Co-funded by the European Union

YOUNG MUSIC TALENTS IN EUROPE

Building the Musical Bridge

Working with learning outcomes in pre-college music education

A PRACTICAL GUIDE

A companion to **Building the Musical Bridge — FULL REPORT**

For teachers and institutional leaders, for use with students

Version 1.1 | 26 October 2026

Young Music Talents in Europe
In cooperation with AEC and the project partnership

Developed through the Erasmus+ project
Developing a better curricular connection between pre-college and higher music education

Start with something you already teach

Choose a short passage, rehearsal task or musical project. Use the outcomes to clarify the learning, discuss progress and agree a useful next step. Begin with one outcome and an activity you already teach.

A five minute start

1. Choose a short musical task.
2. Select one relevant outcome from page 3.
3. Explain the musical goal to the student.
4. Listen or observe as the student tries the task.
5. Agree one next step and the support needed.

Find what you need

Your purpose	Turn to
See the shared framework	Page 3
Explore the outcomes through teaching	Pages 4–7
Try a lesson rehearsal or creative project	Pages 8–10
Give feedback and review a curriculum	Pages 11–12
Discuss transition and hear the student perspective	Pages 13–14
Plan a manageable trial	Page 15
Find the source report and acknowledgements	Page 16

Learning and assessment

A learning outcome describes what a student is expected to know or do. Evidence is something heard, seen or explained that helps you understand the learning. Reflection means considering what happened and using that understanding to decide what to try next.

Begin with discussion and formative feedback that helps the student improve. For formal assessment, agree the musical demand, permitted support and criteria beforehand. These pages offer suggested applications, not a compulsory assessment system or evaluated interventions.

The 14 proposed outcomes reproduce Chapter 6 of the full report and concern the end of specialised preparation for higher music education (HME). For younger learners, adapt the milestones, task and guidance. The framework does not assign a qualification or replace a programme’s admission requirements.

The 14 outcomes at a glance

The categories describe connected aspects of musicianship. A single activity can reveal several outcomes, but record only what you actually observe. Full statements and teaching suggestions follow on pages 4–7.

Practical and artistic

Code	Outcome area
P1	Artistic expression and principal study
P2	Repertoire and stylistic engagement
P3	Practice and rehearsal strategies
P4	Ensemble and collaborative musicianship
P5	Aural understanding and musical representation
P6	Creativity and musical exploration
P7	Performance and audience communication

Theoretical and contextual

Code	Outcome area
T1	Musical knowledge in practice
T2	Repertoire and cultural context

Generic and transversal

Code	Outcome area
G1	Responsibility and reflective learning
G2	Communication and participation
G3	Digital competence
G4	Sustainable musicianship
G5	Professional awareness and educational choice

Set the level through the musical task: name the repertoire or material, complexity, preparation time, degree of guidance and intended pathway. The same outcome can describe different developmental stages when these conditions are explicit.

OUTCOMES P1 TO P4

Develop artistic work and rehearsal habits

P1 Artistic expression and principal study

Realise and communicate musical intentions with developing technical control and expressive understanding appropriate to the principal study and intended HME pathway.

Try in teaching. Ask the student to show two ways of shaping a phrase and choose one.

Look or listen for. A musical intention that can be heard, with technique supporting it.

P2 Repertoire and stylistic engagement

Prepare and present relevant repertoire or musical material across an appropriate range of styles, using understanding of musical and contextual characteristics to inform decisions.

Try in teaching. Compare a stylistic feature in two relevant works and try its effect in performance.

Look or listen for. An informed decision linked to the music, rather than a list of facts.

P3 Practice and rehearsal strategies

Plan purposeful practice and rehearsal, identify problems, select and adapt strategies, and evaluate progress with increasing independence, seeking guidance when needed.

Try in teaching. Ask the student to identify a practice problem, try a strategy and review the result.

Look or listen for. A reason for the strategy, an adjustment and appropriate help-seeking.

P4 Ensemble and collaborative musicianship

Prepare and contribute responsibly to shared music-making, listening and responding to others, participating in musical decisions and adapting to different roles.

Try in teaching. Observe a short rehearsal as students agree an entry, balance or phrasing decision.

Look or listen for. Preparation, attentive response and a contribution to the shared decision.

OUTCOMES P5 TO P7 AND T1

Connect hearing knowledge and creative choices

P5 Aural understanding and musical representation

Recognise, remember and work with musical material by ear, and interpret and use notation or other relevant forms of representation appropriate to the discipline and intended HME pathway.

Try in teaching. Hear or sing a passage, then connect it with the score or a relevant representation.

