



# MUSIC

Examination Board: Eduqas  
Specification: Advanced GCE

## Why should I study Music?

The course has a healthy balance between practical and academic aspects, and one key feature is the importance of individual responsibility. This is especially true of the performing and composing work but also of the musical listening and understanding lessons. Music is an inescapable part of human existence and culture and studying at A Level allows students to develop their knowledge and skills to a high level as well as helping them to understand and appreciate what it is to be creative.

## What will I learn about?

### Performing

Pupils are required to perform at least 3 pieces on their instrument or voice that are at Grade 5/6 standard or above. Their recital needs to be around 10 – 12 minutes in length. Credit is given where the difficulty of the pieces played is higher than the required level.

### Composing

The composing Units have two strands: A free composition and a composition based on one of four briefs set by the exam board. Pupils need to compose between 4 and 6 minutes of music in total.

### Listening and Appraising

The listening units involve study of the Western Classical tradition and Music of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. These are compulsory units that contain 4 set works. Pupils must also study 1 further area from the following; Rock and Pop, Musical Theatre and Jazz. You will learn to analyse and describe music in detail as well as understand the social and cultural contexts of the period the music was composed in. In the examination, there are short answer listening questions and longer essay types, comparing the works.

## How will I be taught?

For the Performing units, relatively little class time is needed. Teaching staff will ensure that you understand the requirements and have selected pieces to perform that are appropriate. You will then be expected to practice regularly to ensure that you gain the best possible marks. The composing units involve the study of models as well as exercises to help develop your melodic and harmonic skills. The listening units involve listening and understanding how the music studied 'works'. You will explore the melodic, rhythmic, textural and structural features of the music and compare them with other well-known pieces. Home learning tasks will include research as well as further background reading and listening.



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### Application beyond school:

A level musicians are highly sort after people. As well as looking to further develop your musical skills at University or Conservatoire, A Level musicians are analytical, organised, creative, team players and highly skilled individuals; all skills that apply to a wide range of university courses and disciplines. As well as careers as performers, teachers and academia, music students have gone on to careers as diverse as Law, banking and Finance, Social and Therapeutic work, Psychology and working in the general Arts and Culture sectors.

### Assessment Format:

Level	Component	Requirements	Duration	Marks
A Level	Unit 1: Performing	Public performance of a recital program of at least 3 pieces. The recital must last between 10 – 12 minutes	Year 13 April – May Externally assessed.	108 marks 35% of A Level
A Level	Unit 2: Composing	Pupils create 2 compositions: one is a free composition and the second is a composition based on a brief set by the exam board. The total length of composition is between 4 and 6 minutes.	Year 12 free composition. Year 13 exam board brief. Both externally assessed.	72 marks 25% of A Level
A Level	Paper 3 Appraising	Written examination based on the compulsory set works and the pupils optional area of study. Questions will be a mix of short listening extracts and longer essay based questions. Pupils are allowed to take blank copies of the musical scores studied into the examination.	2 hours 15 mins Year 13	100 40% of A Level

### Are there any special requirements?

**General:** As with GCSE, you need to be prepared to develop all three core skills – performing, composing and listening. Students who only want to perform and do not enjoy composing or analysing will not excel at A Level. A GCSE grade of 7 – 9 is a starting point, as it shows all round ability.

**Performing:** You need to be at least Grade 5 standard on your instrument or voice when you begin the course and be prepared to practice as the A level examiners expect a very polished performance in your recital. To help with this, pupils will receive free, regular tuition on the instrument they will be performing on.

**Theory:** Pupils need to be able to read notation and have a grasp of music theory if they have not taken GCSE music. We encourage all pupils to take Grade 5 theory during Year 12 to help with their composition and allow them access to higher practical grades.

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