

Music

A Level



Overview

A Level Music is suitable for all instrumentalists or vocalists who have already achieved a standard equivalent to at least ABRSM Grade 4 (or other recognised examination body). The course focuses on the disciplines of Performing, Listening and Analysis. Any musical style is suitable for performing, but the course includes a core study of Western classical music. Confident musical literacy skills are essential, as is a willingness to be creative and involved with the musical activities of the Department.

What goes well with this course?

Many of our students opt to study both Music and Music Technology. This course will combine well with almost any other subject; in the past students have also studied:

- English
- Psychology
- History
- Mathematics
- Performing Arts

- Photography
- Media Studies
- Film Studies
- Business

Students considering taking Music at university would benefit from taking subjects with a focus on analytical writing, such as English or History.

Progression

A Level Music is a requirement if students wish to study for a specialist Music degree or undertake a professional training course at one of the Conservatoires. Music can be studied as a single honours degree as well as part of a combined honours course, with a wide range of subjects (for example Business, English, Languages, Mathematics, etc.) A good pass at A Level Music makes a positive impression on university admissions for most degree programmes.

Course Content

The course covers three broad areas:

Performing Music – Students prepare towards a final recital which must be of Grade 6 standard or above on their chosen instrument(s) and/or voice.

Composing – this is a specialist study of key compositional techniques from the Western Classical Tradition, Music of the 20th Century and the candidates own interests.

Understanding Musical Style – in which students study the development of symphonic music through the classical and romantic eras, music of the twentieth century and jazz between 1920 and 1960.

Educational Experiences

Course Specific Trips, Visits & Experiences

Music A Level students have the opportunity to take part in a variety of course related experiences. In the last couple of years, these have included:

- Concert trips
- Composition workshops with professional ensembles, most recently the Camilli String Quartet and also the Yehudi Menuhin School
- A chance to perform in the College's Winter and Spring Concerts and the annual Battle of the Bands as well as regular lunchtime recitals
- A chance to perform at the College's annual Leavers' Festival
- The opportunity to take part in Reigate's New Music Fest – both behind the scenes and on the stage
- Participation in lectures and study days led by leading specialists and academics

Music students will be required to participate in at least one College music group throughout the duration of their studies and can select from activities such as Chamber Ensemble, Chamber Choir, Pop Choir, Songwriting and Band.

Assessment

The course is assessed through a formal examination in June and externally assessed coursework, both for Composition and Performance.

The exam board for this A level is Eduqas.

Entry Requirements

All students need to have at least five

GCSEs at Grade 4 or above (and a satisfactory school reference) in order to be accepted on an A Level/BTEC Level 3 Programme.

Students will need at least one of the following qualifications to be considered:

- Grade 6 or above in GCSE Music
- Grade 4 ABRSM Instrument – pass or above
- Grade 5 ABRSM Theory – Students must either have Grade 5 Theory on entry or commit to passing it in the November of their Lower Sixth year. Students without the grade 5 will be given support sessions to help them achieve it in November

In addition, all students will be invited to attend an audition and an interview with the Music staff.

Suitability for the course can be discussed with the department should alternative qualifications or experience be presented.

Students will do well on the course if they are:

- Creative
- Confident
- Natural performers
- Fascinated by the workings of music
- Good with IT
- A team player
- Keen to develop their instrumental or vocal technique to a high standard

Students should be enthusiastic performers and active listeners. Students will have the opportunity to develop their key skills generally as well as sharing their enthusiasm and interests with other specialist musicians.