

Music A Level



HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

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EXAM BOARD

EDEXCEL

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A level Music is a hugely rewarding subject which will broaden students' understanding and appreciation for the art. Students will develop as performers and composers and will experience a range of musical styles and genres. The course



allows students to explore the ways in which musical has developed over time, in particular the relationship between the music and its historical, social and political context; this provides opportunities for interesting discussions and debates. There are opportunities for students to shape their own learning and explore aspects of the subject that particularly interest them. The composition component allows students to specialise in a musical style of their choice, and includes scope to explore music technology. The subject is suitable for those with a passion for music and a thirst for a deeper understanding of this unique art form.

SKILLS REQUIRED AND DEVELOPED ON THE COURSE

- Performing (students must be able to play a musical instrument or sing at or beyond grade 5 standard; students must be receiving instrumental or singing lessons;
- Composing;
- Score-reading;
- Critical thinking and close analysis of musical works;
- Ability to recognise and describe musical elements in detail;
- Ability to discuss the effects of musical elements on the listener;
- Analysis of how music is affected by its historical, social and political context.

PROGRAMME OF STUDY

Component One:

Performance

An 8-minute public recital; repertoire should be of Grade 7 standard or higher.

30% of total A Level

Component Two:

Composition

One 4-5-minute free composition, or composition in response to a brief. (40 marks)

One technical study; Bach chorale harmonisation. (20 marks)

30% of total A Level

Component Three:

Appraising

2 hour exam paper on set works and unfamiliar music.

40% of total A Level

EXAMINATION RESULTS

In 2026, 67% achieved grade A*-A. Students have progressed to study Music at Oxford University, Durham University, University of Manchester, Royal College of Music, Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and BIMM Institute.

ENRICHMENT ACTIVITIES

The Music Department offers a vast array of extra-curricular ensembles and enrichment opportunities. Musical ensembles include: Orchestra, Senior Soul and Funk Band, Jazz Band, Chamber Choir, Senior Gospel Choir, Musical Theatre Ensemble. These ensembles perform regularly both in public and as part of school events.



Recent performances by Grey Coat sixth-form students have taken place at the Royal Festival Hall, Barbican Hall, Westminster Abbey and the Houses of Parliament.

There are a number of sixth-form music events, including Gig Night and Performance Showcases. These are student-led and allow sixth-form students to shape the musical performances at The Grey Coat Hospital. The department comprises of a full Mac Suite and Studio which sixth-form students are welcome to use in their own time: students have used these to produce their own music, record and produce podcasts, among other things.

FUTURE CAREERS

Music is a highly versatile subject; this A level in particular develops a range of skills desirable by many employers. Performing develops excellent co-ordination, problem-solving and listening skills, as well as developing the characteristics of resilience and determination. Composition develops critical thinking skills and creativity. Appraising develops critical analysis and evaluative skills, as well as an understanding of how the arts are affected by historical, social, and political contexts. Music is seen as an incredibly challenging and academically rigorous subject, highly-regarded by universities; it covers a wider range of disciplines, including essay-writing. As well as Music, students go on to study English, Humanities, Sciences, Medicine, Politics, History of Art, Languages, Classics, Law, and many other courses at university.

Creative careers are becoming more and more important to the UK and UK economy. The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport have reported that the creative industries are worth £124 billion to the UK economy; music is said to be one of the industries taking a leading role in driving the UK's economic recovery. With the rise of technology and automation, the arts – and music in particular – are some of the only disciplines protected from the increased involvement of technology.