GCSE Music Revision List for the Summer Exam

The 4 Areas of Study & Exam Structure

- **Area of Study 1: Musical Forms and Devices**
    - Based on the **Western Classical Tradition**.
    - Focused on the **Set Work** (J.S. Bach — *Badinerie* from Orchestral Suite No. 2 in B minor, including reading/interpreting the alto clef/viola or specific classical conventions).
    - Unseen Western Classical music testing forms (e.g., binary, ternary, rondo, variation, ground bass) and devices (e.g., sequence, imitation, pedal point, ostinato).
- **Area of Study 2: Music for Ensemble**
    - Explores textures and sonorities across chamber music, jazz and blues, musical theatre, and Baroque/Classical/Romantic ensembles.
    - Key composers and styles include jazz/blues combos, chamber groups, and stage/theatre ensembles.
- **Area of Study 3: Film Music**
    - Focuses on how music creates mood, character, and action in film.
    - Music by composers such as John Berry, Hans Zimmer, Klaus Badelt, and John Williams (*Star Wars*).
    - Concepts to revise: leitmotif, non-diegetic vs. diegetic music, mickey-mousing, ostinato, pedal notes, and orchestral scoring.
- **Area of Study 4: Popular Music**
    - Covers pop, rock, fusion, and singer-songwriter styles.
    - Focused on the **Set Work** (Toto — "Africa").
    - **:** Unseen pop/rock styles (e.g., The Beatles, Queen, Adele, synth-pop, rock anthems).

Revision checklist broken down by every **Musical Element** required for the **WJEC Eduqas GCSE Music** Component 3 exam.

Use the **MAD TSHIRT** acronym to make sure you cover every angle when answering listening questions and the 10-mark extended writing question.

M – Melody

- **Movement.** Conjunct (moving by step), disjunct (moving by leaps), scalic (moving up/down a scale), arpeggio/broken chord.

- **Pitch Features.** Chromatic (using notes outside the key), pentatonic (5-note scale), blue notes (flattened 3rd, 5th, 7th), intervals (octave, 5th, 3rd, semitone, tone).
- **Melodic Devices.** Sequence (repeating a motif higher or lower), imitation, repetition, ostinato/riff, inversion (upside down), retrograde (backwards), augmentation (longer note values), diminution (shorter note values).
- **Ornamentation.** Trill (rapid alternation between two notes), mordent (upper or lower), turn, acciaccatura (crushed grace note), appoggiatura (leaning note).
- **Word Setting (Vocal Music).** Syllabic (one note per syllable) vs. melismatic (many notes per syllable), falsetto, vibrato, scat singing.
- **Major/ minor**
- **Modulation** (changes key)
- **Descending** (moves down a pitch)/ **ascending** (moving up a pitch)
- **Anacrisis** (upbeat)

A – Articulation & Playing Techniques

- **General Articulation.** Legato (smooth and connected), staccato (short and detached), accent (emphasised note), marcato (marked/heavy), tenuto (held for full value).
- **Strings.** Arco (with the bow), pizzicato (plucked), tremolo (rapid bowing on one note), double stopping (playing two strings at once), divisi (section splits into different parts), con sordino (with a mute), glissando (slide).
- **Woodwind & Brass.** Tonguing, slurring, muted brass, pitch bend, flutter-tonguing.
- **Guitars & Vocals.** Palm muting, hammer-on, pull-off, slide/glissando, distortion, wah-wah, rap, falsetto.

D – Dynamics

- **Volume Levels.** Pianissimo (*pp* – very quiet), piano (*p* – quiet), mezzo-piano (*mp* – moderately quiet), mezzo-forte (*mf* – moderately loud), forte (*f* – loud), fortissimo (*ff* – very loud).
- **Gradual Changes.** Crescendo (*cresc.* – getting louder), diminuendo (*dim.* – getting quieter).
- **Sudden Changes.** Sforzando (*sfz* – sudden strong accent), subito piano/forte (suddenly quiet/loud), terraced dynamics (sudden steps in volume, typical of Baroque music).

T – Texture

- **Core Textures.** Monophonic (single melody line with no accompaniment), homophonic (melody with chordal accompaniment, or all parts moving in the same rhythm/chordal),

polyphonic/contrapuntal (two or more independent melodies weaving together), heterophonic (simultaneous variations of the same melody).

