



# Music builds skills for life

A practical toolkit for  
music teachers to evidence  
transferable skills



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Bring the power of music and transferable skills into focus for your students.

# SECTION 1 – Why this toolkit exists

Music builds the skill that shapes futures.  
This toolkit helps you evidence them.

Every music teacher knows that the value of music education extends far beyond performance. What is often harder to demonstrate – to parents, senior leaders, inspectors, and governors – is just how powerfully music develops the transferable skills young people need to thrive in further study, work, and life.

New research from Trinity College London\* confirms what many educators see every day in their practice. Music education builds a wide range of essential human skills that employers consistently identify as critical for future career success. These skills are not abstract ideals – they are developed through the everyday reality of learning an instrument, rehearsing for performance, working in ensembles, and receiving regular feedback.

**According to the findings (pp.18-21), teachers report that music powerfully strengthens:**

- ▶ Creativity - 82%
- ▶ Concentration - 77%
- ▶ Resilience - 76%
- ▶ Teamwork - 74%
- ▶ Adaptability - 74%
- ▶ Communication - 74%
- ▶ Time management - 69%
- ▶ Social fluency - 69%
- ▶ Problem-solving - 67%

These skills are the very ones ranked most important by employers across all sectors – from communication and collaboration to resilience and creative thinking. And crucially, the research shows that students who continue with music beyond compulsory schooling demonstrate significantly higher workplace confidence, including a 22-point increase in confidence in finding creative solutions.

Music education doesn't just enrich young people – it equips them. Yet while the impact is clear, many teachers tell us that it remains challenging to evidence these skills in a way that is recognised, trusted, and easily understood beyond the music department. This toolkit was created to help.

## What this toolkit gives you

- ▶ Clear, research-backed evidence you can share with SLT, parents, governors, and external partners
- ▶ A simple skills grid showing the transferable capabilities developed through music learning
- ▶ Practical tools for documenting and demonstrating student progress
- ▶ Language and templates for reports, newsletters, and departmental communications
- ▶ Guidance on how Trinity assessments can support evidence collection and demonstrate student achievement

Whether you teach in a school, a music service, a college, or a private/commercial setting, this toolkit is designed to give you the confidence, clarity, and language to articulate the full impact of music education – and to help your students' achievements be recognised in ways that truly reflect their growth.

**Music builds skills for life. This toolkit helps you show it.**

\* **Full white paper:** [Career-Ready: Bridging the Employability Skills and Confidence Gap](#)

## SECTION 2 – Skills at a glance

### What music education develops – and how teachers can evidence it.

Music learning builds a powerful set of transferable skills that young people need for study, work, and life. This grid summarises each skill, why it matters, what the research shows, the behaviours students develop in music learning, and the types of evidence you can collect to demonstrate progress. This section is designed to be printed, shared with SLT or parents, and used in curriculum and departmental planning.

#### Skills-at-a-Glance Grid

| Skill                  | Why it matters   | Research evidence (pp.18-21)   | What students do in Music that builds it  | Evidence teachers can collect   |
|------------------------|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Creativity</b>      | Essential for problem-solving, idea generation, and innovation in all careers.             | 82% of teachers say music strongly develops creativity.                            | Exploring the work of others and utilising their findings in ways which develop their own musical voice and personality, and allow this to be expressed. Experimenting with sound and tonal colour, improvising, composing. | Recordings of contrasting interpretations; composition drafts; performance notes. |
| <b>Concentration</b>   | Supports academic progress and sustained focus in study and work tasks.                    | 77% of teachers report music strengthens concentration.                            | Practising difficult passages, maintaining focus in lessons, listening across ensemble parts.   | Practice diaries; before/after recordings; teacher observation notes.             |
| <b>Resilience</b>      | Core to overcoming setbacks, responding to feedback, and managing pressure.                | 76% report music-making builds resilience; strong links to feedback cycles.        | Practising passages for improvement, trying different practice techniques, recovering after performance errors.   | Reflection sheets; rehearsal footage showing iteration; exam reports.             |
| <b>Teamwork</b>        | Crucial for collaboration, group communication, and shared responsibility.                 | 74% say music fosters teamwork through ensemble work.                              | Blending sound, balancing roles, responding to peers, supporting section leaders.   | Ensemble rehearsal clips; peer-assessment notes; conductor comments.              |
| <b>Adaptability</b>    | Needed for adjusting to new tasks, changing expectations, and unfamiliar environments.     | 74% of teachers identify adaptability as a key outcome of music learning.          | Adjusting interpretation, responding to conductor direction, adapting to new group interactions and behaviours.   | Teacher feedback; rehearsal journals; annotated scores showing changes.           |
| <b>Communication</b>   | Employers cite communication as the No.1 skill for future careers.                         | 74% report music builds communication and expression skills.                       | Performing with intention, phrasing, articulation, musical storytelling, ensemble interactions.   | Performance recordings; interpretation statements; audience feedback.             |
| <b>Time management</b> | Essential for managing deadlines, balancing priorities, and organising work.               | 69% say music improves time management through regular practice and rehearsals.    | Planning practice sessions, preparing for exams, working to set performance dates.  | Practice planners; rehearsal schedules; goal-setting sheets.                      |
| <b>Social fluency</b>  | Helps students navigate group settings, interact confidently, and collaborate effectively. | 69% highlight social fluency gains through music.                                  | Working with unfamiliar peers, responding to ensemble non-verbal interactions, participating in group rehearsals and tasks.   | Ensemble observations; peer feedback; lesson reflections.                         |
| <b>Problem-solving</b> | Applies to academic challenges, technical tasks and workplace decision-making.             | 67% report music enhances problem-solving through analytic and creative processes. | Troubleshooting technical issues, analysing errors, adjusting approach to improve the musical outcome.  | Annotated scores; teacher notes; student-led improvement plans.                   |

