

# Composition: Internal Assessment Briefs (2019)

## Brief 1: Rondo

Write a short Rondo in a **major key** for string quartet or small Classical Orchestra. It must follow the outline below and include at least one example of each of the WCT Style Features listed overleaf. The basic structural model is a shortened version of the finale from Haydn's Symphony No. 2, one that can also be found in countless other Rondo movements. *The piece should be at least TWO MINUTES in length.*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>A</b>  | Opening idea using a standard phrase structure. Choose: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period or sentence (8 bars). THEN a written-out repeat but with second half modified so it cadences with a perfect cadence in the dominant</li> <li>• Compound period (16 bars, modulating to the dominant in the second 8 bars)</li> </ul> <p>NOTE: whichever you choose, your final cadence must use ii6, I6/4 or both as part of the progression</p> |
| <b>B</b>  | ca. 12-16 bars including a modified fragment of theme and ending with a dominant pedal (this must be at least four bars and include the dissonant harmonies suggested on ALM)  |
| <b>A'</b>   | As A but final four bars is a cadential idea ending in a perfect cadence in the tonic  |
| <b>C</b>  | At least 24 bars that provide thematic, textural and tonal contrast. It is recommended that you go into the tonic minor for this section (it would be good to modulate to a related key as well) and finish on the dominant so it leads naturally back into the tonic major for the next section.  |
| * optional extension *  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>A''</b> (modified version of A modulating to a new key)</li> <li>○ <b>D</b> (new contrasting section following on in new key and staying there or modulating further before returning to prepare for A return)</li> </ul> |  |
| <b>A</b>  | As before but perhaps with a more extensive final coda   |
| <b>B</b>  |  |
| <b>A'</b>   |  |

## Brief 2: Incidental Music

Imagine you are writing incidental music for a play set in the Nineteenth Century. The theatre company wants to the music to be in an authentic late eighteenth or EARLY nineteenth century style in order to create the right atmosphere. You have been asked to produce a short concert piece that presents some of the best music from the play in a single movement. You should write for a small to medium-sized Classical orchestra, follow the overall ternary form below and include at least one of each of the WCT style features listed overleaf. *The piece should be at least TWO MINUTES in length.*

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| <b>A</b>  | This section in rounded binary (like a minuet/trio) but could also be expanded <p><b>a</b> Initial idea in a standard phrase form such as period, sentence etc (ends in dominant)</p> <p><b>b</b> continuation of dominant or another key before returning</p> <p><b>a'</b> modified return of A finishing with a perfect cadence in the tonic</p> |
| <b>B</b>  | Contrasting idea in any structure  |
| <b>A'</b> | Shortened return of A section.   |

Some pieces you might use as inspiration (most scores on Moodle):

- Mendelssohn: Midsummer Night's Dream, Fingal's Cave
- Grieg: Peer Gynt
- Schubert: Rosamunde
- Carl Davis: Pride and Prejudice (TV adaptation)

**Make sure you use the WCT COMPOSITION HUB**  
(<https://alevelmusic.com/alevelcompositionhelp/wct-composing-hub/>)

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**WCT Fingerprints (see notes on [www.alevelmusic.com](http://www.alevelmusic.com))**

1. Common cadences: ii6 – V – I cadence
  2. Common cadences: Cadential 6/4 (perfect or imperfect)
  3. Circle of fifths (at least partial)
  4. AND another harmonic sequence (see those listed on ALM)
  5. Passage based on parallel motion (best to have a short passage that is ONLY based on parallel motion i.e. sixths or thirds)
  6. Octave unison (ALL parts)
  7. Tonic and/or dominant pedal
  8. Augmented sixth (works particularly well onto the dominant)
  9. Diminished seventh
  10. Pivot chord modulation (for the Rondo brief this has to happen at the end of the A section)
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**Writing for the standard Classical Orchestra**

Must include:

- Violin I and II, viola, Cello and Bass (usually these will play the same part)
- Two horns, two oboes and/or flutes  
NOTE: woodwind invariably come in pairs, written on the same staff. You need not write separate parts for both all the time as sometimes they will double (write 'a 2') or one will play a solo line (write 'a 1' or 'solo')

Will often also include:

- Two clarinets
- Bassoon(s)
- Trumpet(s)
- Trombone(s)
- Timpani (plus triangle, cymbal, snare drum, bass drum)

Might additionally include:

- Piccolo
- Cor Anglais
- Eb (high) or bass clarinet
- Tuba

Pieces that get high marks will:

- be meticulous about following the conventions of the WCT (see conventions and melody-writing tips on [www.alevelmusic.com](http://www.alevelmusic.com))
- use the features listed above
- have simple but characterful melodies that include lots of **dynamics and articulation**
- include a variety of simple but effective textures

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## Deadlines

|                                      |                |                               |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| <i>Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April</i>   | First Draft    | Completed A, B and C sections |
| <i>Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May</i>    | Second Draft   | Completed draft               |
| <i>Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> May</i> | Final deadline | Finished piece                |