

The skills and/or topics needed to achieve Grades 8 & 9 are . . .

Performance: selecting a piece which you can confidently perform. It should never be too hard that you might make mistakes/only be able to perform some of it fluently whilst also it should not be something too simplistic.

Composition: developing your ideas in a way which makes musical sense and working within a recognisable structure. Exploring devices such as key change, counter melodies, imitation, harmony, cadences and accompaniment styles.

Listening: 'zooming in' on an instrument to describe what it's doing, how it's doing it and when it's doing it. Never just relying on listing instruments in hopes of scoring several marks. Making clear links (in film music questions) of how the music suits, matches, depicts the scene it is being used in.

If aiming for Grades 8 & 9 you will need to particularly focus on this in your exam papers . . .

Melodic dictation question - even if you don't know the exact pitch, you are given the correct rhythm and will most likely be able to draw the correct shape the notes move in.

Comparison question - being sure to start your sentence with 'Extract A has....whereas Extract B....' or 'BOTH extracts use....'. Be very clear as to which extract you are describing and always draw a similarity or difference between them.

You can find resources to support your preparation at . . .

Music department YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@southammusic8462/>
playlists

Topic booklets OCR revision guides

When completing independent revision you should . . .

Focus on what you are unsure of.

Prioritise carefully - you don't want to waste an hour of your time going over material you're actually really secure on.

Listen to the style of music (YouTube/Spotify) you are revising whilst using your booklets and notes. Its very useful to watch live performances of each style so you can link what you hear to what you can see.

Grade boundary for a Grade 8 in 2019

158/200

Grade boundary for a Grade 9 in 2019

169/200

Top tips for aiming for Grades 8 & 9

Choose your performance pieces with support from your class and instrumental teachers.

Have a very rough outline plan for how your composition can develop within a structure.

Practice listening to and describing the different music genres you have studied.