**A note on confidence** – Research also shows students continuing with music beyond compulsory years report much higher confidence across all transferable skills – including a 22-point increase in confidence with creative problem-solving and stronger readiness for work.

(Reference: Career-Ready: Bridging the Employability Skills and Confidence Gap - Music findings, p.20)

## SECTION 3 – From the music room to the workplace

How musical learning develops real-world skills and career-ready behaviours.

Music education is one of the most powerful – and often underestimated – pathways for developing the behaviours that young people need for life beyond school. The skills built naturally through learning an instrument, rehearsing, performing, and working in ensembles map directly onto the competencies employers value most.

This section connects what happens in music lessons to the skills required in modern workplaces, giving you language you can use in reports, parental communication, departmental planning, careers education, and advocacy with senior leaders.

### Music > Transferable Skills Map

| Music Activity  | Transferable Skills  | Real-World Capability  |
|---|--|--|
|  <p><b>Rehearsal &amp; Performance Preparation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working to fixed deadlines</li> <li>Refining performances under time pressure</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time management</li> <li>Resilience</li> </ul>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meeting deadlines</li> <li>Delivering work under pressure</li> <li>Preparing thoroughly</li> <li>Managing long-term tasks</li> </ul>                            |
|  <p><b>Daily Practice &amp; Technique</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetition, accuracy, refinement</li> <li>Solving technical challenges</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concentration</li> <li>Problem-solving</li> <li>Resilience</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staying focused on complex tasks</li> <li>Independent learning</li> <li>Tackling problems methodically</li> <li>Improvement through iteration</li> </ul>        |
|  <p><b>Ensemble Work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening to other ensemble members</li> <li>Balancing parts and voices</li> <li>Giving/receiving cues</li> </ul>                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teamwork</li> <li>Social fluency</li> <li>Leadership</li> </ul>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective collaboration</li> <li>Clear and confident communication</li> <li>Knowing when to lead vs support</li> <li>Working productively with peers</li> </ul> |
|  <p><b>Interpretation &amp; Expression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making musical decisions</li> <li>Exploring styles</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creativity</li> <li>Communication</li> <li>Adaptability</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generating ideas</li> <li>Communicating meaning</li> <li>Adjusting to different contexts</li> <li>Responding to audience needs</li> </ul>                       |
|  <p><b>Feedback &amp; Iteration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Acting on teacher/conductor guidance</li> <li>Refining performance through critique</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resilience</li> <li>Adaptability</li> <li>Growth mindset</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking feedback professionally</li> <li>Improving work quickly</li> <li>Adjusting approach when needed</li> <li>Demonstrating learning agility</li> </ul>       |
|  <p><b>Performance &amp; Presentation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Delivering in front of audience/examiner/adjudicator</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication</li> <li>Confidence</li> </ul>                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presenting ideas clearly</li> <li>Managing nerves</li> <li>Speaking up in meetings</li> <li>Communicating with presence</li> </ul>                              |
|  <p><b>Technical &amp; Musical Problem-Solving</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Troubleshooting tuning, rhythmic and balance issues</li> <li>Improving sound quality and intonation</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Critical thinking</li> <li>Problem-solving</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diagnosing issues</li> <li>Producing solutions</li> <li>Making decisions with incomplete info</li> <li>Analytical reasoning</li> </ul>                          |
|  <p><b>Working With New Peers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapting to new interactions and behaviours</li> <li>Adjusting to unfamiliar styles</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adaptability</li> <li>Social fluency</li> </ul>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating into new teams</li> <li>Navigating different personalities</li> <li>Adapting to change</li> <li>Professional collaboration</li> </ul>               |
|  <p><b>Memory &amp; Listening Skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning and internalising pieces and structures</li> <li>Critical listening</li> <li>Analysing texture and construct</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concentration</li> <li>Attention to detail</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Focus and concentration</li> <li>Accurate task completion</li> <li>Careful analysis</li> <li>Quality control</li> </ul>   |
|  <p><b>Balancing Individual &amp; Collective Roles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Taking ownership of personal part</li> <li>Supporting ensemble performance</li> </ul>                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leadership</li> <li>Self-management</li> <li>Teamwork</li> </ul>      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Managing individual tasks</li> <li>Contributing to team success</li> <li>Balancing autonomy and cooperation</li> </ul>  |

**Music education mirrors the exact conditions of modern workplaces: deadlines, teamwork, pressure, feedback loops, iteration, and high-stakes delivery.**

