

Music

Music A level offers you the chance to study a vast range of music and the context in which it was created, whether it is Baroque concertos, Jazz masterpieces or avante garde music from the last two centuries. Music students become analytical and critical thinkers, as well as creative, imaginative and independent workers

Music is one of the world's largest industries, and every year we send several people off to study music and to become successful musicians in later life. If you enjoy performing, like learning about social and historical contexts, engage well in discussion and analysis, love creating your own music, and appreciate the artistic as well as the theoretical, then Music is for you.

What will you be learning?

Appraising Music (40% of final mark). This develops the appreciation of music and composers' masterful techniques. The paper lasts 2½ hours and comprises a listening section, some short-answer analysis questions related to the set works you have studied, and an essay on one of the two chosen Areas of Study. The compulsory topic is The Western Classical Tradition (Baroque solo concerto, Mozart opera, Romantic piano music), and our chosen Areas of Study are Jazz (mostly covered in Year 12) and Art Music since 1910 (mostly covered in Year 13).

Performance (35% of final mark). You prepare a series of performances for recording and assessment by your teachers. It can be a combination of solos and ensemble, and must amount to a minimum of 10 minutes (should not exceed 12 minutes). The set period for recordings is 1st March onwards.

Composition (25% of final mark). This component is coursework. You will compose two pieces, one in response to an externally set brief and the other a free composition. They must amount to a minimum of 4½ minutes and should not exceed 6 minutes.

What are lessons like?

Here's what the students say: "Lessons can be quite light-hearted, but the content is quite hard-core." "It is challenging but rewarding, with very intense lessons in which you have to think for the whole hour! You have to have your "learning-head" on." "You do need to be able to read music in order to stay happy in this subject." "The discussion part of it is awesome." "After I've had Music, I have a smile on my face for the rest of the day."

What can it lead to?

There is enormous variety in the type of Music courses offered at university and conservatoires. Courses can focus on musicology, performing, historical study, psychology, composition, technology, recording, jazz, or popular music styles, and many more general and traditional courses can be found. Most courses have a menu of modules so that you can play to your strengths and interests, and there is always the chance to research something that interests you.

Want to know more?

To find out more about the course and discuss your suitability please contact J.Hartley@qes.org.uk, G.Leach@qes.org.uk or D.Foster@qes.org.uk