- **Textural Devices.** Unison (everyone playing/singing the exact same notes), octaves (same melody an octave apart), imitation, canon, round, call and response, antiphonal (alternating between two groups), drone, pedal note.
- **Density.** Thin/sparse texture vs. thick/dense texture, layered texture (adding instruments gradually).

S – Structure & Form

- **Classical Forms.** Binary (AB or AABB), rounded binary (ABA'), ternary (ABA), rondo (ABACADA), theme and variations (A A1 A2 A3), minuet and trio, strophic (same music for every verse, AAA), through-composed (new music throughout, ABCDE), theme and variations
- **Popular & Jazz Structures.** Intro, verse, pre-chorus, chorus, middle 8 / bridge, instrumental break/solo, outro; 12-bar blues (I–I–I–I / IV–IV–I–I / V–IV–I–I), 32-bar song form (AABA).
- **Structural Features.** Coda (ending section), cadenza (virtuosic solo passage), exposition, development, recapitulation, phrasing (balanced 4-bar or 8-bar phrases, antecedent and consequent).

H – Harmony

- **Chord Types.** Major, minor, diminished, augmented, dominant 7th, added 6th/9th chords, power chords (root and 5th).
- **Harmonic Style.** Diatonic (notes belong to the key), chromatic (notes from outside the key), consonance (pleasant/stable clash-free sound), dissonance (clashing/tense sound), modal.
- **Cadences.** Perfect (V–I, sounds finished), plagal (IV–I, "Amen" cadence), imperfect (ends on V, sounds unfinished), interrupted (V–vi, surprise minor chord).
- **Harmonic Devices.** Pedal note (sustained bass or inverted treble note while chords change), drone (sustained fifth or single note), harmonic rhythm (how fast the chords change), circle of fifths.

I – Instrumentation & Sonority

- **Orchestral Families.** Strings (violin, viola, cello, double bass, harp), Woodwind (flute, piccolo, oboe, clarinet, bassoon), Brass (trumpet, French horn, trombone, tuba), Percussion (timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, xylophone, glockenspiel).
- **Baroque & Ensemble.** Basso continuo (harpsichord/organ + cello/bassoon), string quartet (2 violins, viola, cello), jazz frontline (trumpet, saxophone, trombone) vs. rhythm section (piano, double bass, drums).

- **Pop, Rock & Technology.** Electric guitar, bass guitar, drum kit, synthesizer, drum machine; production effects including reverb, delay/echo, distortion, chorus, flanger, panning, looping, sampling.
- **World / Fusion.** Sitar, tabla, dhol, sarangi, tanpura (Bhangra/Indian classical).

R – Rhythm & Metre

- **Time Signatures.** Simple duple (2/4), simple triple (3/4), simple quadruple (4/4), compound duple (6/8), compound triple (9/8), compound quadruple (12/8), irregular/changing metre (5/4, 7/8).
- **Rhythmic Features.** Dotted rhythms, triplets, syncopation (off-beat accents), swing rhythms (uneven quavers in jazz/blues), cross-rhythms, polyrhythms, hemiola (feeling 3/4 as 3/2), anacrusis (upbeat), Scotch snap, ostinato, chaal rhythm (Bhangra).
- **Note Values.** Semibreve, minim, crotchet, quaver, semiquaver, rests, ties.
- **4- bar phrases**
- **Balanced phrases/ regular phrases**

T – Tempo & Tonality

- **Tempo Markings.** Largo (very slow), Adagio (slow), Andante (walking pace), Moderato (moderate), Allegro (fast), Vivace (lively), Presto (very fast).
- **Tempo Changes.** Accelerando (speeding up), rallentando / ritardando (slowing down), rubato (flexible tempo for expression), a tempo (return to original speed), pause / fermata.
- **Tonality.** Major (bright/happy), minor (sad/serious), modal (Dorian, Mixolydian, etc.), pentatonic, atonal (no key centre).
- **Modulation.** Changing key during a piece, most commonly to the **dominant** (5th above), **subdominant** (4th above), **relative minor**, or **relative major**.
- **Dissonance**

Circle of 5th

Quick Exam Tip for Listening Questions

Whenever a question asks you to *"Describe the music"* without naming an element, pick points from at least **three different letters of MAD TSHIRT** (for example: **I**nstrumentation, **T**exture, and **R**hythm) to guarantee you hit different marking criteria.