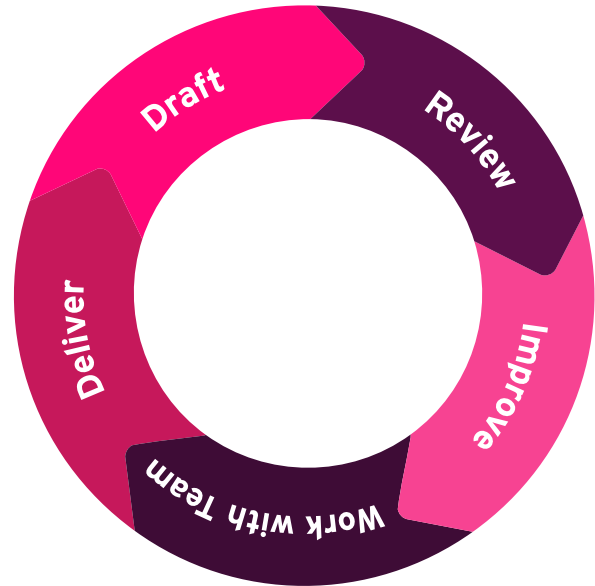
## SECTION 3 – From the music room to the workplace

### The Music Learning Cycle

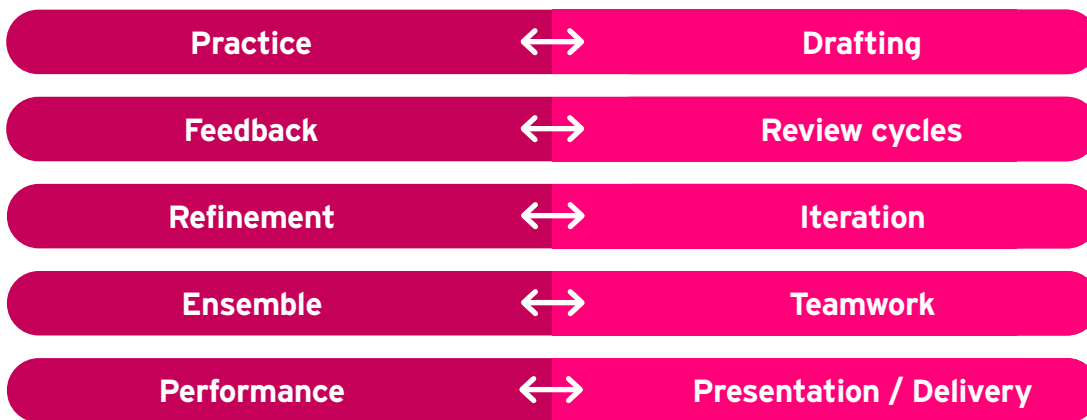
Music learning:



Workplace cycle:



Music learning to workplace practice:



## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

Simple, ready-to-use tools to help you evidence the skills your students develop through music learning.

Music teachers already know how deeply music supports student growth – in confidence, resilience, creativity and communication. But it's not always easy to capture or evidence these skills in ways that senior leaders, parents, inspectors, and students themselves can clearly see and value.

This section provides practical, classroom-ready tools to help you do exactly that.

Each one is designed to be flexible for use in:

- ▶ whole-class music
- ▶ instrumental & vocal lessons
- ▶ ensembles and choirs
- ▶ peripatetic sessions
- ▶ independent/private and state school settings
- ▶ commercial music schools

All tools can be photocopied, adapted, or used digitally.





## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

### Tool 2 – Skills Language for Reports & Feedback

Evidence-informed phrasing to help teachers articulate skills development.

Use these in progress reports, comments on practice logs, parent communications or SLT briefings.

#### CREATIVITY

"Explores expressive choices with confidence and originality."

"Demonstrates the ability to generate musical solutions independently."

#### PROBLEM-SOLVING

"Identifies technical issues and overcomes them independently."

"Demonstrates an intelligent and structured practice ethic in improving performance skills."

#### RESILIENCE

"Responds positively to challenge and refinement cycles."

"Persists through difficult passages and improves steadily."

#### CONCENTRATION

"Sustains focus on practising regularly over extended periods."

"Shows strong attention to musical accuracy and nuance."

#### ADAPTABILITY

"Adapts readily to new repertoire across different styles and genres."

"Interacts well with groups and ensembles, as well as solo repertoire work."

"Responds constructively to direction through the rehearsal progress."

#### TEAMWORK

"Balances their role effectively within the ensemble."

"Listens and adjusts to support group cohesion."

#### TIME MANAGEMENT

"Prepares reliably for rehearsals and concert days."

"Organises practice time efficiently and purposefully."

#### COMMUNICATION

"Communicates musical ideas clearly through expression and phrasing."

"Uses musical and verbal communication effectively to support ensemble work."

#### SOCIAL FLUENCY

"Engages confidently with peers, including in new group settings."

"Collaborates respectfully and constructively with others."

## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

### Tool 3 – Parent/Carer Communication Templates

Adaptable paragraphs you can paste into newsletters, emails, reports or event programmes.

