



September 2026

RE: GCSE Music Deadlines

Dear Parents and Carers,

A large part of the GCSE Music course is our performing and composition coursework. Students have been working on these pieces in lessons over the course of Year 10 and the start of Year 11. I am writing to you today about several deadlines we have coming up so that you and your child are fully informed and know what to expect. Both performance and composition require time investment to get the best results, and I would encourage everyone to put that time in now, before the pressure of exams starts to build. This reflects The Willink's school's commitment to engaging in order to achieve; we know that the effort students put in now will pay off both in their final grades and in the confidence they carry forward.

Performance

For performance, each student needs to complete two recordings – one solo and one ensemble. Together the two pieces need to add up to between 4 and 7 minutes, with each piece being no less than 1 minute. They must also have a score of their chosen pieces. These performances are recorded in school on the following dates:

- Recording Window 1: 10th and 11th November – focusing on solo performances
- Recording Window 2: 26th and 27th January – focusing on ensemble performances

During each of these windows your child will have a 20-minute slot where they will leave lessons and come to Music to record their piece. During this slot they will have the opportunity to record several times, and we will select the best recording for submission.

If your child is sufficiently ready, earlier opportunities to record will be made available. They should discuss this directly with their teacher.

If your child is completing their ensemble with a peer or teacher outside of school, they are expected to arrange a suitable time to record their performance with their teacher.

Composition

For composition, each student needs to write two pieces of music – one free composition and one brief composition. The two compositions need to add up to at least 3 minutes. Students have already started work on their free composition and should be nearing completion. We will be starting work on the brief composition in November. A list of deadlines is below.



Free composition:

- Final deadline: Thursday 22nd October

Brief composition:

- 1st draft: Monday 4th January
- 2nd draft: Friday 13th February
- Final deadline: Thursday 24th March

If you have any questions about any information in this letter, or any other aspect of the GCSE Music course, please contact me at tmurray@willink.w-berks.sch.uk

Yours sincerely,

Tom Murray
Head of Music