



**Australian Government**

**Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations**

# **CUSMCP402A Develop techniques for composing music**

**Revision Number: 2**

## CUSMCP402A Develop techniques for composing music

### Modification History

| Release   | Comments                                                                                         |
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| Release 2 | Created to fix formatting errors only.<br>Released with CUS09 Music Training Package version 1.2 |

### Unit Descriptor

This unit describes the performance outcomes, skills and knowledge required to apply aural imagination and perception skills to compose a range of musical pieces.

### Application of the Unit

Composers in all genres apply the skills and knowledge outlined in this unit. They could be creating music for a wide range of ensemble, band or solo performances, for such things as music theatre, corporate events, advertising, schools and computer games.

This unit builds on skills covered in:

- CUSMCP301A Compose simple songs or musical pieces.

Skills associated with using computer technology as the primary tool for composing music are covered in:

- CUSMCP501A Compose music using electronic media.

### Licensing/Regulatory Information

No licensing, legislative, regulatory or certification requirements apply to this unit at the time of endorsement.

### Pre-Requisites

Not applicable

## Employability Skills Information

Not applicable

## Elements and Performance Criteria Pre-Content

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| <i>Elements describe the essential outcomes of a unit of competency.</i> | <i>Performance criteria describe the performance needed to demonstrate achievement of the element. Where bold italicised text is used, further information is detailed in the required skills and knowledge section and the range statement. Assessment of performance is to be consistent with the evidence guide.</i> |
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## Elements and Performance Criteria

| ELEMENT                                       | PERFORMANCE CRITERIA                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
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| 1. Explore ways of expressing ideas musically | <p>1.1 In consultation with <b>appropriate personnel</b>, identify <b>factors</b> that may have an impact on how to approach the composition of music</p> <p>1.2 Consider the range of ways <b>musical elements</b> could be organised for different types of musical pieces and different purposes</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| 2. Generate ideas for musical pieces          | <p>2.1 Clarify <b>scope</b> of composition brief with appropriate personnel</p> <p>2.2 Prepare a <b>plan</b> for completing work in line with the requirements of the brief and negotiate a <b>contract</b> as required</p> <p>2.3 <b>Brief</b> other people involved in the composition project as required</p> <p>2.4 Generate a range of musical ideas or starting points and experiment with options for realising them</p> <p>2.5 Investigate the potential of basic structural elements for achieving the desired effect</p> <p>2.6 Discuss options with appropriate personnel and refine ideas as required</p> |
| 3. Create musical pieces                      | <p>3.1 Develop and apply a range of <b>compositional techniques</b> to organise musical elements into working versions of musical pieces</p> <p>3.2 Listen to work in progress with appropriate personnel and seek feedback on how well compositions meet creative and technical requirements</p> <p>3.3 Incorporate ideas and suggestions into final compositions</p> <p>3.4 As required, attend rehearsals or performance workshops where compositions are being played and make any necessary adjustments to compositions</p> <p>3.5 Present all compositions in required <b>format</b> by agreed deadline</p>     |
| 4. Evaluate own musical compositions          | <p>4.1 Identify criteria to provide an effective measure of the success of own compositions</p> <p>4.2 Compare work against previous compositions to assess development of techniques and ideas</p> <p>4.3 Discuss strengths and weaknesses of compositions with appropriate personnel and identify strategies for improving own compositional techniques</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |



## Required Skills and Knowledge

*This section describes the skills and knowledge required for this unit.*

### Required skills

- communication and teamwork skills sufficient to:
  - discuss compositional requirements in a collaborative manner
  - document plans for compositional projects
  - respond positively to constructive feedback on own compositions
- listening skills in the context of:
  - using aural imagination when manipulating musical elements
  - analysing music instrumentation
  - applying aural-perception skills to improve compositional outcomes
- initiative and enterprise skills in the context of:
  - phrasing and shaping music appropriately
  - expressing appropriate musical nuance
  - demonstrating originality and innovative approaches in the use and organisation of musical elements
  - extending musical boundaries for self and audience
  - experimenting with the synthesis of musical ideas and materials from a range of sources
  - composing appropriately for the context of venues, sound forces and perceived audience taste
- learning skills in the context of continuously improving composition techniques through practice and refinement based on critical feedback
- planning, self-management and organisational skills sufficient to:
  - prioritise work tasks
  - meet deadlines
  - plan the composition of musical pieces in a logical sequence
  - work within established budgets and timeframes
  - demonstrate reliability in all agreed work commitments
- technology skills in the context of using music composition software at a working level of proficiency