#### **A** General update (newsletter-friendly)

Music continues to play a vital role in developing my/our students' confidence and broader skills. Recent research shows that music strengthens creativity, concentration, resilience, teamwork and communication – all skills that support success far beyond the music room. This term, students have been developing these capabilities through rehearsals, concerts, and other ensemble activities, preparing them not only for performance but for study and working life.

#### **B** Reporting after a concert or exam

Your child has made strong progress this term, not only musically but also in transferable skills such as improved resilience, communication and focus. Preparing for their recent performance/exam required sustained practice, adaptability and confidence – skills that employers consistently highlight as essential for future success.

#### **C** For parents of new instrumental/vocal learners

Learning an instrument develops far more than musical technique. Through regular practice, performing for others, and receiving feedback, students build resilience, problem-solving abilities and concentration, as well as the confidence to share their ideas. We/I look forward to supporting your child as these wider skills continue to grow.



## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

### Tool 4 – SLT-Ready Briefing Slide

Paste this text directly into a slide deck for school leadership or governors.

#### The Transferable Skills Developed Through Music Education

##### Key Evidence:

- ▶ Music develops creativity (82%), concentration (77%), resilience (76%) and teamwork (74%).
- ▶ Students who continue with music beyond compulsory years show 22-point higher confidence in creative problem-solving.
- ▶ Musicianship mirrors workplace demands: deadlines, feedback cycles and iteration, collaboration, and performance.

##### Impact on Learners:

- ▶ Increased confidence in communication and collaboration
- ▶ Improved adaptability and problem-solving
- ▶ Stronger focus and self-management
- ▶ Greater resilience and comfort with challenge

##### How We Evidence This:

- ▶ Rehearsal journals and recordings
- ▶ Trinity assessment feedback
- ▶ Teacher feedback
- ▶ Student reflection sheets
- ▶ Ensemble participation notes

##### Why It Matters:

Music education develops the human skills that employers now rank as essential for future success – skills our students practise every week.

## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

### Tool 5 – Skills Evidence Collection Checklist

A simple audit tool for teachers and Heads of Department.

Use this checklist during exam prep, ensemble term planning, or departmental reviews.

#### Evidence Teachers Can Collect Throughout the Term

##### Rehearsals & Lessons

- ▶ Video clips of rehearsal improvements ○
- ▶ Teacher annotations on sheet music and scores ○
- ▶ Practice diaries or digital practice apps like NoteLab Music ○
- ▶ Feedback notes (teacher, peer, self) ○

##### Performances

- ▶ Audio/video recordings ○
- ▶ Concert programmes listing repertoire ○
- ▶ Audience or peer feedback summaries ○

##### Assessments (Trinity or internal)

- ▶ Examiner feedback reports ○
- ▶ Teacher feedback ○
- ▶ Commentary on performances of pieces/songs ○

##### Student Reflections

- ▶ Completed reflection sheets (Tool 1) ○
- ▶ Goal-setting documents ○
- ▶ Termly learning reviews ○

## SECTION 4 – Practical tools for teachers

### Tool 6 – Mini Classroom Prompts (for display or verbal warm-ups)

Quick starters that make skills explicit.

#### TEAMWORK

"Tell your partner one thing you did today that required teamwork."

#### RESILIENCE

"What mistake did you fix today, and how did you fix it?"

#### CREATIVITY

"Did you make any musical choices and why?"

#### ADAPTABILITY

"What did you change after receiving feedback?"

#### CONCENTRATION

"What helped you stay focused during this rehearsal?"

These help students build self-awareness and make the implicit skills explicit.

### Tool 7 – Departmental Planning Add-on

A ready-made "Skills in Our Curriculum" statement.

Paste into curriculum documents:

Our music curriculum is designed to develop both musical ability and the transferable skills young people need for further study, work and life. Through performance, composition, listening and rehearsal activities, students build resilience, adaptability, concentration, creativity, communication and teamwork – skills consistently identified by teachers and employers as essential for future success. Our use of structured progression, feedback cycles and performance opportunities ensures these capabilities are practised and evidenced throughout learning.

## SECTION 5 – Skills evidence & assessment

How Trinity assessments make transferable skills visible, measurable, and meaningful.

Music education naturally develops the skills young people need to thrive – creativity, resilience, teamwork, communication, adaptability, concentration and more. But as many teachers tell us, these capabilities can be difficult to document in a way that is trusted by parents, senior leaders, inspectors, further education providers and employers.

This is where structured, performance-based assessment makes a significant difference.

Trinity's assessments do more than measure musical proficiency.

They provide a trusted framework for evidencing the wider human skills highlighted in the research – particularly those teachers say are hardest to assess: resilience (28%), adaptability (26%), leadership (23%), creativity (22%), and concentration (22%).

This section explains how Trinity assessments support the recognition, documentation and celebration of these crucial skills.

### 1. How Trinity assessments reflect real-world skill development

#### A. Performing effectively under realistic conditions

Practising and performing regularly replicates workplace demands:

- ▶ preparation with fixed deadlines
- ▶ high-stakes delivery
- ▶ managing pressure to perform well
- ▶ need for composure and confidence

**Students demonstrate:** confidence, discipline, resilience, presentation skills, stagecraft, time management and attention to detail.

#### B. Structured feedback cycles

Teacher feedback → practice → improvement → assessment → examiner commentary.

