



# Music A Level

TRANSITION BOOKLET

2021





# Welcome to the Music A level!

In the following booklet pages you will find a page dedicated to each aspect of the AQA A level Music course.

## **Introductions to aspects of the course**

At the top of each page there is a short introduction to that part of the course along with brief details about what you will do in lessons as well as detailing any coursework and/or exams you will take for that part of the course.

## **Tasks**

The remainder of each page then outlines a few tasks you should attempt to complete over the Summer break. The aim of the tasks is to give you a better understanding as to how best prepare yourself for the start of the course in September.

## **Your First Task!**

Please set up an A4 lever arch file for Music. It will need nine different sections labelled as follows – **General Listening, Baroque solo concerto, The operas of Mozart, Romantic Piano Music, Pop Music, Music for Theatre, Performance, Composition and a Glossary.**

Please file any tasks you complete over the summer in your folders.

☺ **ENJOY YOUR SUMMER OF MUSIC!** ☺





## AQA Music

### Component 1: Appraising music

#### Area of study 1: Western classical tradition 1650-1910

**Baroque: the solo concerto**

**Classical: the operas of Mozart**

**Romantic: the piano music of Chopin, Brahms and Grieg**

#### What you will do:

- ❖ Over the course of many lessons you will study and analyse the above areas of classical music.
- ❖ Throughout this study you will look at a selection of pieces in detail focussing on the main elements of music, such as melody, harmony, tonality, rhythm, instrumentation, structure and texture etc.
- ❖ You will also learn how to study scores and also gain awareness of the context in which this music was composed.
- ❖ You will do all of this through listening tasks, theoretical tasks, written tasks, practical tasks and independent tasks.
- ❖ For the exam you will be expected to answer listening questions on unfamiliar music from these styles as well as answer more extended essay questions on set works from these areas of study.

#### Tasks to complete over the summer:

**Listen** to Purcell's Sonata for trumpet and strings in D major Z.850, Mozart's 'Le Nozze di Figaro' k.492: Act 1 and Chopin's 'Ballade no.2 in F major op.38' to begin to familiarise yourself with these three styles of classical music.





## AQA Music

### Component 1: Appraising music

#### Area of study 2: Pop Music

Named artists:

Stevie Wonder

Joni Mitchell

Muse

Beyoncé

Daft Punk

Labrinth

#### Area of study 4: Music for theatre

Named composers:

Kurt Weill

Richard Rogers

Stephen Sondheim

Claude-Michel Schönberg

Jason Robert Brown

#### What you will do:

- ❖ Over the course of many lessons you will study and analyse various songs/musical numbers taken from a range of artists/composers.
- ❖ Throughout this study you will look at several pieces in detail focussing on the main elements of music, such as melody, harmony, tonality, rhythm, instrumentation, structure, texture, timbre, dynamics and articulation.
- ❖ You will do all of this through theoretical tasks, listening tasks, practical tasks and independent tasks.
- ❖ For the exam you will be expected to answer listening questions on the above artists/composers from these styles as well as answer more extended essay questions on set works by a selection of the above. You will show your understanding of these styles by drawing on examples relevant to the questions asked.

#### Tasks to complete over the summer:

**Listen** to as many of the artists/composers listed above as you can (rent or buy DVD's/Albums where possible as this will give you a better understanding of the context of each piece). Youtube is also an excellent resource (make sure you get the correct version).





**AQA Music**  
**A Level Performing**  
**Component 2: Performance**



**What you will do:**

You must be able to perform music using one or both of the following ways:

- instrumental/vocal: as a soloist, and/or as part of an ensemble
  - production: via music technology.
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- ❖ You must perform for a minimum of ten minutes – that is the total *playing* time so you should aim for around 12 minutes to be safe!
  - ❖ For your performance you may choose to do a programme of shorter pieces, and you can also choose to perform a complete work or a single movement/s from a particular piece.
  - ❖ You can choose whatever pieces you like; there is no rule on choosing pieces BUT try to choose pieces that will show off your ability to a good standard.
  - ❖ Don't choose pieces that are too easy, try to aim for grade 7 and above if you can (by the end of your second year).
  - ❖ However, don't choose pieces that are too hard either! It is much better to play an easier piece you can play well, than a harder piece you know you will make lots of mistakes in.

**Tasks to complete over the summer:**

1. **Choose and rehearse** a solo piece for your instrument/voice and be prepared to perform parts of it to the class when you return in September.
2. **Video (or audio) record** yourself performing a solo piece of your choice for your instrument/voice and write a short evaluation of your performance ready to show and feedback to the class in September.
3. **Photocopy** as much music as you can that you are confident playing. This should be solo pieces and/or ensemble pieces for your instrument/voice. Then file these photocopies in your music folder so you have a good selection of music to choose from for your performance lessons starting in September.

**To note: Always bring your instrument and a selection of music to play to ALL of your performance lessons.**





**AQA Music**  
**A Level Composing**  
**Component 3: Composition**



**What you will do:**

You will create two compositions of which the combined durations must be a minimum of four and a half minutes.

**Composition 1: Composition to a brief**

The composition must be in response to one brief from a choice of seven externally set briefs. The briefs may include different stimuli, such as:

- a poem or a piece of text
- photographs, images or film
- notation.

**Composition 2: Free Composition**

Free compositions need not reference areas of study or a given brief.

- ❖ You will produce a full score as well as a recording of both compositions.

**Tasks to complete over the summer:**

1. **Get listening!** Try to listen to a few pieces of music a week (radio, youtube, your own CD/MP3 collections, or those of family and friends). Listen to as many different styles of music as you can, and keep a log of pieces and artists you have listened to. At the end of each piece make some brief notes outlining what you liked most about the piece, and any ideas you would like to try out in your own composing. File any notes you make in the composition section of your folder.
2. **Get creative!** Now have a go at actually trying out some of the ideas that have inspired you. Keep a composition journal which details any musical ideas you have tried over the summer. This could be a chord progression you like, notation of a melody you have composed, a set of lyrics, or other devices you like the sound of. File any notation/notes you make in the composition section of your folder.

