



Course Description

GCSE Music - You will participate in a wide range of music-making activities and learn composition, performance and listening techniques. You will be expected to take part in school concerts and must already be learning to play an instrument (including voice).

What topics will I be covering?

Component 1, Performing - A minimum of two pieces, lasting a total of 4 minutes, recorded in the year of assessment: One piece must be an ensemble lasting at least one minute. One piece must be linked to an Area of Study. Grade 3 is standard level.

Component 2, Composing - Two pieces: One in response to a brief and one free composition.

Component 3, Appraising - Listening examination: 8 questions, 2 on each area of study:

AoS 1 Musical Forms and Devices (including a set work)

AoS 2 Music for Ensemble

AoS 3 Film Music

AoS 4 Popular Music (including a set work)

How much of the course is examination or Controlled Assessment?

Component 1 and 2 are coursework and Component 3 is a 1.5 hour exam which you will sit in the hall, just like all other subjects.

How much work is required after school?

You will need to attend extra-curricular music clubs in order to improve your practical musicianship. Students who participate in orchestras and groups outside of school as well as in school tend to achieve higher practical scores than those who don't. You should be practicing your instrument every day.

How is the work assessed and when?

Component 1 and component 2 are marked internally and moderated externally. Component 3 is an exam, which is marked externally. You will complete your coursework components first, ideally before Y11 Christmas, so all efforts after Christmas are focused on preparing for the exam.

What do I need to achieve a good grade?

A good level of practical musicianship. You should be able to play a number of songs all the way through and should ideally already be pursuing music in extra-curricular clubs or outside of school. You should have an interest in studying and playing music in a number of different genres and be willing to explore composition.

If I want to study the subject after GCSE, what grade must I get?

To study music at A-level, you will likely need at least a grade 5 or 6 at GCSE. Entry requirements to study level 3 BTECs are more holistic, but the better your grade, the more likely you are to get a place on a course.

What career options lead from this subject?

The creative industries are worth roughly £126 billion annually. A GCSE in music is a great starting point for pursuing a career in the music industry. Even if the music industry is not for you, all employers love music! It shows you are committed to improving your skills and great at working with others.

