



MUSIC

A-LEVEL

Examination Board: WJEC EDUCAS

Course content:

This is an enjoyable music course in which you will develop a wide range of skills in performing, composing and analysing music that leads nicely on from GCSE. You will perform on your instrument, develop skills in composing for different genres, analyse a variety of music and develop knowledge of musical harmony. In A-Level you will be able to choose your strongest skill out of performing and composing, this will then have a bigger weighting on your final grade.

A Level Content	
Unit 1 Performing 35% if performance specialist 25% if composition specialist	If you specialise in performance you will prepare a 10-12 minute performance with at least 3 pieces covering at least 2 areas of study. If you specialise in composition you will prepare a 6-8 minute performance with at least 1 piece covering 1 area of study.
Unit 2 Composing 35% if composition specialist 25% if performance specialist	If you specialise in performance you will prepare two compositions where one is a classical brief and one is a free composition If you specialise in performance you will prepare three compositions where one is a classical brief, one from another area of study and one free composition
Unit 3 Appraising 40%	You will study three areas of study (below), studying set works and doing wider listening to answer questions in an exam. You will answer questions on Area of Study 1, a choice of areas 2, 3 or 4 and a choice of areas 5 or 6.

Skills acquired:

- Performance skills: Developing technical ability on your instrument to a high level and performing
- Composition skills: Develop skills writing music in different genres, develop knowledge of instrumental techniques, learn to use music software
- Musical Understanding: Develop listening skills, ability to use advanced musical vocabulary, further develop skills in reading musical notation, analysing scores of a variety of genres and knowledge of the areas of study below:

Areas of Study that you will explore

	Area of Study	Set works, styles or composers
1	The Western Classical Tradition	Haydn - Symphony no. 104 Mendelssohn - Symphony no. 4
2 (choose one)	Rock and Pop 1960-1990	Pop, Rock, Soul, Funk, Folk
	Musical Theatre	Rogers, Bernstein, Sondheim, Schonberg, Lloyd-Webber, Schwartz
	Jazz 1920-1950	Ragtime, Dixieland, Early Jazz, Big Band, Be-bop, Cool Jazz
3 (choose one)	Into the Twentieth Century	Trio for Oboe, Bassoon and Piano by Poulenc Three Nocturnes, No. 1 by Debussy
	Into the Twenty-first Century	Asyla mvt 3 by Ades String Quartet no. 2 by Bearnish

Continued



MUSIC *(continued)*

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Methods of assessment:

- Unit 1 is marked by a visiting examiner
- Unit 2 is completed individually under controlled conditions, a CD and score will be submitted to the exam board
- Unit 3 will be assessed via a 2 hour 15 minute exam

Possible Careers:

Students who gain an A Level in Music go on to pursue a variety of careers in the Performing Arts. Music degrees at university and Music colleges require you to have an A-level in Music, and it is also beneficial for musical theatre courses. Music shows that you are creative, committed and confident to any universities or employers.

Example careers: professional musician in a variety of genres, conducting, music therapist, composer, music publisher, music teacher, musical theatre performer.

Prior experience:

It is recommended that you will have studied Music GCSE (grade C or above). Exceptions can be made on the condition that you play a musical instrument to a good standard (grade 5 and above), have experience of performing, and can read music easily. A basic knowledge of music theory is also recommended.

Extra Benefits:

All students that take Music A-level will be entitled to receive a **free** weekly 30 minute lesson on their instrument within school which would normally cost roughly £525 per year.

Students will also be offered the opportunity to perform a concerto with the school orchestra.

Student Comments:

"The composition and performance modules are challenging but rewarding; my AS Level Composition is probably one of the best songs I've ever written!" "The small class size makes it really easy to make quick progress and means one-to-one tuition is always available." "I thoroughly enjoyed enhancing all areas of my music ability such as composing and performing whilst encountering new areas of study, for instance, Bach chorales and listening and understanding questions. The course is definitely a great choice especially if you are considering it for higher education."