### Required knowledge

- well-developed understanding of musicianship issues, including:
  - repertoire and music history relevant to area of specialisation
  - instrumentation and orchestration
  - musical protocols and customs for setting down music
  - genres and styles, and their musical forms and conventions in written notation
  - interpretation of chords, scales, melodies, forms, textures or other conventions found within music notation

- options for using computer applications to notate music
- copyright issues in relation to composing music
- reading and writing music using written music notation, such as acoustic and electronic scores, sheet music and chord charts
- techniques for writing directions for:
  - instrumentation
  - voicing
  - expression
  - timbre
  - attack
  - pitch
  - tempi
  - dynamics
- issues and challenges that typically arise in the context of composing music

## Evidence Guide

*The Evidence Guide provides advice on assessment and must be read in conjunction with the performance criteria, required skills and knowledge, range statement and the Assessment Guidelines for the Training Package.*

|                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>Overview of assessment</b>                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Critical aspects for assessment and evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit</b> | <p>Evidence of the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• compose a selection of musical pieces in response to at least two briefs</li> <li>• apply well-developed aural skills to the composition process</li> <li>• work collaboratively with others involved in creating or performing the compositions.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Context of and specific resources for assessment</b>                                             | <p>Assessment must ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• access to an environment where music compositional skills can be applied</li> <li>• access to appropriate range of instruments relevant to the candidate's selected musical styles</li> <li>• access to industry-current software, hardware and audio equipment for composing, orchestrating and setting down music</li> <li>• access to scores relevant to the candidate's selected musical styles</li> <li>• use of culturally appropriate processes, and techniques appropriate to the language and literacy capacity of the candidate and the work being performed.</li> </ul>                  |
| <b>Method of assessment</b>                                                                         | <p>The following assessment methods are appropriate for this unit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• evaluation of work plans prepared by the candidate</li> <li>• direct observation of the candidate composing musical pieces</li> <li>• written or oral questioning to assess candidate's understanding of musical elements and compositional techniques</li> <li>• written or oral questioning to test knowledge as listed in the required knowledge section of this unit</li> <li>• case studies and scenarios as a basis for discussion of issues and challenges that typically arise in the context of composing music in response to a brief.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Guidance information for</b>                                                                     | Holistic assessment with other units relevant to the industry sector, workplace and job role is recommended,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

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| <b>assessment</b> | <p>for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CUFCMP301A Implement copyright arrangements</li><li>• CUSMCP401A Develop techniques for arranging music</li><li>• CUSMCP501A Compose music using electronic media</li><li>• CUSMLT401A Notate music for performance</li><li>• CUSMLT403A Analyse functional harmony</li><li>• CUSMLT501A Refine aural-perception skills.</li></ul> |
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## Range Statement

*The range statement relates to the unit of competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that may affect performance. Bold italicised wording, if used in the performance criteria, is detailed below. Essential operating conditions that may be present with training and assessment (depending on the work situation, needs of the candidate, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts) may also be included.*

