

Why study A Level Music?

Studying music at A Level will give you a solid grounding in composition, performance and listening. These disciplines within music go side-by-side and therefore your enjoyment of music will grow as you learn to analyse a piece of music, whether it's something you perform, or simply enjoy listening to, by breaking down the use of harmony, melody, structure and texture. You should study music if you want to grow as a musician, not just as a performer, but also as a composer and active listener. You should study music if you are inquisitive and want to unlock how composers create that magic within a piece.

What will I study?

We start the course by exploring how you describe harmony, tonality, rhythm, structure, texture and melody. We do this by practical means and short composition exercises. We then move onto analysing how composers use these musical elements. We study a broad range, from Baroque Concerto, to Mozart Opera and 19th Century Piano Music, alongside Pop (Beyonce, Stevie Wonder and Daft Punk) and Jazz (Louise Armstrong, Dizzy Gillespie and Miles Davies). You will learn to use a variety of compositional devices before you are encouraged to compose longer compositions. We aim to make the lessons as practical as possible, and encourage you to bring your instrument to lessons in order to realise ideas on the instrument which is most natural to you.

Assessment

25% performance, 25% composition (both teacher assessed), 50% examined.

Component 1: 40%, 2.5 hour listening and appraising exam in which you will listen to both unfamiliar music and set works. This exam requires you to analyse a score and discuss the musical elements the composer has used and an extended essay in which you will be required to discuss Jazz or Pop in detail.

Component 2: 35%, performance. This will be recorded in Year 13 and requires you to do a ten minute performance which must be Grade 6 or above.

Component 3: 25%, composition. You will submit two compositions, one which will be a brief written by you, and one will be set by the exam. You will need to demonstrate compositional techniques you have learnt on the course.

Study trips, visits and events

We organise at least two concert trips a year. Dependent on what our local concert halls are offering, it may be opera, piano music or jazz. We also invite professional composers for workshops in which you can share ideas and learn from someone who composes every day!

Subject entry requirements

6 in Music **and** the ability to read music fluently.



Student Perspective

“In taking this course, my love for music has grown and I’ve been introduced to new styles of music which I otherwise would not have listened to, such as opera, romantic piano music and jazz. The course can be challenging but it’s really rewarding to realise how much I have learnt over time. The support given by my music teachers has allowed me to improve, and grow in confidence, both as a composer and performer.”

Abbie, A Level Music student