Music is uniquely an aural art form. The essential nature of music is abstract. Music encompasses existing sounds that are selected and shaped, new sounds created by composers and performers, and the sounds that listeners perceive and define as these sounds are music. Music exists distinctively in every culture and is a basic expression of human experience. Students’ active participation in music fosters understanding of other times, places, cultures and contexts. Through continuous and sequential music learning, students listen to, compose and perform with increasing depth and complexity. Through performing, composing and listening with intent to music, students have access to knowledge, skills and understanding which can be gained in no other way. Learning in Music is aurally based and can be understood without any recourse to notation. Learning to read and write music in traditional and graphic forms enables students to access a wide range of music as independent learners.

Music has the capacity to engage, inspire and attract all students, exciting the imagination and encouraging students to reach their creative and expressive potential. Skills and techniques developed through instrumental music learning allow students to manipulate, express and share sound as listeners, composers and performers. Music learning has a significant impact on the cognitive, affective, motor, social and personal competencies of students. As independent learners, students integrate listening, performing and composing activities. These activities, developed sequentially, enhance their capacity to perceive and understand music. As students progress through studying Music, they learn to value and appreciate the power of music to transform the heart, soul and spirit of the individual. In this way students develop an aesthetic appreciation and enjoyment of music.

In listening to, performing and composing music from a broad range of styles, practices, traditions and contexts, students learn to interpret through different contexts, including social, cultural and historical contexts. Based on this curriculum, key questions for Years 7 to 10 are presented in the table below. For transition purposes from primary to secondary in Years 7 to 10, the emphasis in Year 7 could then be on: 8.1, 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6, and in Year 8: 8.2, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.7.

Content descriptions in each Arts subject focus on similar concepts and skills that, across the bands, present a developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum examines past, current and emerging arts practices in Australia and internationally, and explores the way artists work with different kinds of materials and technologies. Through making and responding to artworks, students respond to each other’s artworks, to artworks from different times, places and cultures, to popular culture and new approaches to arts practice, and to artworks and responses in different media and forms. Learning in Music extends students’ ability to work with more abstract concepts and consider increasingly complex contexts. The Arts curriculum allows students to explore the nature of culture and its relationship to music. Students learn to recognise their subjective preferences and consider diverse perspectives of music. This, in turn, informs the way in which they interpret music as performers and composers.

Music: Years 7 and 8 Achievement Standard
By the end of Year 8, students identify and analyse how the elements of music are used in different styles and apply this knowledge in their performances and compositions. They evaluate musical choices they and others from different cultures, times and places make to communicate meaning as performers and composers.

Students manipulate the elements of music and stylistic conventions to compose music. They interpret, rehearse and perform songs and instrumental pieces in unison and in parts, demonstrating technical and expressive skills. They use aural skills, music terminology and symbols to recognise, memorise and note features, such as melodic patterns in music they perform and compose.

AIMS
In addition to the overarching aims of the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, Music knowledge, understanding and skills ensure that, individually and collaboratively, students develop:

- the confidence to be creative, innovative, thoughtful, skilled and informed musicians
- skills to compose, perform, improvise, respond and listen with intent and purpose
- an understanding of music as an aural art form as they acquire skills to become independent music learners.

Organisation and Content Structure
In the Australian Curriculum, the Arts is a learning area that draws together related but distinct art forms. While these art forms have close relationships and are often used in interrelated ways, each involves different approaches to arts practices and critical and creative thinking that reflect distinct bodies of knowledge, understanding and skills. The curriculum examines past, current and emerging arts practices in each art form across a range of cultures and places.

The Australian Curriculum: The Arts Foundation to Year 10 enables exploration of the dynamic relationships between Arts subjects. This can involve students making and responding to artworks in traditional, contemporary and emerging forms, using materials, technologies and techniques from one Arts subject to support learning in another. In this twenty-first century Arts curriculum, students explore innovative and hybrid art forms which extend and challenge art making and combine practices of two or more art forms.

