



# A Level Music

**Key Contact:** Mrs H Stephenson (Head of Music)  
**Exam Board:** AQA

## Overview of the course:

If you have been studying GCSE Music up until now you will have realised that it is an intriguing and multi-faceted subject in which you will have started to gain real expertise. The A Level Music course offers you the chance to develop that expertise in a wide range of exciting and challenging activities. It will enable you to deepen your understanding of key aspects of Music, and to see more clearly the fascinating connections between the disciplines of composing, performing and listening.

Students who study Music at A Level take a leading role in the lively extra-curricular programme offered by the College. They will take part in many exciting concerts at College and in the community, and develop their performing expertise with the ensemble directors.

## What will you study?

The thread running through the course is your development as a musician through performing, composing, listening and analysing music.

## Assessment

### Component 1: Appraising Music 40 %

During this unit you will listen to and explore a wide range of music whilst greatly developing your aural and analytical skills. There are seven possible areas of study (listed below). Area of study 1 'Western Classical Music' is compulsory and then two further areas of study are chosen from the remaining options to suit the cohort's musical interests:

- Western Classical Music 1650 – 1910
- Pop Music
- Music for Media
- Music for Theatre
- Jazz
- Contemporary Traditional Music
- Art Music since 1910

**Assessment:** a listening and written exam based on both familiar and unfamiliar music.

### Component 2: Performance 35 %

During the course you will continue to develop your performance skills on your chosen instrument

or voice. As well as focusing on technique there is also an emphasis on musical interpretation and you will explore the expressive choices available to you as a performer. Students may choose which genre and musical style they would like to focus on.

**Assessment:** A portfolio of performances totalling 10 minutes as a soloist or a member of an ensemble.

### Component 3: Composition 25 %

During the course you will develop a range of composition techniques and skills. You will explore how composers combine and construct musical ideas, experiment composing music for yourself and become familiar with using music software such as *Sibelius* and *Reason* in any style or genre.

**Assessment:** two compositions, one of which is completely free choice and another one based on choice of briefs set by AQA.

## Possible career path?

- The combined course prepares students for all the challenges of a Music degree at university or music college.
- The A Level course can lead to other areas of Music study, such as Music Therapy and Arts administration.
- A Music qualification shows that you are a well organised and highly motivated student who can take the initiative and can work well with others. Universities and future employers favour A Level Music because of the sheer number of skills involved. It can, therefore, help you in applying for jobs or courses for which these are desirable characteristics.

## Entry requirements

Five GCSEs Grade 9-5, including English and Mathematics **and** a Grade 6 in Music. The ability to read music in both the treble and bass clefs is compulsory and a willingness to work toward Grade 5 theory during the summer holidays is desirable.

If Music GCSE has not been studied but you have gained musical skills by other means please ask the Music Department staff for advice.

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### Enrichment Opportunity

We recognise that progress in a musical instrument or singing is vital for students studying for a Level 3 course in Music at the college. Students studying Music in the Sixth Form can apply for subsidised individual lessons in an instrument or in singing. Any subsidy is conditional on good attendance and engagement, and can be withdrawn if these conditions are not met. Students can make an application at the start of the course.