A LEVEL MUSIC
Exam Board: Edexcel

Sixth Form

Where do I start from?

For this subject you should have a minimum standard equivalent to Grade VI on your main instrument. If studied at GCSE a minimum of Grade 6 in music is essential. If pupils have not studied music at GCSE level, we would expect them to be a minimum of Grade VII on their main instrument. Pupils would also be expected to complete a rigorous programme to fill in any gaps in knowledge. You will also require a Grade 5 in English Language or English Literature. Mathematics at a minimum Grade 4 is acceptable.

If GCSE Music has been studied but an instrument has not been studied to the required grading level by the applicant, the student must, at the point of application and entry, play within a County Level ensemble. The Director of Music will have the final determination as to whether this county ensemble standard has been met in discussion with NMPAT Chief Executive. Please note that the County ensemble level is only an alternative to the musical instrument grading for those students who have studied GCSE Music. Examples of County Ensembles could be any County Youth ensemble (Orchestra, Concert Band, Brass Band, Big Band and Choir)

The Edexcel syllabus is designed to make a natural progression from work started at GCSE level. The course is suitable for students who wish to take music to College or University level, and for those who simply wish to extend their musical experience and knowledge even further.

If you would like a contrasting, academic subject to give you a breadth of subject knowledge in preparation for UCAS, this is the subject for you!

What will I study?

The course demands performing, composing, listening and analytical skills in almost equal measure. You will improve your 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 composed. We also have opportunities to develop conducting skills rehearsing junior ensembles.

How will I be assessed?

There are termly assessments and internal examinations throughout the course.

Unit 1: Performing Music (30%)

This unit gives you the opportunity to perform as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble. You can choose music in any style. Any instrument and/or voice are acceptable as part of a live recital. It must be **a minimum of 8 minutes**.

Unit 2: Composing (30%)

You will develop your composition skills leading to a creation of a composition. This can be either a free choice composition (in any style for any instrumental line up) or based on a set brief from Edexcel. You will also be asked to complete a Techniques paper - this is worked on in lessons and would be a choice from Bach Chorales, Two Part Counterpoint, an Arrangement or a Re mix of a given sample. Composition must last a minimum of 4 minutes; Techniques task must be at least 1 minute in length.

Unit 3 Appraising (40%)

You will study six genres with three set pieces in each. This is designed to give you a depth of knowledge across a number of differing styles:

Vocal Music
- J. S. Bach, Cantata: Ein feste Burg
- Vaughan Williams: On Wenlock Edge

Instrumental Music
- Schumann: Piano Trio in G Minor, Op. 17.
- Berlioz: Symphonie Fantastique

Music for Film
- Herrmann: Psycho
- Elfman: Batman Returns

Popular Music and Jazz
- Beatles: Revolver
- Courtney Pine: Back in the Day
- Kate Bush: Hounds of Love

Fusions
- Debussy: 'Estampes'
- Shankar: Breathing Under Water

New Directions
- Saariaho: Petals for Cello and Electronics
- Stravinksy: Le sacre du printemps (The Rite of Spring)

Exam: one exam (two hours 10 minutes in length) based entirely on your historical topic areas – both listening and essay based answers.