

Music

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to be able to play a musical instrument?

You do need to perform but this can be on an instrument, singing or rapping. If you want to play an instrument you should have some experience of playing it, therefore if you have not had lessons on an instrument, you should focus on keyboard as you have played that in Key Stage 3. You do not need to have passed any grade exams but you should feel able to learn pieces to a good standard.

If I am playing the keyboard, what standard do I need to be at?

You will need to perform with both hands together. But, you only need to perform for four minutes, so this could be just two pieces to learn over two years.

Do I have to perform in front of everyone?

It's great if you do but there is no pressure to. You will have to perform in front of your teacher but no one else.

Do you have to sing?

You don't have to sing but it is a useful skill to help you through many of the tasks. You won't have to sing on your own unless you are using your voice as your performance instrument.

What kind of questions are in the final exam?

You will listen to eight pieces of music and identify features of them. You may be asked to name instruments, identify other musical features e.g. how many beats in a bar or you may get played a piece of music by a band like Guns 'N' Roses and be asked to identify features of the song that are typical of a rock anthem.

Do I have to be able to read music?

You will need to be able to recognise where the notes are on a staff and different note lengths. You do not need to be able to sight-read a piece of music, just have the tools to decipher what all the symbols mean.

What kinds of homework tasks will I be expected to do?

A constant homework will be to practise your instrument and rehearse your performance pieces. As well as this, you may be asked to log onto a computer programme called Focus On Sound which has lessons and quizzes about a range of musical topics. You may also research a particular genre or revise features of a style for a mock test.