Within all Arts subjects, design facilitates the creative and practical realisation of ideas. Design thinking is a fundamental strategy in the experimentation, refinement and resolution of an artwork and takes into account logical, critical and aesthetic considerations. Many different words describe design within the Arts such as choreographing, narrating, devising, constructing, composing and sculpting. Design connects the different art forms so that they inform each other, providing possibilities for students to create innovative and hybrid forms of art.

Strands - Content descriptions for each arts subject reflect the interrelated strands of Making and Responding. Each strand includes learning and knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore arts practice and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions.

- Making includes learning about and using knowledge, skills, techniques, processes, materials and technologies to explore arts practice and make artworks that communicate ideas and intentions.
- Responding includes responding, exploring, responding to and analysing interpreting artworks.

Relationship between the strands: Making and Responding are intrinsically connected. Together they provide students with knowledge, understanding and skills as artists, performers and audience and develop students’ skills in critical and creative thinking. As students make artworks they actively respond to their development of the artwork, and the artworks of others; as students respond to artworks they draw on the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired through their experiences in making artworks.

In music, students listen to, compose and perform music from a diverse range of styles, traditions and contexts. They create, shape and share sounds in time and space and critically analyse music. Music practice is aurally based and focuses on acquiring and understanding knowledge about music and musicians.

Knowledge and skills of Music
In Music, students’ exploration and understanding of the elements of music, musical conventions, styles and forms expand with their continued active engagement with music. In listening to, performing and composing music from a broad range of styles, practices, traditions and contexts, students learn to recognise their subjective preferences and consider diverse perspectives of music. This, in turn, informs the way in which they interpret music as performers and composers.

The Arts across Foundation to Year 10: Years 7–10
As students move into adolescence, they undergo a range of important physical, cognitive, emotional and social changes. Students often begin to question established conventions, practices and values. Their interests extend well beyond their own communities and they begin to develop concerns about wider issues. Students in this age range increasingly look for and value learning that is perceived to be relevant, contextual and engaging. Increasingly they are able to work with more abstract concepts and consider increasingly complex contexts. The Arts curriculum enables students to explore and question their own immediate experience and their understanding of the wider world. Learning through and about the Arts enables students to build on their own experiences and dispositions. Students explore and engage with artworks made by others. They make their own artworks drawings on their developing knowledge, understanding and skills.

Students’ understanding of sustainability is progressively developed. They explore how the Arts are used to communicate about sustainability and also learn about sustainability of practices in the Arts. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have converted oral records to other technologies. As they explore forms, students find that over time there has been development of different traditional and contemporary styles. Students explore Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures in Australia, reflecting in developments of forms and styles in the Arts. Through the Australian Curriculum: The Arts, students in Years 7 to 10 further develop broad questions such as: What meaning is intended in an artwork? What does the audience understand from this artwork? What is the cultural context of the artwork and of the audience engaging with it? What key beliefs and values are reflected in artworks and how did artists influence societies of their time? How do audiences perceive and understand artworks? What does the advancement of technology mean to the presentation of, and audience engagement with, different artworks? This curriculum also provides opportunities to engage students through contexts that are meaningful and relevant to them and through exploration of past and present debates.

Content descriptions in each Arts subject focus on similar concepts and skills that, across the bands, present a developmental sequence of knowledge, understanding and skills. The focus of each content description in Foundation to Year 6 expands into more specific content descriptions for Years 7 to 10 as presented in the table below. For transition purposes from primary to secondary in Years 7–8 and consistency state-wide, generalist primary teachers at Year 7 could focus on the four initial similar concepts and skills eg, the 1st, 3rd, 5th and 7th Content Descriptions. E.g. The emphasis in Year 7 could then be on: 5.1, 6.3, 6.5 and 6.6, and in Year 8: 8.2, 8.4, 8.5 and 8.7.
In Years 7 and 8, learning in Music builds on the experience of the previous band. It involves students making and responding to music independently, and with their classmates, teachers and communities. They explore music as an art form through listening, composing and performing.

Students build on their aural skills by identifying and manipulating rhythm, pitch, dynamics and expression, form and structure, timbre and texture in their listening, composing and performing. They aurally identify layers within a texture. They sing and play independent parts against contrasting parts. They recognise rhythmic, melodic and harmonic patterns and beat groupings. They understand their role within an ensemble and control tone and volume. They perform with expression and technical control. They identify a variety of audiences for which music is made.