This mirrors the iterative, feedback-driven processes found in modern workplaces.

**Students demonstrate:** adaptability, responsiveness to critique, growth mindset.

#### C. Ensemble and collaborative opportunities

When performing in orchestras, bands, choirs, or other groups students also show: adaptability, responsiveness to critique, growth mindset.

#### D. Clear, progressive benchmarks

Graded exams give students:

- ▶ targets to work towards
- ▶ structured progression
- ▶ opportunities to build achievement over time

**This supports development of:** discipline, time management, concentration and resilience.

## SECTION 5 – Skills evidence & assessment

### 2. Skills Mapping: Where Transferable Skills Appear in Trinity Assessments

The table below links typical Trinity music assessment components to the transferable skills highlighted in the research (pp.18-21).

| Assessment Component                       | What Students Do   | Skills Evidenced  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>Performance Pieces or Songs</b>         | Interpret repertoire; apply technique & display musical voice/personality through expression across different styles and genres; perform under pressure. | Communication, adaptability, confidence, creativity, resilience, concentration. |
| <b>Technical Work</b>                      | Demonstrate control, discipline, accuracy, focus.  | Concentration, overcoming challenges, persistence, attention to detail.         |
| <b>Musical Knowledge</b>                   | Explain technical terms and structures, demonstrate understanding of style and context.  | Critical thinking, abstract reasoning, analysis, communication clarity.         |
| <b>Sight Reading</b>                       | Respond in real time to unseen material.   | Adaptability, decision-making, thinking under pressure.                         |
| <b>Improvisation</b>                       | Respond in real time to a new stimulus   | Creativity, decision-making, planning, thinking under pressure.                 |
| <b>Aural Tests</b>                         | Listen, analyse, recall and respond.   | Listening skills, attention to detail, analytical thinking.                     |
| <b>Ensemble Options (where applicable)</b> | Work with peers; maintain collective timing and balance.   | Teamwork, leadership, social fluency, collaboration.                            |

### 3. Using Trinity assessment feedback as evidence

Trinity examiner reports can be used as formal documentation of:

- ▶ growth in confidence
- ▶ improvement in responsiveness to feedback
- ▶ gains in expressivity and communication
- ▶ ability to perform under pressure
- ▶ progress in technical problem-solving
- ▶ developing musical judgement and decision-making

Teachers can:

- ▶ add exam reports to student portfolios
- ▶ reference examiner comments in parent communications
- ▶ use feedback to structure goal-setting conversations
- ▶ present evidence during SLT reviews, inspections, or governor meetings

This creates a robust, external validation of skills often considered "hard to measure".

### 4. Building a Skills Portfolio Through Trinity Assessments

Encourage students to compile a simple Skills & Performance Portfolio across the year.

This could include:

- ▶ performance clips (start/end of rehearsal process)
- ▶ markings to sheet music, lead sheets and scores
- ▶ examiner reports
- ▶ practice diaries
- ▶ ensemble participation notes
- ▶ self-reflection (from Section 4 tools)
- ▶ short written rationale of interpretative decisions

This builds student agency and confidence – and provides clear, trackable evidence of skill development.

## SECTION 5 – Skills evidence & assessment

### 5. Talking to Parents, SLT & Inspectors About Skills Evidence

Here are ready-to-use phrases that link Trinity assessments to transferable skills:

#### For parents

“Your child’s Trinity exam preparation this term has helped develop their resilience, communication and concentration – skills that support their academic progress and wider confidence.”

#### For senior leaders

“Trinity assessments provide a structured framework for evidencing the human skills our students need for successful progression – skills such as adaptability, teamwork, focus, and confidence under pressure.”

#### For inspectors

“These assessments give clear, externally validated evidence of student progress not just musically, but in essential life skills identified in national research – particularly confidence, resilience, communication, and problem-solving.”

### 6. Why transferable skills matter – and how Trinity supports them

The research shows that music education strengthens the exact behaviours young people need for work readiness (pp.18-21). Trinity assessments help teachers show those skills in action.

#### Trinity supports teachers by providing:

- ▶ reliable, structured assessments
- ▶ clear skill-based learning outcomes
- ▶ detailed feedback from specialist examiners
- ▶ progression frameworks that build persistence and self-belief
- ▶ flexibility across musical genres and pathways
- ▶ resources and CPD that reinforce both musical and transferable skill development

Music learning builds the skills.  
Trinity helps you evidence them.



## SECTION 6 – Case studies

Real stories of how music learning builds confidence, creativity and essential life skills.

The research shows that music education strengthens the skills young people need for success in further study, work, and life – confidence, resilience, creativity, collaboration, adaptability and communication (pp.18–21). These skills are not abstract; they grow through real experiences: performing under pressure, practising consistently,

overcoming mistakes, interpreting repertoire, and responding to feedback.

The following real stories from Trinity learners and educators demonstrate exactly how these skills develop – and why structured musical pathways matter.

### Case Study 1 – Adrian: “Music taught me resilience – and I use it every day.”

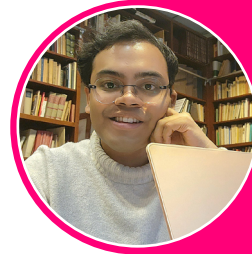
(Source: Research report, p.20)

#### Background:

Adrian completed Trinity Grade 3 Electronic Keyboard and Grade 2 Music Theory before pursuing a career in software development.

