

# AQA A-Level Music

Head of Department: Mrs. T. Brown

## Department Information

The music department is located in a purpose built block. There are two large teaching rooms, 6 individual practice rooms and a recording studio. A further teaching room is located in the nearby history block, housing 14 PCs and 10 iMac computers. These run specialist music software (i.e. Sibelius and Logic Pro). Students have ample opportunities to learn about music technology as well as more traditional elements of the subject. The department runs a number of thriving extra curricular ensembles and puts on regular concerts.

## Why study this course?

A level music provides a natural progression from GCSE music and allows students with an interest and ability in all kinds of music to further explore all aspects of the subject. It is a challenging course, but also highly enjoyable and rewarding.

## Aims of the course

The course aims to broaden students' musical understanding and appreciation across the areas of performing, composing, listening and appraising; allowing them to build upon their existing skills whilst also developing them further.

## Course outline

### Unit 1: Appraising

Written paper 2 hour 30 minutes

Section A contains structured listening questions using a CD of musical excerpts. Section B requires candidates to analyse set pieces from three different strands: The baroque concerto, The operas of Mozart and the piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg. Finally section C requires an essay showing contextual understanding of music from a two further areas of study (Jazz and Musical Theatre).

### Unit 2: Performing

Externally assessed. Candidates will offer two (or more) contrasting pieces to form a short programme (10 minutes) for either solo acoustic performance and/or performance via music technology. The expected standard is equivalent to grade 7.

### Unit 3: Composing

Externally assessed coursework completed in controlled time. Candidates create two pieces of music, lasting four and half minutes in total. One piece is composed in response to an externally set brief. The second piece is a free choice of composition.

## How am I assessed?

All units are assessed externally and performances are recorded at school on a given date in Year 13. Compositions are undertaken as controlled assessment during lesson time. Listening and Appraising is assessed by a written and listening examination.

## Where does this course lead?

Students who study music at A level often go on to study a variety of courses at undergraduate level. The music course provides a challenging opportunity for students to develop a range of skills from performing and composing, to listening and analysis, which are combined with a wider range of transferrable skills that enable them to succeed after they have completed their formal studies.