Look or listen for. Connections between hearing, reading and musical action at the required level.

P6 Creativity and musical exploration

Explore, develop and evaluate musical ideas through improvisation, composition, arrangement, interpretation or other creative activity relevant to the principal study.

Try in teaching. Invite two endings, variations or interpretations, then ask what changed.

Look or listen for. Exploration, comparison and a reason for developing one idea further.

P7 Performance and audience communication

Prepare and deliver a musical presentation that communicates artistic intentions with awareness of audience, setting and practical responsibilities.

Try in teaching. Have the student plan a short presentation for a particular audience.

Look or listen for. Preparation and musical communication; outward confidence is not the criterion.

T1 Musical knowledge in practice

Explain and apply relevant concepts of rhythm, melody, harmony, form and musical organisation in listening, creation and interpretation, as appropriate to the intended HME pathway.

Try in teaching. Use a harmonic, rhythmic or formal feature to answer a real interpretative question.

Look or listen for. Understanding applied to listening or music-making, alongside necessary theoretical foundations.

OUTCOMES T2 G1 AND G2

Make understanding and reflection useful

T2 Repertoire and cultural context

Relate selected musical work to relevant stylistic, historical and cultural contexts, using that understanding to inform artistic choices and engagement with different musical perspectives.

Try in teaching. Use a score, recording or accessible source to explore a work's context and one artistic choice.

Look or listen for. A connection between context and musical decisions, with openness to other perspectives.

G1 Responsibility and reflective learning

Set realistic goals, use feedback constructively, reflect on progress and take increasing responsibility for learning and artistic decisions, with appropriate guidance.

Try in teaching. Agree a realistic goal, revisit feedback and ask the student to identify a next step.

Look or listen for. A change in learning or decision-making; polished reflective writing is not required.

G2 Communication and participation

Discuss musical work clearly, give and receive constructive feedback, and contribute respectfully and responsibly to shared activity in different educational or cultural settings.

Try in teaching. Ask ensemble members to exchange one specific observation and a suggestion, then try it.

Look or listen for. Clear, respectful exchange and a constructive response in the musical work.

Make room for different ways of responding

A student can explain a decision by speaking, demonstrating, annotating a score or making a brief recording. Choose the form that reveals the learning. Explain any programme-specific language requirements separately from the general communication outcome.

Local ensembles and classroom work are valid settings. Access to travel, specialist vocabulary or professional recordings should not determine whether a student can demonstrate these capabilities.

OUTCOMES G3 TO G5

Support sustainable learning and informed choices

G3 Digital competence

Select and use accessible digital tools for musical learning, practice, creation, recording or collaboration, explaining their purposes and limits and applying relevant principles of attribution, consent and responsible use.

Try in teaching. Use a simple recording or notation tool to answer a musical question. Ask why that tool was chosen.

Look or listen for. Purposeful use, checking and responsible handling of sources and recordings.

G4 Sustainable musicianship

Plan and review practice habits and workload, demonstrate basic awareness of hearing protection and excessive strain, and identify appropriate sources of guidance and support.

Try in teaching. Review a practice plan that includes breaks, other study demands and a source of support.

Look or listen for. Awareness of workload, hearing protection, excessive strain and where to seek guidance.

G5 Professional awareness and educational choice

Identify different ways of studying and working in music and relate these possibilities to personal interests, learning needs and possible next steps.

Try in teaching. Compare two possible study routes or musical roles using reliable information.

Look or listen for. Questions and possible next steps connected with the student's interests and learning needs.

Keep expectations proportionate

Provide reasonable access to any digital tools you require. AI use is optional; where it contributes, discuss checking, attribution and the student's own decisions. Obtain appropriate consent before sharing recordings.

Discuss wellbeing through ordinary learning and practice scenarios. Do not require personal health disclosure. Keep career exploration open: a young musician can make an informed next choice without a fixed professional plan.

SUGGESTED LESSON ACTIVITY

Use one musical passage as a learning task

Choose a short passage with an audible musical question, such as shaping a phrase, maintaining pulse through a change or balancing a melodic line. Agree the task's level and the guidance available. Use P1 and P3 as the main focus; add T1 or P5 only where the activity provides evidence.

Step	Student and teacher activity
Hear the starting point	The student plays or sings the passage and describes what they want a listener to hear.
Choose a strategy	Identify one difficulty. The student proposes a method, with teacher guidance where needed.
Try and compare	Work on the passage. Compare the result by listening, demonstration or a brief recording.
Explain the change	Ask which decision helped, what remains difficult and what to try next.
Plan the next practice	Agree a short task, a way to check progress and when guidance will be available.