#### Skills developed through music:

- ▶ Resilience: “You make mistakes as you practise, but the important thing is to continue.”
- ▶ Teamwork: Ensemble experiences helped him work confidently with others.
- ▶ Communication: Developing expressive playing supported his professional communication style.
- ▶ Problem-solving: Technical challenges and learning about musical forms and construction built analytical thinking.



#### Why it matters:

Adrian credits music with preparing him for real-world work cycles – iterating, refining, reacting to feedback, and performing under pressure.

#### Toolkit link:

Adrian’s experience demonstrates how resilience, concentration and problem-solving built through music directly support workplace confidence and success.

### Case Study 2 – Sam: Building Confidence and Musical Identity Through Drumming

(Source: Trinity Success Stories – Sam)

#### Background:

Sam discovered a passion for drumming early on and progressed through the Trinity Rock & Pop syllabus, achieving a Grade 8 Distinction.

#### Skills developed through music:

- ▶ Confidence: Sam’s mother notes he is “more confident with each performance.”
- ▶ Creativity: Improvisation sections in exams strengthened his spontaneous musical thinking.
- ▶ Resilience: Working towards a high-level grade required persistence and discipline.
- ▶ Focus and time management: Sam’s long-term progression through multiple grades illustrates sustained concentration and dedication.



#### Why it matters:

His journey illustrates how structured progression motivates learners and teaches them to set goals, practise consistently, and deliver under pressure.

#### Toolkit link:

Sam’s story evidences the connection between performance, confidence, creativity, and resilience – key skills highlighted in the research.

## SECTION 6 – Case studies

### Case Study 3 – Melissa: Gaining Confidence and Expressive Skills Through Piano

(Source: Trinity Success Stories – Melissa)

#### Background:

Melissa studied piano using Trinity's Classical & Jazz syllabus and flourished through the flexibility and creativity it offered.

#### Skills developed through music:

- ▶ **Communication:** Melissa learned to communicate emotion and meaning through musical phrasing.
- ▶ **Confidence under pressure:** Regular performance preparation helped her manage nerves.
- ▶ **Creativity:** Exploring expressive choices developed her musical voice.
- ▶ **Concentration:** Working through detailed technical passages built focus and persistence.



#### Why it matters:

Her teacher notes that Melissa became more articulate, reflective, and self-assured – skills that supported her beyond music lessons.

#### Toolkit link:

Melissa's development highlights the research theme that music enhances communication, concentration, and confidence, especially for learners who grow through expressive work.

### Case Study 4 – Ravina: A Teacher's Perspective on Skills Growth

(Source: Trinity Success Stories – Ravina)

#### Background:

Ravina is a professional musician and teacher who prepares students for Trinity exams across a range of instruments.

#### Skills developed through music:

- ▶ **Creativity & problem-solving:** Students engage deeply with interpretation, improvisation and composition.
- ▶ **Adaptability:** The breadth in Trinity's repertoire lists encourages learners to explore different musical styles.
- ▶ **Confidence:** Ravina's learners treat exams like performance opportunities, building calmness under pressure.
- ▶ **Resilience:** Regular feedback cycles and preparation for assessments strengthen perseverance.



#### Why it matters:

Ravina emphasises that Trinity's flexible, learner-centred approach helps students develop musicianship without the stress of overly rigid assessment formats

#### Toolkit link:

As a teacher case study, Ravina provides external validation that Trinity assessments support skill development, not just technical achievement.

## SECTION 6 – Case studies

### What These Stories Show

Across all four real examples:

**1. Music builds confidence – especially under pressure.**

Performing for peers, teachers, and examiners develops composure, communication and self-belief.

**2. Music strengthens creativity and problem-solving.**

Improvising, interpreting, experimenting and refining ideas mirror the processes of flexible thinking found in many careers.

**3. Music rewards resilience and adaptability.**

Preparing for graded assessments, integrating feedback and persisting through difficulty build the resilience teachers say is hardest to evidence.

**4. Music develops collaboration and social fluency.**

Ensemble playing, teacher-student dialogue and examiner interactions develop teamwork and relationship skills.

**5. Trinity assessments provide credible, structured evidence of these skills.**

From Sam's Grade 8 distinction to Melissa's expressive development to Ravina's teaching experience, Trinity's approach supports both musical and wider skill growth.



## SECTION 7 – For Teachers in Ireland

### How this toolkit supports music educators in the Republic of Ireland

Music education in the Republic of Ireland has a distinctive landscape. Teachers work across a variety of settings – private and commercial music schools, independent schools, Education Training Board (ETB) settings, and through individual tuition – all within a system where student confidence, creativity and personal development are highly valued.

While curriculum structures differ from those in the UK, the skills developed through musical learning are universal, and the findings in this toolkit are just as relevant to Irish learners and their progression.

This page summarises how you can use the tools in this guide within the Irish context.