|                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
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| <p><b><i>Appropriate personnel</i></b> may include:</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performer</li> <li>• ensemble member</li> <li>• presenter</li> <li>• designer:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sound</li> <li>• lighting</li> <li>• costume</li> <li>• make-up and hair</li> <li>• special effects</li> </ul> </li> <li>• client</li> <li>• marketing and promotions personnel</li> <li>• artist's agent</li> <li>• conductor</li> <li>• tutor</li> <li>• mentor.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p><b><i>Factors</i></b> may include:</p>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purpose of musical composition, such as for:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• specific artist</li> <li>• ensemble</li> <li>• music theatre</li> <li>• own personal development</li> <li>• corporate purposes</li> <li>• cultural purposes</li> <li>• marketing and promotion</li> <li>• educational purposes</li> <li>• special communities</li> <li>• special occasions</li> <li>• public and/or religious ceremonies</li> <li>• audio or video recordings for online products or interactive games</li> </ul> </li> <li>• contractual arrangements</li> <li>• available resources</li> <li>• amount of time allocated to rehearsal</li> <li>• available budget</li> </ul> |

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|                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• client's expectations</li> <li>• intellectual property</li> <li>• copyright</li> <li>• online distribution considerations:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• file compression for streaming and downloading</li> <li>• file formats</li> <li>• promotional samples to accompany each piece</li> </ul> </li> <li>• timelines.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b><i>Musical elements</i></b> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acoustics</li> <li>• aesthetic qualities</li> <li>• articulation</li> <li>• attack</li> <li>• beat</li> <li>• cultural context</li> <li>• duration</li> <li>• dynamics</li> <li>• expression</li> <li>• form</li> <li>• harmony/chords</li> <li>• instrumentation</li> <li>• interpretation</li> <li>• intonation</li> <li>• melody</li> <li>• notation</li> <li>• nuance</li> <li>• orchestration</li> <li>• ornamentation</li> <li>• phrasing</li> <li>• pitch</li> <li>• relationship to song lyrics</li> <li>• rhythm</li> <li>• scales</li> <li>• shape</li> <li>• sound production</li> <li>• suspensions</li> <li>• tempo</li> <li>• texture</li> <li>• timbre/tone colour</li> <li>• time signatures</li> <li>• tonality</li> </ul> |

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|                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• transposition</li> <li>• unity and contrast</li> <li>• voicing</li> <li>• volume.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Scope</b> of composition brief may include:             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• purpose</li> <li>• number of musical pieces required</li> <li>• duration of pieces</li> <li>• musical genre</li> <li>• instruments for which music is being composed</li> <li>• budget</li> <li>• required resources</li> <li>• evaluation and review requirements</li> <li>• timeline</li> <li>• final format for compositions.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Aspects to be covered in the work <b>plan</b> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• duration, general vision for and scope of the composition material</li> <li>• text and any associated collaboration required</li> <li>• timelines</li> <li>• budget</li> <li>• instrumental and performing resources required for the work</li> <li>• timetable that allows for unexpected developments and contingencies</li> <li>• communication plan that ensures ongoing discussion and confirmation of the music being composed</li> <li>• plan of music components and any text components</li> <li>• map that clearly indicates duration requirements for sections of the work.</li> </ul> |
| Aspects to be covered in a <b>contract</b> may include:    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• milestones and payment schedule</li> <li>• materials and facilities provided by both parties</li> <li>• responsibilities of both parties</li> <li>• role of any subcontracted personnel</li> <li>• process for negotiating variations to the contract.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Briefing</b> others may involve:                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• allocating work in line with project requirements</li> <li>• providing specifications</li> <li>• agreeing on standards of work and monitoring procedures</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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|                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• providing technical and financial information</li> <li>• agreeing on payment schedules</li> <li>• discussing reporting mechanisms and arrangements for dealing with contingencies</li> <li>• negotiating process for providing feedback on work in progress.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Compositional techniques</b> may include: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applying the theory and practice of harmony and counterpoint</li> <li>• composing heads as starting points for jazz improvisation</li> <li>• instrumentation</li> <li>• generating workable rhythm section parts</li> <li>• writing note combinations that sound good to the ear</li> <li>• contrary motion</li> <li>• writing parts</li> <li>• creating introductions and endings</li> <li>• using countermelodies</li> <li>• re-harmonising chord progressions</li> <li>• developing musical themes or motifs.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Format</b> may be:                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• computer-based</li> <li>• paper-based.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## Unit Sector(s)

Performing arts - music composition