List of musical terms:

Melody

- Anacrusis
- Conjunct (stepwise)
- Disjunct (angular)
- Arpeggio/broken chord
- Scalic (ascending/descending)
- Low pitch
- High pitch
- Range
- Sequence
- Imitation
- Repetition
- Contrast
- Leitmotif
- Motif
- Octave
- Tone/Major 2nd
- Major 3rd
- Perfect 4th
- Perfect 5th
- Major 6th
- Major 7th
- Semitone
- Microtone
- Chromatic movement
- Pentatonic
- Blue notes
- Trill/ornamentation/decoration
- Countermelody
- Answering phrase
- Thematic
- Fanfare

Tonality

- Major
- Minor
- Modulation to the Dominant and Relative Major/Minor
- Pentatonic

Harmony

- Primary chords
- Secondary chords
- Inversion
- Diatonic
- Tonic
- Subdominant
- Dominant (7th)
- Perfect cadence
- Imperfect cadence
- Plagal cadence
- Interrupted cadence
- Chord progression/chord sequence
- Harmonic rhythm
- Drone
- Pedal
- Dissonance
- Power chords

Form and Structure

- Binary
- Ternary
- Rondo
- Minuet and Trio
- Repetition
- Contrast
- Theme and variations
- Strophic
- 32 bar song form/AABA
- 12 bar Blues
- Call and response
- Ostinato
- Bridge
- Break
- Loop
- Improvisation
- Verse
- Chorus
- Middle 8
- Fill
- Introduction
- Outro
- Coda
- Riff
- Phrasing (regular and irregular)

Texture
- Monophonic
- Homophonic
- Polyphonic
- 2, 3 or 4 part textures
- Unison
- Chordal
- Imitation
- Layered
- Melody and accompaniment
- Countermelody
- Descant
- Round
- Canon
- Drone
- Alberti bass
- Stab chords
- Walking bass

Tempo
- Allegro/Vivace
- Allegretto
- Moderato/Andante
- Adagio/Lento
- Accelerando
- Ritardando/Rallentando
- Rubato
- Pause

Rhythm
- Semibreve
- Minim
- Crotchet
- Quaver
- Semiquaver
- Dotted
- Syncopation
- Swing rhythms
- On the beat
- Off-beat
- Triplet
- Chaal
- Associated rests
- Driving rhythms
- Dance rhythms
- Rock rhythms

Metre
- Regular
- Irregular (5/4, 7/8)
- Accent
- Simple time
- Duple/triple/quadruple
- Compound time

Dynamics
- Pianissimo
- Piano
- Mezzo piano
- Mezzo forte
- Forte
- Fortissimo
- Crescendo
- Diminuendo
- Sforzando

Musical Styles
- Western Classical Tradition
- Baroque
- Classical
- Romantic
- Chamber music
- Jazz
- Blues
- Musical Theatre
- Film Music
- Rock
- Soul
- Hip-hop
- Reggae
- Ballad
- Pop
- Bhangra
- Fusion
- Minimalism

Sonority - i*nstruments, Voices and Groupings*

- Strings
- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double bass
- Harp
- Woodwind
- Flute
- Oboe
- Clarinet
- Saxophone
- Bassoon
- Brass
- Trumpet
- French horn
- Trombone
- Tuba
- Percussion
- Timpani
- Drum kit
- Snare drum
- Cymbal
- Hand held percussion
- Glockenspiel
- Xylophone
- Tabla
- Dhol
- Keyboard
- Piano
- Organ
- Harpsichord
- Basso Continuo
- Classical or Spanish guitar
- Electric guitar
- Bass guitar
- Sitar
- Sarangi
- Tumbi
- Solo
- Duet
- Trio
- Soprano
- Alto
- Tenor
- Bass
- Backing vocals
- A cappella
- Chorus
- Orchestra
- String quartet
- Pop/rock group
- Rhythm section
- Acoustic

Technology

- Synthesised/electronic
- Panning
- Phasing
- Sample
- Reverb
- Echo
- Amplified

Performance techniques/Articulation

- Humming
- Syllabic
- Melismatic
- Scat
- Vibrato
- Falsetto
- Belt
- Rap
- Staccato
- Legato
- Sustained
- Accent
- Pizzicato
- Arco/bowed
- Divisi
- Double stopping
- Tremolo
- Distortion
- Hammer on
- Rim shot
- Slap bass
- Drum roll
- Muted
- Glissando/slide
- Pitch bend

- Plucked
- Slurred
- Tongued
- Detached