### 1. Why transferable skills matter in the Irish context

In Ireland, music is a key contributor to the Junior Cycle Wellbeing indicators – including Resilient, Responsible, Creative, Connected, and Confident Communicator. These are qualities that music teachers nurture in every lesson.

The research findings on pp.18-21 align directly with these priorities:

- ▶ Creativity (82%)
- ▶ Resilience (76%)
- ▶ Communication (74%)
- ▶ Teamwork (74%)
- ▶ Adaptability (74%)
- ▶ Concentration (77%)

These are skills that support student confidence, transition to Senior Cycle, and preparation for further study in FE/HE or the creative arts.



## SECTION 7 – For Teachers in Ireland

### 2. How to use this toolkit in Irish settings

#### A. Independent / Private Schools

Use the Skills-at-a-Glance Grid and Reflection Sheets to:

- ▶ show parents and leadership the broader developmental benefits of music
- ▶ support wellbeing initiatives
- ▶ evidence musical growth in a holistic learner profile
- ▶ demonstrate the value of regular performance and assessment

#### B. Commercial Music Schools & Private Studios

This toolkit helps you:

- ▶ communicate skills development clearly to parents
- ▶ support student retention through goal-setting and progress tracking
- ▶ provide structure for learners who thrive on a clear pathway
- ▶ enhance your studio's reputation by showcasing evidence of impact

#### C. ETB and Community Music Settings

Tools in this guide can support:

- ▶ Youthreach and adult-learner pathways
- ▶ Community music programmes focusing on confidence and social fluency
- ▶ Skills-based reporting for funders, boards and local partners
- ▶ Integration with wellbeing, social development and creative engagement objectives

### 3. Why Trinity assessments align well with Irish priorities

Trinity's approach naturally complements Irish music education, where student-centred learning, creativity, and flexibility are highly valued.

Trinity assessments support Irish learners by:

- ▶ providing internationally recognised qualifications without restricting musical identity
- ▶ allowing repertoire choice that respects student voice and diverse genres
- ▶ supporting creative musicianship, including improvisation and composition
- ▶ offering examiner feedback that builds confidence and growth mindset
- ▶ helping students prepare for Senior Cycle Practical components, auditions, and further study

These pathways work particularly well for learners needing a confidence-building structure that still promotes autonomy and expressive development.

## SECTION 7 – For Teachers in Ireland

### 4. Communicating the value of music to Irish parents

Parents value music for its contribution to confidence, wellbeing and social engagement.

The toolkit gives you ready-made language and evidence to highlight how music supports:

- ▶ personal development
- ▶ academic self-belief
- ▶ emotional resilience
- ▶ social skills
- ▶ creativity and expression
- ▶ preparation for performance and communication

These themes resonate strongly with families choosing independent tuition or supporting students through exam years.

### 5. Next steps for teachers in Ireland

Consider using:

- ▶ Skills Reflection Sheets – adapted for Junior Cycle learning logs
- ▶ Skills Grid – as part of student progress folders
- ▶ Parent Communication Templates – for annual reports or lesson updates
- ▶ Skills-Evidence Checklist – to prepare for concerts, exams or practical assessments
- ▶ Case Studies (Section 6) – to illustrate the impact of sustained music study

Whether you teach in a school, studio, or community setting, these tools help you showcase the full value of music education to learners, families, and leadership.



## SECTION 8 – Next steps for you/your music department

Turning insight into action: practical ways to embed transferable skills and evidence into your teaching.

You now have a set of tools designed to help you show the full impact of music education – not just musically, but in the broader skills that young people need for study, work and life. This section outlines simple, effective next steps you/your department can take to embed this approach and communicate its value clearly to students, parents, senior leaders and your wider community.

### 1. Use the Skills-at-a-Glance Grid in your planning and communication

The grid in Section 2 can support:

- ▶ curriculum and scheme-of-work planning
- ▶ lesson and rehearsal objectives
- ▶ progress tracking
- ▶ performance reviews and practical exams
- ▶ advocacy with SLT, governors, parents or funders

#### Action:

Print the grid for your classroom/studio/teaching space, include it in department handbooks, and share it with peripatetic staff so everyone is speaking the same language about music's wider impact.

### 2. Integrate reflection and evidence into everyday practice

Use the Student Skills Reflection Sheet (Section 4) at key points during the year – after concerts, before or after exams, or at the end of a term.

This helps students:

- ▶ articulate their learning
- ▶ recognise their progress
- ▶ build confidence
- ▶ prepare for exams and practical components

#### Action:

Choose one class or ensemble to pilot reflection sheets this term; expand to others once established.



## SECTION 8 – Next steps for you/your music department

### 3. Build a simple skills portfolio for each learner

A Skills & Performance Portfolio helps students track:

- ▶ rehearsal clips
- ▶ notes from practice sessions and markings to sheet music and scores
- ▶ examiner feedback
- ▶ technical progress
- ▶ self-reflections
- ▶ personal goals

This is powerful evidence for teachers, parents, inspectors and leadership teams.

**Action:**

Create a folder (digital or physical) for each student; add two pieces of evidence per term.

### 5. Share success stories widely

Stories like those of Adrian, Sam, Melissa, and Ravina (Section 6) show the real human impact of music learning.

