



Music

Awarding Body: AQA

Level: A-Level

Intro

Studying Music at A-Level will introduce you to a wealth of new approaches to music, whilst challenging you to deepen your current interests and skills. It is exciting and rewarding, unique in its combination of academic study and creative opportunity.

The course focused on developing three key skills; performing, composing and appraising. You will build on your knowledge of musical theory, gain a solid understanding of the principles of performance, refine your practical skills, study and practice composition, and expand your knowledge of music history through listening and appraisal.

When studying Music, your brain needs to simultaneously process different pieces of information at quick speeds. When playing music, you are strengthening the bridge between your logical left hemisphere and your creative right hemisphere. So, the more you practice, the more this bridge is developed. This means that musicians are more likely to process information quicker and craft creative solutions, ideal for both academic and social situations.

Year one content

Your study will include the following in Year one:

- Western Classical Music
- Development of the symphony 1750-1900
- Musical Theatre (Rodgers / Bernstein / Sondheim / Schoenberg / Lloyd-Webber / Schwartz)
- How to read orchestral scores and transposing instruments
- Developing performance techniques and requirements
- Composing in a number of different styles (Classical, romantic, Western Classical Tradition)

Year two content

Your study will include the following in Year two:

- Musical Theatre (West Side Story, Assassins, Jesus Christ Superstar, Les Misérables, Children of Eden)
- Musical language and composers of 21st century ('Boardwalk' and 'Natural Bridges' by Sally Beamish),
- A study of Ecstasio by Thomas Adés
- A development of composition and performance skills

The A-Level is made up of the following formal assessments:

- Component 1: A performance recital. This is externally assessed by a visiting examiner.
- Component 2: Two compositions (controlled assessments), one of which must reflect the musical techniques and conventions associated with the Western Classical Tradition and one free composition
- Component 3: A formal written exam (2 hrs 15 mins) assessing understanding of the areas of study and set works

What you need

At least a grade 5 in GCSE Music. Students must be confident performers working at or equivalent to Grade 5 on an instrument at the beginning of the course. Grade 5 theory is strongly recommended.

You will also be required to join the Senior Choir, Jazz Band or Orchestra and commit to regular rehearsals and concerts in order to enrich their subject knowledge.

Career and further study

Music is a highly regarded academic subject with an excellent reputation with both employers and universities for creative, rigorous and academic, requiring a huge range of skills.

This course provides a sound preparation for the study of music in higher education, as well as providing opportunities to develop strengths and interests leading to music-related and other careers. A Music A-Level develops versatile strengths, ideal for any industry; personal organisation, rigorous self-discipline, teamwork skills to come up with creative solutions, and communication skills.

Popular degrees for students who take Music A-Level range from Music to Drama, English, Mathematics, Teacher training, Psychology, Economics and many more.

Music A-Level, and Music degrees, can lead to a vast range of careers from teachers to performance artists, managers, lawyers, accountants, therapists and media professionals, to name but a few.

Trips and other costs

You will be expected to buy some musical scores and a Music textbook.