# Music 1 – compositional devices

### Rhythmic and melodic devices

* Repetition – repeating parts of musical material
* Ostinato – a short, repeated motif
* Riff – a short, repeated phrase often used in contemporary music
* Unison – the same part played by at least 2 instruments or voices
* Call and response – a succession of 2 distinct phrases usually played by different layers, where the second phrase is heard as a response to the first phrase

### Rhythmic devices

* Syncopation – when notes are played off the beat
* Polyrhythm – when 2 or more contrasting rhythms are played at once
* Multimetre – the use of changing time signatures throughout a piece
* Backbeat – the emphasis of beats 2 and 4 in a 4/4 time signature, usually played by the drumkit

### Melodic devices

* Sequence – the restatement of a motif or longer melodic (or harmonic) passage at a higher or lower pitch in the same voice
* Imitation – when one part repeats similar musical material taken from another part
* Round or canon – a piece of music where 2 or more identical parts begin at different times
* Countermelody – another melody of secondary importance
* Hook – a short musical idea to appeal to the listener

### Harmonic devices

* Drone – a sustained pitch played continuously as other parts change in pitch and/or rhythm
* Modulation – the changing of key signature
* Extended chords – chords that are made up of more than 3 notes (for example, 7th and 9th chords often used in jazz)
* Harmonisation – when a harmony is added to the main melodic material – often used in vocals in contemporary music
* Consonance – ‘pleasant’ sounding harmony
* Dissonance – ‘clashing’ sounding harmony
* Cadence – a progression of 2 chords at the end of a phrase
* Pedal point – a low sustained note played under a moving chord progression that is eventually harmonically resolved

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