**Action:**

**Capture your own local examples:**

- ▶ note student progress and achievements
- ▶ collect small quotes
- ▶ record short rehearsal clips
- ▶ showcase ensemble teamwork

These stories build advocacy and strengthen your department's/organisation's profile.

### 4. Use Trinity assessments to provide recognised, structured evidence

Trinity assessments already capture:

- ▶ resilience
- ▶ focus and concentration
- ▶ communication
- ▶ creativity
- ▶ adaptability
- ▶ performance confidence

These are exactly the skills highlighted in the research (pp.18-21).

Use exam preparation and feedback to reinforce the wider skill-building narrative.

**Action:**

Discuss with your team or peripatetic staff where Trinity assessments fit naturally in your learners' progression – and how examiner reports can feed into Skills Portfolios.

### 6. Communicate the value of music clearly and confidently

Use the language from Section 4 (Skills Language for Reports & Feedback) and Section 5 (Skills Evidence & Assessment) to frame music not just as a subject, but as a place where students develop:

- ▶ confidence
- ▶ creativity
- ▶ resilience
- ▶ teamwork
- ▶ problem-solving
- ▶ communication

**Action:**

Include a "Skills Built Through Music" section in reports, newsletters or concert programmes.

## SECTION 8 – Next steps for you/your music department

### 7. Use this toolkit to support whole-school priorities

The transferable skills highlighted in this research map directly onto whole-school goals around:

- ▶ wellbeing
- ▶ communication
- ▶ personal development
- ▶ confidence
- ▶ oracy
- ▶ leadership
- ▶ employability

**Action:**

Share this toolkit with senior leaders or heads of year to demonstrate how music contributes meaningfully to these priorities.

### 9. Plan one skills-focused event or initiative

A small pilot can showcase the toolkit's principles in action.

**Options include:**

- ▶ a "Skills Through Performance" concert
- ▶ an open rehearsal with student commentary
- ▶ a parent workshop on "What music teaches beyond the notes"
- ▶ a student-led skills exhibition during a concert interval
- ▶ an end-of-term "Music & Skills Award" recognising confidence, teamwork or creativity

**Action:**

Select one initiative for the next term and integrate it into your calendar.

### 8. Strengthen partnerships with peripatetic teachers and external tutors

Many learners encounter music primarily through peripatetic tuition or private schools. Aligning language and goals provides consistency and clarity for parents and students.

**Action:**

Host a short departmental briefing or share a digital version of this toolkit with all tutors and external partners.

### 10. Join or build a community of practice

Music teachers thrive when they share ideas and celebration.

**Action:**

Join Trinity's regular webinars, online communities like Facebook groups, network with local hubs or clusters, or create a shared folder of best practice within your school or music service.

Music education shapes young people's futures.

With the tools, evidence and stories in this toolkit, you/your department can confidently demonstrate how – and ensure that your students' skills, achievements and growth are recognised and celebrated.

## SECTION 9 – Take the next step with Trinity

Bring the power of music and transferable skills into focus for your learners.

You've explored how music education builds the essential human skills young people need for success – confidence, resilience, creativity, communication, teamwork, adaptability and more.

You now have practical tools, evidence, classroom resources and real stories to help you demonstrate that impact every day. **If you're ready to take the next step, Trinity is here to support you.**

### 1. Join the Trinity Educator Community

Connect with music teachers across the UK and Ireland who are committed to developing confident, creative young musicians.

Get access to:

- ▶ CPD sessions and webinars
- ▶ Teaching tips and resources
- ▶ Updates on syllabuses and assessment pathways
- ▶ Opportunities to share your practice

[Sign up and stay connected →](#)

### 2. Download free sample materials & teaching resources

Explore repertoire lists, sample exercises, videos and support materials that help make Trinity assessments part of your everyday teaching.

[Access free materials →](#)

### 3. Discover how Trinity assessments can support your learners

Whether you teach in a school, studio, music service or community setting, Trinity offers flexible, student-centred assessments that value real musicality and build confidence.

Useful for:

- ▶ developing performance readiness
- ▶ evidencing transferable skills
- ▶ planning progression pathways
- ▶ motivating learners long-term
- ▶ providing evidence of progress and achievement

[Explore music assessment options →](#)

### 4. Book a short conversation with a Trinity advisor

Connect with music teachers across the UK and Ireland who are committed to developing confident, creative young musicians.

We can help with:

- ▶ choosing the right pathway
- ▶ planning grade journeys
- ▶ building department-wide assessment frameworks
- ▶ aligning music learning to wider school priorities

[Schedule a 15-minute call →](#)

### 5. Stay updated with webinars, events & opportunities

From online CPD to in-person networking, Trinity offers a programme of events designed to support your teaching and your learners' progress.

[See upcoming and past events →](#)

### 6. Share your story

We're always looking to celebrate the impact of music teachers and learners.

**If you'd like to contribute a success story or case study:**

[Get in touch and tell us more →](#)

A final note. **Music education changes lives.**

It builds the confidence, creativity and resilience young people need to thrive.

By helping your learners evidence these skills – through thoughtful teaching and trusted assessment – you are shaping futures in powerful, lasting ways.

**Thank you for the work you do. We're here to support you every step of the way.**