**Margaret Arnold –** The Music Study Design 2023 to 2027 can be found on the music pages of the VCAA website and contains 10 units of music studies. The Common Unit 1 and 2 study leads to four different Unit 3 and 4 studies. Students may complete any or all of these separate Unit 3 and 4 studies. As is the case now, schools select which studies they will offer.

The new study offers opportunities for more students to become involved in senior music programmes using a wider variety of instruments including many digital music making and composing options. It allows for students to follow on from the Victorian Curriculum where the music making aspects might be more informal rather than based on formal instrumental tuition. There are still two performance-based studies as part of the pathways, as specialist studies, and one composition-based, but there's also now a real music making option for those who've come through a classroom programme rather than individual lessons.

In selecting which courses to offer for your students, you'd need to think strategically about how you can make these opportunities work for your own situation. It may be worth teaming up with another teacher or school and planning this sort of thing together. Some schools have arrangements with nearby schools to provide one or other study for each other, or to combine students to make a class at one particular school. Some schools may choose to have a small number of students work with another school for a particular study or take the Virtual School Victoria option for a music study or perhaps work with a single study provider, but it really depends on the school culture. Not all studies will be on offer at all schools.

It's important to note that the hours of scheduled classroom instruction over the semester can include the classroom music, the instrumental lessons, master classes, and other ensemble rehearsals as appropriate to the studies. This gives teachers more flexibility when planning for classes, particularly if you do have a combined class. Some schools may also allow a couple of extra periods across a cycle for teachers dealing with combined classes, but the way classes are staffed, scheduled, and organised is an individual school decision. This provides a broader experience than the current study, allowing students the opportunity to explore a range of music making possibilities. You have a lot of flexibility here to extend students in particular directions if they already have some experience.

The knowledge and skills listed are at the minimum end. Good teaching allows for students to be extended beyond the minimum. Music inquiry is the natural progression for classroom-based music. Unit 3 Influence in Music in area of study two makes connections between at least two different works from different times and/or locations. This would be teacher-driven, and samples of suitable works will be made available in the support materials. How has one work influenced another? This area of study also will involve performing and composing or arranging connected works. This unit models what students will do in Unit 4 as they prepare for their individual project using their own choice of works. The external assessment is via the externally-assessed task or EAT recordings and various documentation as described in the examination specifications, which will be made available later this year. The written examination is short, and a large part of this course is about music making with the increased understandings resulting from some guided analysis of how it's put together, where the influences have come from, and how that affects the resulting sound.

In music contemporary performance, we're really talking about the performance practise that includes embellishment and/or improvisation, uses collaborative and aural practises in learning, often takes recordings as a primary text, and projects a personal voice. So, the definition of contemporary performance has been made for this study. Sample programmes will be provided in the support material, and it should be noted that any instrument could take this approach. Current music performance group students already often reimagined works selected from the A list, but this will actually be a formal requirement for at least one work to be reimagined. Other works might be covers and original works can be accommodated here too, although the composition itself would not be assessed.

In Unit 3, Responding, note the emphasis on recreating in the skills and the broad range of possible documentation. Various possibilities will be explored in the support materials. While recorded examples and drills can be useful too, students should be actively engaged in this process, often with using their instrument and/or voice. The music repertoire performance has been defined for this study as the recreation and interpretation of notated musical works for any instrument where there is an established repertoire of notated works.

So, the aim is a little different from the contemporary performance. A shorter list of prescribed works doesn't imply any lower expectation of performance standard or music literacy. The common organisational structure in contemporary performance and repertoire performance allows for both streams to be in a combined class. Each area of study is in common, although the aims of each or the knowledge and skills take the study in a slightly different direction. You can see that in both contemporary and repertoire, the assessment is of the same balance.

Outcomes 1 and 2 are related specifically to this performance aspects of the study, not surprisingly with the name performance in its title, and they make up 70% of the assessment in the study. Outcome 3 is only 30% in total. Here's an excerpt from Unit 3 Outcome 3 in music contemporary performance and music repertoire performance. Compare the knowledge and skills side by side. There are common areas, common material, but the way that it might be expressed may differ.

The new repertoire Outcome 3 is actually very similar to the current music performance study. The contemporary course makes more demands on hearing chord progressions, but again, note the use of terms identify, recreate, and notate or document. These are defined in the cross-study specifications at the start of the study design. Composition. Aural and/or visual analysis of works by others and by students themselves and listening and responding to a wide variety of music excerpts in familiar and unfamiliar styles allow students to dive deep into creating music and understanding ways that elements can be treated, and compositional devices used in their own and others' music. It is open to all forms of composition, including digital.

This study really is open to students who are using more conventional means of composition or coming from a digital background. And students will begin by creating exercises to explore compositional devices and expand to create coherent music work or groups of short works. And by Unit 4, they'll be discussing their own works and describing how music material has been developed to create unity and diversity. The difference from the current music style and composition is the larger concentration on the composition process and the removal of studying and analysing other works in Unit 4. The aural and written examination is shorter, 60 minutes, assessing only Outcome 3.

The other two outcomes are assessed by the externally-assessed task, which is now in common with the other specialist studies worth 50%. It may be that you need two partnerships if you have a combined class as they're different studies, but so will numerous other schools. So, you might just partner with one teacher, but for the two studies, a partnership might actually be quite helpful as you develop the assessment tasks. More detailed support material for each music study will gradually become available during terms two and three.

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