

A Level Music



Transition Booklet

2022

Name:

Form:

The tasks in this booklet are designed to refresh your knowledge of music theory, develop your skills in performing and widen your knowledge of Music ready for A Level.

You are expected to complete these tasks over the summer and hand the work in on the first lesson in September.

The Course Structure

Similar to GCSE Music the course is split into 3 components.

Component 1: Performance

By the end of year 12 you will be expected to:

Produce a performance of between 6-8 minutes.

It will be a minimum of 2 contrasting pieces.

Be a minimum of Grade 5 standard.

Component 2: Composition

By the end of year 13 you will have written 2 compositions.

1 of these will be done in year 12.

It will be done in the Western Classical Tradition using traditional harmony and structure.

Component 3: Appraising

At the end of year 12 you will sit a listening and appraising exam.

We will cover the following: Western Classical Tradition focussing on
Symphony no. 104 – Haydn

Jazz – 1920-1950

Task 1: Music Theory

When we start the A level course we begin with a module called Starting Points in which we review basic theory through some simple composition tasks. We will go over keys, triads, dissonance etc. but we do presume some basic knowledge.

Read through the Harmony booklet and complete the tasks in the question booklet.

You may also use resources on www.musictheory.net

You may need some manuscript paper for some of the tasks. This can easily be found and printed free of charge from the internet.

Task 2: Music Analysis

Pick 2 pieces of music that are important to you or you really enjoy listening to. Write approx. 1000 words describing these pieces in detail. Think about the following points:

- What is the context of the piece of music?
- What musical features make it a good piece of music.
- Are there any creative or interesting compositional techniques used that you can discuss?
- Research the songs creation process and try to focus on any analysis of the song you can find.

Task 3: Performance

Make sure you don't neglect your playing during the summer break. For September I want you to prepare a performance on your instrument/voice. This needs to be 1 piece only and if possible at least Grade 5 standard. We will perform these in the first 2 weeks to create a performance plan for the year. You could:

- Polish up a piece you are already working on. You might find a recorded accompaniment on Youtube for pieces that are very regularly played for grades etc.
- Resurrect an older piece that you really enjoyed. You will be able to play it better now you are a bit more advanced. Listen to some performances of the piece on Apple Music/Spotify/Youtube. What do you like about these performances? Is there anything you can incorporate?
- Look at the graded lists for the level at which you are currently playing. Listen to the pieces and choose one to learn from scratch. You can use recorded performances to help you learn the piece and decide how to play it.