A possible exchange

Teacher: "What would you like us to hear at the end of this phrase?"
Student: "More direction, without rushing."
Teacher: "Which part of your practice helped that happen? Show me the difference."

Keep a useful record

A short note might read: "P3: compared two practice strategies; slower work clarified the change of position. Next lesson: check whether the strategy transfers to the following phrase." This records an observation and next step, not a judgement about the whole outcome.

Adapt the support

A younger or less experienced learner may choose between two teacher-modelled strategies. A more independent learner can propose and test a strategy. Record the support given so that the judgement remains meaningful.

SUGGESTED REHEARSAL ACTIVITY

Make ensemble learning visible

Select a short ensemble passage with a shared problem: entries, pulse, balance, tuning or phrasing. Tell students that you will observe how they prepare, listen and reach a musical decision. P4 is the main focus, with G2 and P1 where evidenced.

During the rehearsal	What to notice
Each member states one musical observation	Can students identify something specific without assigning blame?
The group agrees one change and rehearses it	Who listens, responds, demonstrates or helps clarify the decision?
Roles change where musically appropriate	Can students adapt when leading, supporting or following?
The group performs the passage again	Does the agreed change become audible? What still needs work?
Each student names a next preparation task	Can the student connect their own preparation with the ensemble's needs?

Notice the individual contribution

A polished concert does not tell you who prepared thoroughly or helped the group learn. Combine performance with observation of rehearsal and a short conversation. Quiet listening, a useful question and a well-timed adjustment can all be relevant contributions.

Use peer feedback carefully

Ask for an observation about the music and one suggestion the group can try. Give students a chance to respond through playing. Avoid popularity judgements or treating a single peer comment as a final assessment.

Brief observation for one student

Outcome code: _____ Evidence heard or seen: _____
Support given: _____ Agreed next step: _____

SUGGESTED SMALL PROJECT

Create a musical presentation for a real audience

Use an existing concert, class presentation or community connection. Students prepare a short musical contribution for a defined audience and explain their choices. Select a few outcomes, such as P6, P7 and T2; include G3 or G2 only where the work genuinely addresses them.

Agree the musical purpose

Ask who the audience is, what the students want to communicate and what constraints matter. Choose material suitable for the available time and resources. Keep the artistic task achievable within the existing programme.

Develop and compare ideas

Students try different interpretations, arrangements, introductions or ways of presenting the music. Ask them to identify an alternative they tried and why they chose the final approach. A brief demonstration can replace a written account.

Consider people context and resources

- Whose music and perspectives are represented? Which sources or creators should be credited?
- Can the audience access and understand the presentation? What would help participation?
- Could existing space, shared equipment or digital programme information reduce unnecessary resource use?
- If recording is useful, what consent, access and sharing arrangements are needed?

Present and review

After the presentation, ask what communicated clearly, what surprised the students and what they would change. Use an audience comment as one perspective, alongside musical evidence and the students' reflection.

Keep a small selection of evidence

A plan, a short rehearsal observation, the presentation and one review conversation may suffice. The project can develop societal, ethical, cultural and environmental awareness through concrete choices. Do not turn access to a prestigious venue, travel or costly equipment into a measure of achievement.

WORKING SHEET

Give feedback that leads to another attempt

Choose a task and one or two outcomes. Explain what successful work would sound or look like in that situation. Describe the evidence, the support given and the next action. Use the record to continue teaching rather than create a new examination.

For this task	Example concerning P3 practice strategies
Working with close guidance	The student identifies the problem after a prompt and tries a modelled strategy.
Working within an agreed plan	The student selects a suitable strategy and checks whether it helps.
Adapting the approach	The student compares results, changes the strategy and asks for focused help where needed.

These descriptions illustrate different amounts of support within one task. They are not universal grades, fixed age levels or admission thresholds. Agree the musical demand locally.

Student task and date

Outcome code and the musical demand expected

What was heard or seen and what guidance was given

Student response and agreed next action

Review date: _____ Evidence to revisit: _____

STAFF WORKING SHEET

Map the curriculum you already have

Complete this together across principal study, musicianship and ensemble teaching. Identify a real learning opportunity and existing evidence for each outcome. Leave a cell blank where the connection is unclear, then choose a small number of priorities.

Code	Where students learn this	Evidence already available	One change or question
P1			
P2			
P3			
P4			
P5			
P6			
P7			
T1			
T2			
G1			
G2			
G3			
G4			
G5			

Discuss the pattern

Which capabilities are well supported but poorly described? Where are expectations stated without opportunities to learn? Could a connection between subjects improve the student's experience? Agree one change, an owner and a review date.

