

Year 9 Music Progression Map

Increasing independence: retrieve -> select -> manipulate -> develop -> refine -> justify musical decisions.

Strand	1. Pop Performance & Composition - Shape of You	2. Keyboard Skills - Repertoire TBC	3. Ukulele - Retrieval & Extension	4. Minimalism - Patterns, Process & Ensemble	5. Film/Game Music - Timbre, Motif & Meaning
Pulse, rhythm & metre	Maintain increasingly complex pop parts, including syncopation; compose melodies that sit securely over a backing track.	Perform more demanding rhythms fluently; add simple left-hand roles where appropriate without sacrificing security.	Heavy retrieval: re-establish pulse/strumming quickly, then extend rhythmic control through more varied patterns.	Major development: manipulate repeated cells through layering, addition/subtraction and gradual change; hold independent parts.	Identify and manipulate pulse, tempo and rhythmic activity to create movement, tension or character.
Pitch & melody	Major creative development: generate ideas from major/minor scales; select, record, retrieve and develop them into coherent melodies.	Perform a more demanding melody over a wider range; develop accuracy, phrasing and expressive shape.	Retrieve familiar melodies through song repertoire; understand more independently how accompaniment supports melody.	Develop short melodic cells through repetition, transposition, extension and controlled change.	Major analytical focus: recognise motif/leitmotif, register, contour and tonality; manipulate melody to alter meaning.
Keyboard technique	Apply keyboard skills to pop parts and to testing/developing composition ideas.	Major technical development: increase fluency, fingering, range and expressive control; progress accessibly from secure one-hand playing towards simple independent left-hand roles.	-	Use keyboards to perform/layer repeated cells where appropriate and maintain an independent ensemble role.	Apply keyboard technique to short motifs/themes; vary register, articulation, dynamics or accompaniment deliberately.
Harmony & chords	Understand how major/minor scale material fits the backing harmony; perform chordal roles where appropriate.	Develop melody with simple harmonic/bass support where appropriate; two hands are an extension, not a barrier.	Retrieve and extend earlier chord vocabulary; add new chords and make smoother, more independent transitions.	Explore pedal notes/drones, repeated harmonic cells and layered patterns where appropriate.	Hear and explain how tonality, pedal notes, consonance/dissonance and harmonic choices affect meaning.
Notation	Major development: record compositions so they can be retrieved next lesson; use stave, letter names, rhythmic or meaningful graphic notation.	Follow increasingly demanding notation/chord symbols with less teacher support; connect reading directly to fluent performance.	Read chord diagrams, symbols and rhythmic/strumming notation increasingly independently.	Record and organise patterns using conventional, rhythmic or graphic notation; follow layered scores.	Interpret short motifs/scores and show deliberate changes in register, duration, dynamics or texture.
Performing	Perform demanding pop roles and combine parts securely; move from reproduction towards confident ensemble contribution.	Develop accuracy -> fluency -> expression; diagnose difficulties and progress through accessible levels of challenge.	Retrieve prior technique quickly; perform with greater continuity, rhythmic control and confidence.	Major ensemble development: maintain independent cells, control entries/exits and respond to structural changes.	Perform short themes with expressive control; alter articulation, register, timbre or dynamics to change effect.
Singing	Use vocals selectively as one ensemble role; maintain short material securely and rehearse increasingly without continuous teacher modelling.	Use singing only where helpful to internalise melody/phrasing.	Use singing selectively to support repertoire and ensemble performance.	Voice may be used for patterns where appropriate; not a major focus.	Use voice selectively to explore motif, texture or expressive effect; no sustained whole-class singing requirement.
Composition	Major focus: move from Year 8 improvisation to sustained composition - explore scale ideas, select, notate, retrieve, develop and refine them over several lessons.	Not a major focus; pupils may adapt accompaniment or interpretation.	Make small creative choices through strumming, accompaniment and arrangement.	Major developmental focus: manipulate cells through repetition, layering, addition/subtraction and gradual change; organise a coherent structure.	Complete a short constrained task: alter motif, timbre, register, dynamics, texture or tonality for a deliberate dramatic effect.
Listening	Analyse how bassline, chords, rhythm, vocals and production layers interact; evaluate whether own compositions fit the backing.	Listen critically to accuracy, fluency, phrasing, articulation and balance; identify specific improvements.	Compare accompaniment styles and explain how strumming/chord choices affect character.	Identify layering, ostinato, gradual process, textural growth and structural change.	Major Year 9 focus: explain how several musical elements interact to create character, tension, atmosphere or narrative meaning.
Musical vocabulary	Apply scale, tonality, bassline, syncopation, chord sequence, motif, phrase, repetition and contrast; justify compositional choices.	Use phrasing, articulation, dynamics, balance, register, accompaniment and fluency accurately.	Retrieve chord, strumming, accompaniment, syncopation, rhythm and texture; extend where repertoire requires.	Use ostinato, cell, layering, additive/subtractive process, gradual change, texture and structure accurately.	Use motif, leitmotif, register, instrumentation, sonority, articulation, texture and tonality analytically.
Texture & structure	Understand and manipulate pop-song layers; use texture/structure deliberately in performance and composition.	Perform melody with accompaniment where appropriate; understand changing roles between hands and layers.	Vary accompaniment texture while maintaining song structure.	Major development: build, thin and reorganise texture; use process to create structural development.	Major analytical development: explain and manipulate how texture, orchestration and structure create dramatic effect.
Timbre & instruments	Identify roles of voice, bass, keyboard and other pop timbres; choose suitable sounds when performing/composing.	Develop deliberate control of keyboard sonority through touch, articulation and register.	Control ukulele timbre through attack, strumming position and technique.	Explore how contrasting timbres affect layered textures; select sounds purposefully.	Major focus: recognise/compare instrumental and vocal timbres; explain why particular sounds are effective in context.
Genre, style & context	Understand characteristic features of contemporary pop and make stylistically appropriate performance/composition choices.	Repertoire TBC: contextual learning supports technical development rather than driving the unit.	Explore how accompaniment conventions vary across song styles; apply suitable strumming.	Understand Minimalism through repetition, process and gradual development; encounter representative repertoire.	Explore how film/game music functions dramatically and how composers shape audience response.
Independent musicianship	Major Year 9 development: preserve ideas between lessons, make compositional choices, evaluate, refine and rehearse with decreasing teacher direction.	Diagnose errors, isolate difficult passages, select appropriate challenge and decide when to add left-hand complexity.	Retrieve earlier technique without restarting; choose strategies for difficult transitions and rehearse increasingly independently.	Major development: organise small-group rehearsal, sustain a role, make structural decisions and solve ensemble problems with limited teacher intervention.	Listen, interpret and justify musical choices; adapt material deliberately and explain the reasoning.