

5.4.4 Area of Study 4 -Traditions and Innovation

Starting Point

How composers and performers have used different stylistic and cultural characteristics to forge new styles as exemplified by:

- incorporating selected characteristics of folk music (melodic intervals, dance rhythms) to forge styles with a distinctive national flavour e.g. Vaughan Williams, Smetana, Tchaikovsky;
- borrowing ‘exotic’ characteristics from the music of other cultures to enrich a personal musical style e.g. Turkish instruments and sounds in late 18th century Vienna, Debussy’s interest in *gamelan*, the Beatles’ exploration of Indian music and the string quartet;
- ways in which historical and geographical factors have combined to bring together musicians from different cultural backgrounds and the resulting emergence of new distinctive styles: the influence of African and Western musics on jazz; the development of British Asian pop.

Core

Candidates will study the music of three contemporary styles which each have their roots in music of more than one cultural tradition. They should be taught the historical and cultural contexts of the root styles and the factors which caused the styles to have been brought together into a new style. Candidates will develop an understanding of:

- the features of the traditions which have been drawn upon to create the new style;
- the processes of fusing together these features into a new style: the way in which musicians have worked together and the contributions of each root style to the new style;
- the distinctive characteristics of the new style.

The three styles for study are:

- **Bhangra:** originally a Punjabi folk dance which has interacted with Western Popular music traditions to form a distinctive British Asian style of pop;
- **Salsa:** a fusion of Cuban/Puerto Rican music (especially *son*) and American Jazz;
- **Minimalism:** a new style of Western music, based on cyclical structures such as those found in West African drum music and Indonesian *gamelan*, developed by Western composers through different compositional processes, and in particular through the use of ICT.

Links

Area of Study 1: Candidates may apply their understanding of one of these styles to enhance their interpretation and appraisal of it in performance.

Area of Study 2: Teachers may find it helpful to use the melodies and melodic fragments found in pieces within these styles to increase pupils' awareness of how melodies are constructed in different ways. The different types of scale used in these styles provide an opportunity to explore further the ways in which pitches are organised. Minimalism provides an opportunity to focus on melodic shapes, and to develop an understanding of a different way of using pitch.

Area of Study 3: The dance forms from which bhangra and salsa have developed offer opportunities for exploring further types of dance music.

Language for Learning

Candidates should be taught to understand, recognise aurally, and correctly use the following terminology which describes features which arise specifically within the content of this Area of Study:

- Bhangra: *bhangra* and *chaal* dance rhythms, *rag*, *tal*, *dhol*, *sitar*, *tabla*, *tanpura*, drone, electric guitar, bass, electronic keyboards, synthesisers.
- Salsa: *son*, *clave*, cross rhythms, *montuno* and *choro* (chorus), *son* bands; guitar, *tres*, instruments of the Big Band, swing, walking bass, comping.
- Indonesian Gamelan orchestra.
- Minimalism: polyrhythm, cyclic, layering, phase, sequencing, sampling, editing, multi-tracking and mixing, tape loops.
- The names of composers/performers of the music studied should also be known.

5.4.5 Areas of Study Assessed through Coursework

In Part A of the coursework component (**Integrated Coursework**), **one** piece of performing and **one** piece of composing are to be based on knowledge and understanding developed in Area of Study 1 (5.4.1 Exploiting the Resource) and, in Part B (**Further Coursework**), one piece of composing is to be based on the core styles of **either** Area of Study 3 (*Dance Music*) **or** Area of Study 4 (*Traditions and Innovation*). Therefore, three of the five pieces offered for assessment in coursework **must** be based on learning drawn from the Areas of Study. The remaining performing coursework offers free choice but might also usefully be based on music derived from any of the Areas of Study. Similarly, candidates' learning in their study of Area of Study 2 (*Techniques of Melodic Composition*) may be reflected in some of their composing work and, in the Terminal Task, the candidate's response must be based on this Area of Study.