



## **Music Curriculum Information - GCSE**

As students embark on their Music GCSE, we thought it would be useful to share an overview of the course.

### **In Key Stage 4 Music:**

The examination board for GCSE Music is AQA. You can find further information relating to the specification here: [AQA GCSE Music Specification](#)

- Component 1 - Understanding Music - 40%
- Component 2 - Performing Music - 30%
- Component 3 - Composing Music - 30%

Understanding Music is the examined component of the course and is worked on throughout the two years of the course. Students study music from four areas of study relating to different musical periods and deepen their understanding of musical genres and styles through the in-depth study of two contrasting set works:

Area of Study 1 - Western Classical tradition 1650-1910, looking at music from the coronation anthems of Handel right up to larger scale works of the late Romantic period.

Set Work - Mozart - Clarinet Concerto, K622

- Movement 3 - Rondo

Area of Study 2 - Popular music, including Broadway, Rock music, Film and Gaming music and Popular music from the 1990s to the present day

Set Work - Menken/Ashman - Little Shop of Horrors

- Prologue/Little Shop of Horrors (overture)
- Mushnik and Son
- Feed Me

Area of Study 3 - Traditional Music, including Blues music, Fusion music, contemporary Latin music and contemporary folk music of the British Isles

Area of Study 4 - Western Classical tradition since 1910, looking at the music of Copland, British music, Hungarian orchestral music and minimalism.

The exam assesses listening and appraising skills through previously unheard pieces related to the areas of study and then more detailed questions on the set works.

Performance and Composition are worked on throughout the two years and each are split into two pieces of work. Each student will produce two compositions after working on various compositional techniques. The first of these is a free composition (worked on in Year 10) and this is complemented by a composition to a brief supplied by AQA, which is completed in Year 11. Students also record two performances, one solo and one ensemble, and these are normally recorded in the Autumn and Spring terms of Year 11.

### **Required resources:**

- All technical resources and stationary required are provided
- An instrument for home practice is essential
- Any sheet music required for chosen performances

**Career Links:**

- [Why Study Music](#)

**Homework and assessment:**

Homework of 40 minutes duration will be set in Music to give the students time to consolidate their understanding of work covered at school and further develop their ideas. Homework may take the form of a written piece or online assessment and feedback is given in line with the school marking policy and exam board assessment criteria. Assessment marks are subject to change and are based on the last exam season grade boundaries. If your child is struggling with their homework then they should talk to their teacher about it so that support can be provided.

**Co-curricular Music:**

Throughout the year the Music department runs a large number of opportunities for students to further enhance their performance and creative skills, some jointly with the Boys' Grammar School. It is highly recommended that music students take an active role in participating in these, both to support their studies and gain experience of making music with others. There are also plenty of opportunities for students to set up ensembles themselves. Examples of current ensembles and opportunities include:

- Choir
- Orchestra
- String groups (junior and senior)
- Guitar ensemble
- Percussion ensemble
- Jazz Band
- Joint Musical Production

More information can be found on the [Music Subject Content page](#) of the school's website.

If you have any queries, please contact Mr Mark Warner, Director of Music at [mwarner@ahs.bucks.sch.uk](mailto:mwarner@ahs.bucks.sch.uk).