

Music AS/A level

Introduction

Music A level is a course which has a balance of practical work, composition and analysis of musical scores. **The course is designed to develop the skills of players who are at about grade 5 level in both practical and theory or who have a good pass at GCSE (grade A or B).**

Players of any instrument or voice are free to perform and compose in any style from Baroque to Rock. We recognise that there are some students who are interested in the course who have strong musical skills but lack formal qualifications. For these students we arrange auditions and discuss the suitability of the course.

Year 1

Module 1 Performing

Students prepare and perform a five-minute mini-recital on any instrument/s or voice which is recorded and externally assessed.

Students perform as a soloist or as part of an ensemble – this is usually a rock band or small group of up to 5 performers. 30%

Module 2 Composing

a) Students compose and record a three minute piece selected from a choice of 4 briefs given by the exam board. This can be in any style and for any instruments/voices (Externally assessed) – music technology is widely used for this.

b) Students will answer 3 questions to provide information that could be used for a CD sleeve note to accompany their composition, discussing influences and musical ideas within their composition. (exam in controlled conditions.) 30%

Module 3 Developing Musical Understanding

This module is based on a listening test and analysis of musical scores. Examples are taken from a cross-section of music from 1600 to the present day, from Bach and Haydn to Oasis and The Beatles. The areas of study are Vocal Music and Instrumental Music. Assessment is by written examination with CD and scores provided. The exam has 3 sections: Listening, Investigating Musical Styles and Understanding Chords. This final section involves

the study of harmony and chords, learning to write 4 part music. 40%

Year 2

Module 4 Extended Performance

Students perform as a soloist and/or as part of an ensemble, any music in any style. To produce a 12-15 minute recital. 30%

Module 5 Composition and Technical Study

a) Composition techniques – Students complete a technical study, either 4 part writing or popular song techniques.

b) Students compose a 3 minute piece, in response to a choice of briefs set by the exam board. This could be in a variety of styles and for any combination of instruments and voices.

For this unit students must complete either 1 composition and 1 technical study, or 2 technical studies. 30%

Module 6 Further Musical Understanding

Listening tests and more detailed Score analysis. Written examination (externally assessed).

There are 3 sections: Aural Analysis, Music in Context and Instrumental Music. Students explore a variety of musical styles, including World Music, Film Music and Jazz.

Students are encouraged to explore and broaden their own musical experiences in performance and through concert visits. There are regular performance opportunities, in lunchtime concerts and showcases. The department also organises visits to gigs at a variety of venues, such as Leeds College of Music and The University of Huddersfield. 40%

Specific Entry Criteria

Grade C in English Language and a grade C in music and or grade 5 Music Theory and Practical. An ability to read music is desirable.