

MUSIC GCSE - EDUQAS



Course Details	Appraising Exam - 40% Composing - 30% Performance - 30%
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Introduction- Why Study Music?

Music is a diverse, versatile subject which allows a vast breath of study. It is an exciting and challenging subject which employers and universities regard highly. Music is unique in that it is both a highly creative and academic subject.

Progression from GCSE

GCSE Music acts as a natural stepping stone to A Level Music or BTEC Level 3 Music. These subjects again offer endless opportunities to develop transferable skills as well as providing the academic rigour of music appraisal. Students can progress from there to a Music degree which could specialise in performance, composition or music appraisal, or go on to study Music at a conservatoire.

Course outline



The GCSE is divided into three units:

- **Unit 1- Performance (30%)** You will be required to submit a solo performance and a group performance, totalling at least 4 minutes. This can be several pieces or 2 long pieces. These are completed during the second year of the course. Ideally, the pieces will be a minimum of Grade 3 standard. This is teacher assessed and externally moderated.
- **Unit 2- Composition (30%)** You will be required to compose two pieces of Music, one of your own choosing (with teacher guidance) and one to an exam board brief. They must total 3 minutes of Music. Your free choice composition will be mostly completed in year 10, with the set brief composition being completed in year 11. This is teacher assessed and externally moderated.
- **Unit 3- Appraising Music (40%)** This is a 1hr 45 minute exam which takes place at the end of year 11. You will study two set pieces of Music as well as several styles, and will be tested on your skills of identifying how the musical elements are used within a piece. The areas of study include music for ensemble, musical forms and devices, film music and pop music.

FAQ



Do I have to sing/play keyboard for the exam?

Not unless you want to! Unit 1 can be completed on any instrument. We may do the odd bit of singing in class for fun, but your instrument for Unit 1 is entirely your choice. This can be **any** instrument from any musical style or cultural background.

Do I have to know how to read music already?

Not to a high level. If you know that the musical alphabet is A to G, that is as much as you need! The Music Department will ensure that you have all the knowledge you need to start the course. You will learn to read music on the course.

Do I have to be having instrumental/singing lessons to be accepted on the course?

It's great if you are having lessons, but no. These can be arranged as part of your GCSE course. You will however be expected to practice your instrument in your own time as part of ongoing homework and preparation for Unit 1. All you need to be accepted on the course is a love of Music and a determination to succeed!

Do I need an instrument at home?

It is definitely helpful to have an instrument at home as will allow you to have more practice time on your instrument. That being said, Year 10 and 11 have full priority over the practice rooms and the music room during lunchtime, before and after school for you to practice. If you would like to purchase an inexpensive instrument for use at home, the Music Department is on hand to advise.

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Is there a point in doing it if I don't want to do Music as my career?

Absolutely! As well as being enjoyable for its own sake, Music provides you with a unique opportunity to combine academic and creative skill. Performance helps you not only to build presentation skills, but the process of learning an instrument builds incredible resilience and confidence as you progress. When composing your own pieces for coursework, you will need to be reflective when composing, and use that skill of reflectiveness to improve your work. As well as this, composition will also develop your IT skills as composition is completed using notation software. Music analysis allows you to develop problem-solving abilities whilst simultaneously taking in information- a skill which would be highly useful to many career choices.

Furthermore, as well as developing your skills of working alone, you will learn how to work well with others in several different settings, a highly sought-after skills by employers.

Will it be challenging?

Parts of the course are highly challenging but that is part of how enjoyable Music is. Music is 60% practical but it is also highly academic. You must also be willing to put in your own time on top of homework to practise your instrument, as well as completing extended listening tasks to broaden your own musical horizons in preparation for all three units at GCSE.