Priority: _____
Owner and first action: _____
Review date: _____

JOINT WORKING SHEET

Discuss the bridge with a receiving institution

Start with one intended programme and principal study. Invite a preparatory teacher and a receiving HME colleague to compare a specific musical expectation. Use dated programme information where available. The aim is to clarify preparation and support, not to assume that every HME institution has the same threshold.

Record	Your programme comparison
Programme principal study and source date	
Starting expectation in musical terms	
Relevant outcome code and reason	
Task complexity and guidance expected	
Evidence that could show the capability	
Learning opportunity before entry and support after entry	

Ask each other

- Which foundations are essential at entry, and what will be developed during the degree?
- Does the audition procedure reveal the competence we are discussing?
- What should applicants not yet be expected to have achieved?
- What remains unclear, and who can help establish the answer?

Preparatory contact: _____ Receiving contact: _____
One agreed next action and date: _____

CONVERSATION SHEET

Hear the student perspective

Use these prompts with a final-stage student or recent entrant to HME. Let the student choose what to discuss and how to respond. Ask permission before recording or quoting the conversation; follow the institution's arrangements for minors and personal information.

Which expectations for your next stage are clear and which are still uncertain?

Which learning experiences have helped you prepare and what is harder to access?

Tell us about feedback that changed how you practised or made a musical decision.

Where would you welcome more guidance or a different learning opportunity?

If you have started HME what differed from your expectations?

What is one next step you would choose and what support would help?

Agree together what may be shared and one action to follow up. Record a student's account as their perspective rather than treating it as representative of all learners. Personal health disclosure is not needed.

TEAM PLANNING SHEET

Try a small change over one term

Choose one student group, an existing activity and two or three outcomes. Agree what you want to understand and how much recording is useful. A short trial should help teachers judge whether the framework improves learning conversations and preparation.

When	What to do
At the start	Ask students and teachers what is clear or difficult. Choose the task, outcomes, musical demand and available guidance.
During teaching	Use the activity in ordinary lessons or rehearsals. Keep a few observations and examples of feedback and revision.
At a midpoint	Compare teacher judgements using the same example. Ask whether the evidence shows the intended learning and whether workload is reasonable.
At the end	Review selected work with students. Record what changed, whose experience it reflects and what remains uncertain. Decide whether to continue, adapt or stop.

Agree before you begin

Group and activity: _____
Outcome codes: _____
Teacher responsible and review date: _____

Review usefulness as well as achievement

- Can students explain the goal and their next step?
- Can teachers connect their feedback with musical evidence?
- Who needed more support or a different way to participate?
- How much additional work did the approach create?
- What would justify keeping the change next term?

Keep conclusions proportionate. A useful classroom example can inform improvement without demonstrating a general effect on admission, progression or wellbeing.

About this guide and the people behind it

This practical companion draws on Building the Musical Bridge — Full Report, version 1.2, October 2026, produced through the YMTE Erasmus+ partnership. It preserves the full report's 14 proposed outcomes and turns its application principles into suggested activities and reusable sheets.

For the evidence base, institutional examples and limitations, consult the full report: Chapters 2–5. For the complete outcome framework and developmental explanation, consult Chapter 6 and Appendix B. Chapters 7–8 develop the application principles and recommendations used here.

Acknowledgements

We thank the project partner representatives: Mattias Lundqvist, Young Music Talents in Europe; Finn Schumacker, AEC; Sanja Buhin, Varaždin School of Music; Eduard Lanner, Johann-Joseph-Fux-Konservatorium des Landes Steiermark in Graz; Mario Zecher, Eberhard-Ludwigs-Gymnasium; and Diego Vigueras Gonzáles, followed from August 2025 by María Victoria Márquez Torres, Conservatorio Profesional de Música Costa del Sol.

We also thank Davor Matačić, interview contributor Anke Schittenhelm, the institutions supplying educational examples, questionnaire respondents, AEC and YMTE consultation participants, and colleagues supporting documentation and review. The full report provides the wider acknowledgements and source references.

Publication information

Young Music Talents in Europe, in cooperation with AEC and the project partnership. Editorial coordination: Mattias Lundqvist. Practical guide version 1.1, 26 October 2026. Suggested activities are editorial applications for local adaptation, not validated project interventions or formally adopted assessment standards.

Project: Developing a better curricular connection between pre-college and higher music education. Erasmus+ KA210-SCH, 2024-1-NL01-KA210-SCH-000256686.



Co-funded by the European Union through the Erasmus+ programme.

Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the National Agency Erasmus+. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.