

A LEVEL MUSIC: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



What do you study in A Level Music?

A level music requires you to perform on an instrument or voice, compose your own original music and study a variety of musical genres from the following list:

- Area of study 1: Instrumental music of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven
- Area of study 2: Popular song: blues, jazz, swing and big band
- Area of study 3: Developments in instrumental jazz, 1910 to the present day
- Area of study 4: Religious music of the baroque period
- Area of study 5: Programme music, 1820—1910
- Area of study 6: Innovations in music, 1900 to the present day.

What grade should I be playing at?

You will need to be playing / singing at Grade VI standard by the end of the two-year course. You will be expected to perform for a minimum of 6 minutes on your chosen instrument.

Do I need to be able to read music?

Quite a lot of the course involves analysing classical music, so ideally yes. It is possible without being a fluent reader, but you will need to be prepared to do extra work on your Music Theory. You will need to develop this skill in order to access the final listening exam.

Do I need Grade 5 Music Theory / GCSE Music?

No, but developing your music theory skills will definitely support your success (and enjoyment!) on the course.

How am I assessed?

You will be assessed on your performance recital which will form 30% of your final grade. You will be expected to achieve a fluent performance of a variety of pieces and be assessed on your technical control of your instrument, the fluency and expression in your performance and the difficulty level of the pieces you perform. You will also have to complete two compositions for a further 30% of your grade. These will be assessed on their level of creativity and how musical devices have been employed to create specific musical effects.

You will also have a listening exam which will focus on four of the areas of study. You will have to analyse and evaluate music, writing essays on set works and answering aural analysis questions on unfamiliar music.

How can A Level Music help me in the future?

Music A Level can lead to further musical study at degree level. However, the skills you develop through studying music, such as self-discipline, cooperation and high level analysis skills, are greatly valued on all degree courses and by employers.

Who can I contact to ask more questions?

Please feel free to email Mrs Lowe on slowe@plymstockschool.org.uk