As they explore music, students draw on a range of cultures, times and locations. They explore the music and influences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and those of the Asia region. Students learn that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have converted oral records to other technologies. As they explore form in music, students learn that over time there has been further development of techniques used in traditional and contemporary styles of music.

As they make and respond to music, students explore meaning and interpretation, forms, and elements including rhythm, pitch, dynamics and expression, form and structure, timbre and texture. They consider social, cultural and historical contexts of music. They evaluate the expressive techniques used in music they listen to and experience in performance.

Students maintain safety, correct posture and technique in using instruments and technologies. Their understanding of the roles of artists and audiences builds upon previous bands as students engage with more diverse music.

Examples of knowledge and skills in Music

Music is learned through developing skills and knowledge associated with the elements of music. Musical ideas are conceived, organised and shaped by aspects and combinations of rhythm, pitch, dynamics and expression, form and structure, timbre and texture. When making and responding, students' musical skills are best developed through activities which integrate the techniques and processes of music: listening, composing and performing.

Elements of music

- **Rhythm**: time signature, semi-quaver subdivisions, dotted notes, minim and semibreve rests, quaver rest, dotted crotchet rest
- **Pitch**: melodic sequences based upon pentatonic, major and minor scales; key and key signatures; major and minor chords and primary triads (I, IV, V) in simple chord progressions; reading treble and bass clefs and ledger lines
- **Dynamics and expression**: dynamic gradations including mp and mf, articulations relevant to style, for example, glissando, slide, slur, staccato, legato
- **Form and structure**: repetition and contrast; call and response; digital sequences; theme and variation; 12 bar blues; popular song structures including verse, chorus, bridge, middle 8, intro and outro
- **Timbre**: recognising instrumental types and groups; voice types; acoustic and electronic sound
- **Texture**: identifying layers of sound and their role (accompaniment and melody); unison, homophonic (melody with chords), polyphonic (two or more independent lines playing simultaneously)

Skills (including aural skills)

- recognising rhythmic patterns and beat groupings
- discriminating between pitches, recognising intervals and familiar chord progressions
- identifying and notating metre and rhythmic groupings
- aurally identifying layers within a texture
- imitating simple melodies and rhythms using voice and instruments
- performing with expression and technical control, correct posture and safety
- understanding their role within an ensemble, balancing and controlling tone and volume
- using technology as a tool for music learning and to record their music
- holding and playing instruments and using their voices safely and correctly

Examples of views and questions within the Music Content Elaborations Years 7–8

**Considering viewpoints**

- **Forms and elements**: For example – How have the elements of music and instruments been used in this piece?
- What composition devices were used in your piece?
- **Meanings and interpretations**: For example – Why does the same piece sound different when different musicians play it?
- **Societies, cultures and histories**: For example – What is the social context of this piece and for whom would it be performed? What is the cultural context of this piece and what does it signify? What instruments and other features of the music indicate it is from a particular time and place?
- **Evaluations**: For example - How effectively did the musicians use expressive techniques in their performance? How effectively are the expressive techniques indicated in the notation of the composition? What are the strengths of this performance or composition?

**Years 7–8 Content Descriptions: Music**

- **7.1** Experiment with texture and timbre in sound sources using aural skills
- **7.2** Develop musical ideas, such as mood, by improvising, combining and manipulating the elements of music
- **7.3** Practise and rehearse a variety of music, including Australian music, to develop technical and expressive skills
- **7.4** Structure compositions by combining and manipulating the elements of music using notation
- **7.5** Perform and present a range of music, using techniques and expression appropriate to style
- **7.6** Analyse composers' use of the elements of music and stylistic features when listening to and interpreting music
- **7.7** Identify and connect specific features and purposes of music from different eras to explore viewpoints and enrich their music-making, starting with Australian music, including music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

**Notes**

- It is advised that the ‘Learning in Music’ two page introduction (Subject, structure) is used along with this ‘explorer’ paper. Download it from the Australian Curriculum website.

**Source:** [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au) accessed 22/02/2017