

GCSE Music is about making and listening to music. It covers performing, composing and listening in a variety of musical styles – popular music, world music, 20th century music and classical music. There are opportunities to use music technology and recording. It is a natural progression from Key Stage 3 Music in the Lower School and gives you 'hands on' experience of music from a wide variety of cultures and periods.

Through this course you will become:

- Informed performers
- Skilled composers
- Understanding listeners

Course Outline

You will be following the EDEXCEL syllabus for GCSE Music (syllabus number 2MU01). The main components of the course are performing (solo and ensemble), composing (two pieces in different styles) and listening (to a wide range of musical styles). The course gives you the opportunity to play music with others (e.g. bands, orchestral group, choirs etc) and allows you to develop your skills in composing and listening. A brief outline of each of the papers is given below.

Paper 1: Performance

You are required to play, sing or sequence two pieces altogether. One is a solo in any style, on any instrument. The other performance is an ensemble and will be with at least one other player. These performances may take place in the classroom, in music groups or outside school and are assessed in school by your teacher.

- You are expected to be having regular lessons with an instrumental/vocal teacher so that you can continue to develop as a performer, improve your technique and learn new repertoire throughout the course.
- You are expected to be a member of at least one extra-curricular activity to help develop your overall musicianship.

Paper 2: Composition

For this paper, you are required to compose or arrange two pieces of music based on one of the topics from an Area of Study. You must submit a notated score or a commentary and a recording for each composition.

Paper 3: Listening

This is in the form of an end of course listening exam. You will listen to a CD and answer questions on the four Areas of Study which cover popular music, classical music and music from around the world. Papers 1 & 2 are coursework, meaning that you complete the work during the course. There are no end-of-course examinations for papers 1 and 2. Paper 3 is the only paper that is tested through an end of course external exam.

Throughout your course you will be learning about various styles of music. On the syllabus these are known as your 'Areas of Study'. They will link into your composition work, your listening work and your performance work and by the end of the course you will have a strong understanding of a broad range of musical styles and genres.

The Areas of Study are listed below, along with the 12 set works you will be asked about in the exam:

AREA OF STUDY 1: Western Classical Music 1600-1899

Handel: And The Glory of the Lord from 'The Messiah'

Mozart: 1st movement of Symphony no.40 in G minor

Chopin: Prelude no.15 in D flat major, op.28

AREA OF STUDY 2: Music in the 20th Century

Schoenberg: Peripetie from '5 Orchestral Pieces op.16'

Bernstein: Something's Coming from 'West Side Story'

Reich: 3rd movement (fast) from Electric Counterpoint

AREA OF STUDY 3: Popular music in context

Miles Davis: All Blues from the album 'Kind Of Blue'

Jeff Buckley: Grace from the album 'Grace'

Moby: Why Does My Heart Feel So Bad? From the album 'Play'

AREA OF STUDY 4: World Music

Capercaillie: Skye Waulking Song from 'Nadurra'

Rag Desh: 3 suggested versions (A Shankar, SD Dhandhada & H Dhandhada, B Wertheimer & S Gorn)

Koko: Yiri

The examination board is Edexcel