpretation	Personal and Cultural Expression Creation	Creation and interpretation of original compositions from a personal or a cultural perspective breathe new life into the music	Factual: - What does creation or composition mean in music? - What is the difference between composing and arranging music? - What are the strategies and techniques for composing music? Conceptual: - How do we apply the elements of music when composing music? - How do we express our preference for different musical styles? Debatable: Does personal and cultural perspective affect composing or interpreting a piece of music?	Thinking: IX. Creative Thinking Skills Research: VI. Information Literacy Skills	This unit aims to enhance the student's knowledge of music composition by building upon the skills and techniques acquired during previous lessons. The students will engage in the theoretical interpretation of music composition techniques and apply this understanding to their own compositions. A written component will be required to accompany each student's composition, as a means of demonstrating their comprehension of the course's concepts. Additionally, the students will be expected to address any modifications made to their compositions in response to the feedback received. The students will document their creative process throughout the unit, commencing with their artistic intent and developing their creative thinking skills, including investigation, planning, progression, and reflection.	Criterion Ai, ii: Written task Criterion Bi, ii: Music Composition Criterion Ci: Process Journal Criterion Di, ii: Evaluation of Performance
10	Unit 1 Take the Chance (20th Century Music)	Change Expression and Interpretation	Orientation in Space and Time Boundaries	Changing traditional views of music pushes boundaries and allows performers to express or interpret it in new styles.	Factual: - What is music in the traditional sense of the word? - What is 20th-century music? - What are some techniques to interpret this type of music? Conceptual: - How do 20th-century music artists challenge boundaries in composition and performance? - How does change in the traditional perception of music generate innovative ideas and expression? Debatable: Is "silence" music?	Self-Management: III. Organisation Skills V. Reflection Skills Research: VI. Information Literacy Skills Thinking: IX. Creative Thinking Skills	This unit introduces students to the development and conventions of 20th-century music and its styles. Students will inquire into what music is in the traditional sense of the word and how 20th-century music emerged as a reaction to the Romantic period of music and other traditional styles. They will research various styles and composers of 20th-century music and learn about the compositional techniques used in these styles. They will explore how changes in traditional compositional styles and techniques can bring new ideas and push boundaries in creating music. As part of their assessment, the students will choose a piece to perform from one of the 20th-century styles explored in the class.	Criterion Ai, ii: Responding to the guiding questions and statements about the 20th-century music Criterion Bi, ii: Process Journal Criterion Ci: Performance of a 20th-century musical piece Criterion Di, ii: Reflection and Evaluation of a 20th-century musical piece
10	Unit 2 Rhythms of the World (World Music)	Aesthetics Expression and Interpretation	Personal and Cultural Expression Beauty	Culture can be expressed through interpretation of beauty and taste	Factual: - What is World Music? - What are the characteristics of some World Music cultures? - What defines beautiful and tasteful music in cultures around the world? Conceptual: - How does understanding the aesthetics of culture help us interpret pieces of music? - Why is expression important when creating and performing music? Debatable: Can the aesthetics of different cultures influence each other?	Self-Management: V. Reflection Skills Thinking: IX. Creative Thinking Skills X. Transfer Skills	In this unit, students will further develop their knowledge and understanding of different World Music cultures. They will focus on the aesthetics of different cultures and how rhythmic patterns are used to distinguish between musical styles. Students will start by exploring melodies, harmonies, timbres, structures, and other musical features of various World Music cultures, such as Indian Classical Music, Punjabi Bhangra, Middle Eastern, African, Calypso, and Samba styles. They will compose short rhythmic or melodic pieces to demonstrate their understanding of beauty and taste in each music culture. They will also critique each other's work. Students will learn about podcasts, how to create them, and listen to examples of World Music podcasts. To finalize the unit, students will create their arrangement of a piece of music (either a well-known song or their melody) in a chosen World Music culture style. They will create a presentation through which they will introduce their chosen culture, comment on the composition process, and showcase and critique their final artwork.	Criterion Ai, ii: Responding to the guiding questions and statements about the Rhythms of the World Criterion Bi, ii: Process Journal (written entries)
10	Unit 3 The Musician in Me (Performance)	Development Presentation and Structure	Personal and Cultural Expression Appreciation of the aesthetics and enjoyment of the performance	To grow as an artist, you need to develop your theoretical knowledge, personal and cultural musical skills as well as appreciate aesthetics to present a well-structured performance	Factual: - What does it mean to be an artist? - What personal and cultural musical skills does a good artist need to develop? - What types of artists are there? Conceptual: - How much does a musician need to prepare in order to develop a good presentation? - How can a musician develop his/her performance skills?	Self-Management: IV. Affective Skills	This unit is designed to prepare students for the Diploma Programme music course, especially for its solo performance component. This unit starts in Grade 9 and continues throughout Grade 10. It provides an opportunity for students to focus on developing their performance skills and their understanding and applying the theoretical knowledge behind each piece of music. Students will be given numerous opportunities to perform their chosen music pieces during class through short formative performances and at the school's music events.	Criterion Ci: Evidenced through the entries in Process Journal and the final performance Criterion Di, ii: Reflection and Evaluation. A written critique of the final performance of self and others.

					Debatable: Can a musician create music without involving his/her personal and cultural ideas and feelings?		The final assessment will take place towards the end of the academic year and will consist of a performance for an audience.	
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