

What specification is proposed?

Edexcel A level Music.

What will be covered in the course?

Performing (30%)

You will have regular opportunities throughout the course to develop performing skills and present pieces to an audience. This will culminate in an assessed 8-minute recital between March and May of year 13. Students can perform on any instrument / voice, and in any style / genre. The standard of performance should be Grade 7 or equivalent by the performance date.

We strongly recommend that anyone embarking on the course is playing at a standard equivalent to at least Grade 5 by the end of year 11, in order to be able to reach Grade 7 by year 13. All students will need to be having regular instrumental / vocal lessons with a specialist teacher.

The Music Department runs a wide variety of extra-curricular ensembles and organises a range of trips and workshops. These opportunities are invaluable in helping A level students extend their performing skills and cultural experience.

Composing (30%)

You will develop your composing skills in a range of styles and will submit two pieces (combined minimum duration of 6 minutes). Composition 1 can EITHER be a free composition OR a composition written to fulfil a brief set by Edexcel. Composition 2 must be from a list of briefs set by Edexcel, and will assess your ability to compose using particular techniques, e.g. in the style of a Bach chorale.

Listening and Appraising (40%)

You will study set works and wider listening within six Areas of Study. These will include:

Music for Film	Hermann, <i>Psycho</i> ; Badelt / Zimmer, <i>Pirates of the Caribbean – The Curse of the Black Pearl</i>
Instrumental Music	Vivaldi, <i>Concerto in D minor</i> ; Berlioz, <i>Symphonie Fantastique</i>
Popular Music / Jazz	Beatles - <i>Revolver</i> ; Courtney Pine - <i>Back in the Day</i> , Kate Bush - <i>Hounds of Love</i>
Vocal Music	Bach, Mozart, Vaughan Williams
Fusions	Debussy, Anoushka Shankar, Familia Valera Miranda
New Directions	John Cage, Kaija Saariaho, Stravinsky

Your understanding will be tested in a 2-hour exam at the end of year 13, including both listening and essay questions, including unfamiliar listening and melodic / rhythmic dictation.

How will I be assessed?

Recitals and compositions will be assessed internally and moderated by Edexcel. The listening / appraising exam will be externally assessed by Edexcel.

What can I do with this subject?

Music is a challenging academic and practical subject, the value of which is recognised by highly academic universities. It develops a range of valuable skills: in-depth analysis, creativity, dedication and collaboration to name but a few. You will develop extensive essay writing skills and the ability to apply abstract concepts to music.

Specific entry requirements for this course

Students must be playing grade 5 pieces on a musical instrument by the end of year 11 and have a strong grasp of music notation.

6/B at GCSE music (if previously studied)

