



A Level Music

KS5 Leader: Mrs E Carroll • Exam Board: Edexcel

Course Entry Requirements:

GCSE Grade 4 in Music

Course Outline:

The 'A' level Music course is particularly suited to those individuals who are able to demonstrate competent performance skills. This would typically be indicated by a minimum of a '5' in Music GCSE (with an '6/7' in the performance unit- unit 3), and/or grade 5 standard in either Music Theory or Performance. A significant element of the course is practically based with much scope for students to develop their own skills and interests. Students can choose to perform and compose in a musical style of their choice. The department is fortunate enough to have 2 suites of computers with the music packages Cubase and Sibelius for student use. Such ICT facilities aid with both the creative process and professional standard score writing.

A wide variety of extra-curricular activities exist including; Orchestra, Wind Band, Jazz Band, Brass Band, String Group, Ukulele group, Harlington Voice Box, Harlington Jams, Keyboard Orchestra, Music Committee, Music tours, concerts and productions. Students are encouraged to attend at least 2 activities per week, enhancing their musical experience at HUS.

The course develops a range of musical skills as well as giving students a broad musical background and repertoire. It serves as a sound basis for meeting the demands of university and college music courses. Indeed A Level Music is highly regarded by the Russell Group of Universities due to both the academic rigour and the creative aspects of the courses. The qualification is relevant to careers in the Music Industry as well as other careers that demand lateral thinking skills, independence and self- motivation to name but a few.

The A Level music course provides opportunities for the development of creativity, improvement of performance skills and the acquisition of musical vocabulary and knowledge. Students A Level music can expect to:

- Perform regularly on their chosen instrument in class as well as participate in a variety of extra-curricular activities and musical groups.
- Develop composing and creative skills through short composing projects, extended composition coursework and the use of ICT.
- Listen to and analyse music from a wide range of musical styles, writing about it using musical vocabulary.



Assessment (exam length, % of units):

There are 3 modules to each course. 60% of the course is based on performance and composing coursework of which all is marked externally. There is a written exam at the end of each year, which assesses understanding of set works studied, four part harmony skills and general aural awareness. In Year 12 students perform for 6 minutes; In Year 13, students perform a recital lasting between 8-12 minutes. Solo and group performances are both permitted and the recital can use music of any style. Students are required to complete one composition/ one technical studies each year. However, the performing and composing elements of AS are able to be re-visited and developed in A level. The Music Department does not enter students for examination in Year 12; however, students are expected to complete the units as stated above for internal assessment purposes and to ensure progression into Year 13 is of the projected standard required for success in the Course.

Learning strategies (include variety of lesson delivery and expectations of study):

Students will be expected to work independently in developing their own performance and composing skills. They will also be expected to work within a team and perform in class and whole school ensembles.

Students will be expected to carry out background reading and listening on relevant topics.

Staff will offer guidance and support in practical work and coursework alongside a range of strategies suited to the more academic elements of the course.

It is recommended that to study A' Level Music, students have a performance standard of a minimum grade 4-5 at the end of year 11 (in consultation with the Head of Music); however, instrumental / vocal exams do not have to have been taken.