Introducing Composition

Melodic and harmonic ideas

Learners should use compositional techniques such as:

- repetition
- sequence
- decoration
- variation
- modulation
- changing tonality
- transposition
- use of contrast
- transformations, e.g. inversion, retrograde, retrograde inversion
- cut and paste techniques
- processes, e.g. canon, phasing, addition, subtraction, augmentation, diminution, displacement
- instrumentation
- textures, e.g. polyphonic, homophonic, unison, octaves, counterpoint
- chord voicings/inversions.

- melodic ideas and fragments
- rhythmic patterns
- chords and chord progressions
- harmonic systems
- textures
- riffs and hooks
- sound palettes
- improvisation and experimentation

Presenting musical ideas

Learners should be aware of and use as appropriate any of the following:

- conventions of particular styles, genres (recordings, MIDI and audio files)
- standard notation, e.g. scores, parts
- tab, e.g. guitar, drum, bass etc
- graphic notation
- lead sheet
- chord chart
- accepted graphic notations
- technological solutions such as online and apps.

Shaping musical ideas

- block structures (binary, ternary, rondo, arch, ground bass)
- style
- introductions
- codas
- song structures (12-bar blues and other templates, verse-chorus constructions)
- effective use of repetition and contrast
- pace, e.g. maintaining momentum
- contrasts
- balancing repetition and change.