Teaching Music Online
Welcome!

In these slides you can find out more about how to prepare and deliver great online music teaching.

We are very grateful for the expert input from all of our partners, including Music Education Hubs, teachers and music leaders across the country, researchers from University of Hull and Sound Connections, Grant Golding, Cliff Manning, UCan Play, Music tutors.co.uk and Your Space Music Lessons, who have contributed to the information in this resource.
• Connect: Resound - NYMAZ - Alliance for Musically Inclusive England

• Supporting Music Education Hubs to deliver online music education since 2014
Why Teach Online?

• Geographic barriers
• Logistical barriers
• Personal Choice
• Pandemics!
• Supplement face to face teaching
• An alternative to non-live online content - e.g YouTube
Does it work?

Connect: Resound research into online music learning has demonstrated:

• Increased access to instrumental tuition for many different pupils - rural isolation, personal circumstances, health issues

• Pupil engagement, progression and enjoyment is high

• Concentration and focus benefits

• Teachers are willing and able to adapt to online teaching

• Reduction in travel time = significant cost savings - and environmental benefits

• Investment in equipment enabling multiple camera angles and better sound results in a better quality learning experience
What’s your motivation?

• Reach more pupils

• Specialist instrument/genre/approach

• My employer needs me to

• Fits in with my lifestyle

• I prefer it
Your online presence

• Listings site
• YouTube channel
• Facebook page
• Support networks, marketing, engagement, reviews
• Periodically review to check they link together and support each other - consistent branding, contact details
Preparation is key!

• Ideally, don’t just launch into it - or at least start simple
• Online teaching is different
• Tiring - especially at first
• Simple things - e.g. tuning - take longer
• Adapt your admin systems as well as your teaching - booking, payments, safeguarding
• Book in breaks to your schedule
Software

Many platforms available - try a few out to see which works best for you.

Considerations:

• Quality of video and audio

• Free or paid for? Does the free version give you the functionality and storage you will need?

• What devices/browsers does the platform work on? What do you know about what your pupils use?

• Does the software enable you to schedule lessons easily in advance?
• How easy is it to share files and screens
• Waiting room/password protected?
• Recording capability?
• Stability
• Compatibility with your software and devices
• Have you got a plan B easily available if your usual platform isn’t working?
Hardware - the basics

- Laptop or PC - adjust angle or use external webcam
- Make sure your OS is compatible with your video call software
- Processor - minimum single core 1GHZ or higher. Quad core recommended for high quality screen sharing
- 4 GB RAM
• Larger screen the better - consider an additional screen
• Headphones to reduce feedback
• Remote mouse
• Multi USB port
Hardware - next steps

Audio

• Condenser microphone
• Matched pair of overhead mics
• Lapel mic plus audio interface

Video

• External webcam: wide angle, at least 30 fps, HD 1080p resolution
• Audio/video mixers/streamers to enable multiple camera angles and better management of audio
Teaching space

• Neutral space - no personal effects on display

• Blur background or use physical screen - virtual backgrounds still imperfect!

• Good lighting - watch for direct sunlight

• No distractions

• Appropriate clothing - avoid patterns, jangling jewellery

• Avoid rooms with echoes/sound reflections

• Internet speed and improvements
Learning space

• Take time to talk through learning environment with your pupil - tech session in advance of lessons

• What device/browser are they using - make sure you know how it displays at their end, are features different to what you can see?

• Check internet speed - advise on boosting if needed

• Check sound quality, camera angles

• Limit distractions

• For children/vulnerable pupils make sure someone is in listening distance of lesson - present for very young pupils who need support

• Ground rules for their space during lesson - as neutral a space as possible
Safeguarding

- Adapt existing policies and procedures for online teaching - use ISM, MU, Connect: Resound and Interface: Response for advice

- Model what a safe online interaction should be like - no details about your personal life or your student’s

- Policy on recording and storing video recordings of lessons

- File and screen sharing policies

- Limit direct messaging - as much communication as possible takes place within ‘architecture’ of the teaching platform
• Reporting procedures for concerns - make sure all parties are aware and regularly reminded of them

• Agree supervision procedures in advance

• Ensure parents are fully aware of responsibilities for monitoring lessons - regularly review policies with them

• Consent, appropriate behaviour/dress, safe use of internet and devices
Pre lesson

- Check your setup and practice with a trusted friend!
- Have a technical test with your pupil in advance of the first lesson
- Share music in advance
- Prepare exercises and material
- Payment in advance
- Have back up communication method in place
Latency

• You do need to find a way to work with the delay!

• Pupil counts in - in group lessons, ask pupils to clap the beat

• Take it in turns - delivery/feedback method

• Slow down, leave space so you don’t talk over each other

• Think about backing track - books often come with backing tracks or you can download or create your own

• Think about where backing track speaker is at pupil end to manage feedback - move speaker away from computer if possible
Communication

• You may talk more than in a face to face lesson at first, but make sure you are clear

• Put pupil at ease - don’t just launch in!

• Use bar numbers/markers in the music

• Look for visual clues

• Use clear gestures - lean back to listen and forward to speak

• Use the technology - screensharing, switching cameras - to make lesson as rich as possible
• Ask parents to help if required

• Ask for feedback

• Check in during the lesson that they can hear and understand you
Tuning

• One of the trickier aspects of online music teaching!

• Use online resources and apps - YouTube videos (or make your own!) and tuning apps

• Demonstrate tuning in first lesson - with parental support if applicable

• Remind pupil to setup instrument and tune before lesson in booking reminder email (automate!)
Music

• Planning!

• Send music in advance - same music book at both ends

• Technology can help you - scan in or have a second camera on traditional sheet music to share onscreen, or share digital music via screen share
Instrument challenges

• Embouchure, bow hold, posture, hand shape and positions - how can your technology enable you to show this in a lesson? This is where multiple cameras can be valuable

• Think about learning resources and videos that pupils can watch between lessons - explore other teachers’, and/or create your own.

• Use clear but detailed description and encourage pupils to reflect themselves on whether it feels/looks/sounds right
Recovery and troubleshooting

• Don’t panic!

• Have another communication channel ready for if your main connection fails

• If things are glitchy, look at swapping platforms, boosting internet connection (at either end), using different browsers. Lots of variables so what works for one lesson/pupil may not for the next.

• Set a time limit - reschedule if things can’t be fixed
Thinking Beyond Lessons

• How can online technology support your music education practice beyond lessons?

• Community building - performance clubs and masterclasses for your pupils

• Online video resources - tutorials, practice prompts, mini-challenges

• Add value to your online work with exclusive content for your pupils

• Find new pupils with free, shareable content
In summary!

• Preparation

• Communication

• Support networks - advice, inspiration, sounding board

• Scheduling and self care - screen breaks, move around, don’t over schedule

• Regular review and reflection - check in with yourself and with your pupils
Where next?

Mentoring, advice, networking and resources:

https://interfaceresponse.com/

www.connectresound.org.uk