

MUSIC

AQA Code: 7272

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What do I need to know or be able to do before taking this course?

It is useful to have taken Music at GCSE level, but this is not essential as long as you have a level of understanding equivalent to good pass at GCSE, can already play a musical instrument to at least grade 4 standard and are able to read music.



What will I learn on this course?

Music is an academic, practical and creative subject. The course demands performing, composing, listening and analytical skills in almost equal measure. You will improve your skills in performing and composing in a range of styles. You will listen to a wide variety of music and develop a more informed appreciation of how and why it was written and/or performed.

What kind of student is this course suitable for?

Anyone who has a keen interest in performing, creating and listening to different styles of music and who wishes to broaden their experience and deepen their understanding of music.

What examinations will I have to take to get my qualification?

The Music A-level qualification consists of three units: Appraising Music, Performance and Composition.

1. Appraising music

There is one compulsory area of study and a few optional areas of study from which we choose two.

Area of Study 1: Western classical tradition 1650–1910 (compulsory)

There are **three** strands of music represented which cover **three** key genres:

Baroque: the solo concerto

Classical: the operas of Mozart

Romantic: the piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg.

Optional Areas of Study: These include pop music and music for theatre.

The pop music area of study may include the study of artists such as Stevie Wonder, Joni Mitchell, Muse, Beyoncé, Daft Punk and Labrinth.

The music for theatre area of study may include the study of composers such as Kurt Weill, Richard Rodgers, Stephen Sondheim, Claude-Michel Schönberg and Jason Robert Brown.

How it's assessed

Exam paper with listening and written questions using excerpts of music.

Section A: Listening (56 marks)

Section B: Analysis (34 marks)

Section C: Essay (30 marks)

This component is 40% of A-level marks.

2. Performance

Students perform music using one or both of the following ways:

- instrumental/vocal: as a soloist, and/or as part of an ensemble
- production: via music technology.

The level of performance at A-level should be at least grade 5 with the highest marks available to candidates performing at grade 8 level

How it's assessed

Solo and/or ensemble performing as an instrumentalist, or vocalist and/or music production (via technology). A minimum of ten minutes of performance in total is required.

This component is 35% of A-level marks.

3. Composition

Students learn how to develop musical ideas, including extending and manipulating musical ideas, and compose music that is musically convincing through **two** compositions. One must be in response to an externally set brief (Composition 1) and the other a free composition (Composition 2). The combined duration of the compositions **must** be a minimum of **four and a half minutes**.

How it's assessed

Composition 1: Composition to a brief (25 marks)

Composition 2: Free composition (25 marks)

A minimum of four and a half minutes of music in total is required.

This component is 25% of A-level marks.



What could I go on to do at the end of my course?

This A Level in Music can lead to further study in Music or Performing Arts in Higher Education at degree or HND level. A-level Music, along with a high standard on at least one musical instrument (with practical and theory exam grades to prove it), will be highly desirable for students wishing to study music at degree level. In addition to your main instrument, Grade 5 piano is often considered useful. Music is often chosen as a complementary or contrasting course to broaden your studies or may lead on to a career in the music industry, business, education, event management, leisure and tourism and broadcasting.