

Year 12 Music

Unit 385: Improving Instrumental Performance

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for RSL Unit 385, Improving Instrumental Performance, are to develop and refine my instrumental skills through regular, focused practice and performance preparation. Pupils will develop and refine their instrumental skills through regular and focused practice. They should improve their technical ability, including accuracy, timing, tone, dynamics, articulation and control, while developing greater confidence and consistency when performing. Pupils will identify areas for improvement and use feedback from their tutor and their own evaluation to set realistic targets. They should develop their understanding of musical interpretation and demonstrate the ability to communicate the style, character and expression of each piece effectively. By the end of the unit, pupils should demonstrate clear progress in their overall instrumental performance and become more confident, controlled and expressive musicians.

What previous knowledge is required?

Pupils should have a basic understanding of their chosen instrument and be able to perform simple pieces with some level of accuracy and control. They should have prior knowledge of fundamental musical elements such as rhythm, tempo, dynamics, pitch and notation, where appropriate. Pupils should also have experience of practising independently and performing to others. They should be able to respond to feedback and identify some strengths and areas for development in their own performance. This prior knowledge will allow pupils to build on their existing skills and develop greater technical ability, musical expression, confidence and consistency throughout the unit.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

This unit will help pupils develop the technical and performance skills needed for future musical learning and progression. Pupils will become more confident in identifying areas for improvement, setting targets and using feedback to develop their instrumental technique. They will build stronger practice routines, improve their ability to learn and perform more challenging repertoire, and develop greater musical expression and independence. These skills will support pupils in future RSL units, higher-level music qualifications, ensemble work, live performances and further study or progression within the music industry.

Common Misconceptions

Pupils may believe that improving instrumental performance is simply about practising for longer, rather than practising with clear aims and focusing on specific areas for development. They may also think that playing a piece correctly is more important than musical expression, interpretation and communication. Some pupils may underestimate the importance of good technique, posture, timing, tone and dynamics when developing their performance. Others may assume that mistakes should be avoided completely, rather than recognising that mistakes and feedback are important parts of the learning process. Pupils may also believe that improvement should happen quickly and may become discouraged when progress is gradual. The unit should help pupils understand that effective practice, reflection, constructive feedback and consistent effort are essential to making sustained progress.

Unit 365: Auditioning for Music

Learning Objectives

Pupils will develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to successfully prepare for and participate in a music audition. They should understand the purpose and expectations of an audition and learn how to select appropriate repertoire that demonstrates their musical abilities. Pupils will develop

effective preparation and practice techniques, including managing nerves, improving performance technique and responding positively to feedback. They should develop their ability to communicate confidently and professionally during an audition, including introducing themselves, discussing their musical experience and performing to an appropriate standard. By the end of the unit, pupils should be able to prepare effectively for an audition and demonstrate greater confidence, professionalism and musical awareness in an audition setting.

What previous knowledge is required?

Pupils should have a basic understanding of their chosen instrument or musical discipline and be able to perform at an appropriate level for an audition. They should have some previous experience of practising and preparing musical repertoire independently, as well as an understanding of fundamental musical elements such as rhythm, tempo, dynamics, pitch and musical expression. Pupils should also have experience of performing to others and responding to constructive feedback. An awareness of appropriate behaviour, communication and presentation skills will also be beneficial, as these will help pupils to develop the confidence and professionalism required for a successful music audition.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

This unit will help pupils develop the confidence, preparation skills and professional behaviours needed for future opportunities in music. Pupils will learn how to prepare repertoire effectively, manage performance nerves and present themselves confidently in an audition or performance situation. They will develop their ability to respond to feedback, evaluate their own performance and identify areas for improvement. These skills will support pupils when applying for further music courses, colleges, universities, ensembles, performances, workshops and opportunities within the music industry. The unit will also encourage pupils to become more independent and resilient musicians who are able to prepare effectively for future auditions and musical opportunities.

Common Misconceptions

Pupils may believe that an audition is only about demonstrating how well they can perform their instrument or sing, rather than recognising the importance of preparation, communication, confidence and professionalism. They may also think that choosing the most difficult piece of music will automatically create a stronger audition, when an appropriate piece that showcases their strengths may be more effective. Some pupils may believe that making mistakes during an audition means they have failed, rather than understanding that remaining composed and continuing to perform are important skills. Pupils may also underestimate the importance of researching the audition requirements, preparing questions and presenting themselves appropriately. Another common misconception is that confidence means having no nerves; pupils should understand that nerves are normal and can be managed through preparation, rehearsal and positive performance strategies.

Unit 320: Music Dissertation

Learning Objectives

Pupils will develop the research, analytical and academic writing skills required to complete a music dissertation. They should learn how to select and refine an appropriate research topic, formulate a clear research question and identify reliable and relevant sources of information. Pupils will develop their ability to research independently, analyse and evaluate evidence, and present balanced arguments supported by appropriate musical examples and references. They should develop effective academic writing skills, including structuring a dissertation, using appropriate terminology, referencing sources correctly and presenting their findings clearly. By the end of the unit, pupils should be able to produce an organised, well-researched dissertation that demonstrates independent thinking, critical analysis and a clear understanding of their chosen musical topic.

What previous knowledge is required?

Pupils should have a basic understanding of music theory, musical terminology and the ability to discuss and analyse music using appropriate subject-specific language. They should have some experience of researching musical topics and identifying relevant information from a range of sources. Pupils should also have an understanding of how to structure written work, communicate ideas clearly and use evidence to support their opinions or arguments. Basic skills in referencing and acknowledging sources will be beneficial. Pupils should also be able to work independently, organise their time effectively and reflect on their own learning. This prior knowledge will provide a foundation for developing the more advanced research, critical analysis and academic writing skills required to complete the dissertation.

How will this term's content help with future learning?

This unit will help pupils develop a range of research, analytical and academic skills that can be applied to future study and employment within the music industry. Pupils will become more confident in researching independently, evaluating information and using evidence to support their ideas and conclusions. They will develop their ability to structure extended written work, reference sources appropriately and communicate complex musical ideas clearly. These skills will support pupils when progressing to higher-level music qualifications, further education and university study, where independent research and academic writing are important. The unit will also encourage pupils to develop critical thinking, time management, organisation and independent learning skills that can be applied to a wide range of future academic and professional situations.

Common Misconceptions

Pupils may believe that a dissertation is simply a long piece of descriptive writing, rather than a structured piece of research that requires analysis, evaluation and a clear argument. They may also think that finding information online is sufficient, without considering the reliability, relevance and accuracy of their sources. Another common misconception is that a dissertation should only present the pupil's personal opinions, rather than using evidence and research to support their ideas. Pupils may also believe that using more sources automatically makes a dissertation stronger, when the quality and relevance of the sources are more important. Some pupils may struggle to distinguish between summarising information and critically analysing it. They may also underestimate the importance of planning, referencing, proofreading and managing their time effectively throughout the research and writing process.