

Music

Why study Music?

The A Level course concentrates on three aspects of music – performance, composition and analysis. In doing so, the pupils learn transferable skills such as composing and performing skills. In addition, creativity is an integral part of the qualification and learners are given an opportunity to study the use of music in films and concerts. All three aspects allow the pupils to understand how music works and the relationship between music and society – historically and in the modern world. An understanding of music can lead to a wide variety of professions, ranging from performers to composers for media, games and theatre.

Entry requirements:

A GCSE qualification is not always necessary to follow the A Level course. However, students should have a good understanding of music theory, as well as vocal or instrumental skills to grade 5 (AS) and grade 6 (A2) standard.

Course details and assessment format

AS

40% of the whole qualification. 12% for performing at least two pieces (programme total of 6 – 8 minutes, unit 1), 12% for composing two pieces (portfolio total 3 – 6 minutes, unit 2). 16% is allocated for appraisal in the form of a written examination (1½ hour, unit 3). The performance element is assessed by an external examiner who visits the school and the composition portfolio is sent for external assessment.

A Level

60% of the whole qualification. For units 4 and 5, the pupil may choose either Option A, which consists of an

- extended 10 – 12 minute performance (unit 4, 22% of the qualification) and a 3 – 6 minute composition portfolio (unit 5, 14% of the qualification), or option B, which consists of a

- 6–8 minute performance (unit 4, 14% of the qualification) and an extended 5 – 9 minute composition portfolio (unit 5, 22% of the qualification).

Also, a written examination (2½ hours, unit 6, 24% of the qualification) on Western Musical Tradition and Music of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries.

Skills which are developed and possible progression

Studying music is an excellent way to develop skills as a performer. We teach the subject by developing practical skills as a team, in the form of class ensembles which develop into performing groups outside the classroom. The subject develops pupils' social skills by working in groups on creative tasks and by working towards school performances and beyond. Pupils also have an opportunity to develop their ICT skills through composition and performance work, which prepares them well for employment within the Creative Industries sector which is proving to be a booming business at the moment.



"The subject opens doors to many different styles of music from early jazz to classical. You will have the opportunity to show your talent for performing, composing and appraising all types of music. It makes you a complete musician and ready for any work within the field."

Glesni Rhys

