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GCSE Music

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♪ A rough guide to the course:

- GCSE Music is split into 3 components
 1. Performing (30%)
 2. Composing (30%)
 3. Listening and Appraising (40%)

Over the next couple of slides we will delve a bit more into what is required for each component. Both performing and composing are coursework, marked by the teacher and moderated externally.



1. Performing

- Performing in GCSE Music comprises of 2 performances, recorded in Year 11.
 1. A solo performance, on an instrument of your choice. It must be at least 1 minute in length.
 2. An ensemble performance, on an instrument of your choice (the same or different to the solo). It must be at least 1 minute in length.

The combined time of both performances must be at least 4 minutes.



1. Performing

- There is a system for measuring difficulty, with the ‘standard’ difficulty being about Grade 4 by the time we record in Year 11 (although you don’t have to have taken the exam). We therefore recommend students to be about Grade 2 on their instrument when starting the course, to give the best possible chance of a good grade.
- Any instrument is allowed, current students are performing on guitar, drums, piano, violin, voice, saxophone, and more.
- There is time in the course to practise, but the expectation is private practise (and potentially lessons) should be happening.



2. Composing

- Composing in GCSE Music comprises of 2 compositions, created in Year 11.
 1. A piece written to a brief, from a choice of 4. These are created by the exam board, at the start of Year 11.
 2. A free composition, in a style of your choice.

Each composition must be at least 1 minute in length, and the combined time of both pieces must be at least 3 minutes.



2. Composing

- The briefs submitted by the exam board each relate to an Area of Study we look at in the listening exam. They follow a rough pattern:
 - An instrumental piece for selected instruments or in a certain structure
 - A vocal piece or song
 - A piece for musical or film trailer
 - A fusion piece mixing different styles of music
- We can compose in several ways – using our notation software Sibelius, or other programs like Logic or Garageband.



3. Listening and Appraising

- At the end of Year 11 we have a 1 hour 45 minute appraising exam.
- This includes questions on pieces of music we study, a question on an unfamiliar piece of music, a melodic dictation question, and a short comparison essay between two pieces.
- The exam is a listening exam, so a CD is played which plays extracts of music for each question, with plenty of time between for students to answer

3. Listening and Appraising

- The set pieces we study are split into 4 Areas of Study:

Area of study	Set works
Instrumental Music 1700–1820	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• J S Bach: 3rd Movement from Brandenburg Concerto no. 5 in D major• L van Beethoven: 1st Movement from Piano Sonata no. 8 in C minor 'Pathétique'
Vocal Music	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• H Purcell: Music for a While• Queen: Killer Queen (from the album 'Sheer Heart Attack')
Music for Stage and Screen	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S Schwartz: Defying Gravity (from the album of the cast recording of Wicked)• J Williams: Main title/rebel blockade runner (from the soundtrack to Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope)
Fusions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Afro Celt Sound System: Release (from the album 'Volume 2: Release')• Esperanza Spalding: Samba Em Preludio (from the album 'Esperanza')

What can I expect to do in the course?

- **Year 9:** Understanding music theory and the wider history of music. Learning to compose in different styles, and developing solo and ensemble performances. Investigating the Areas of Study and then an initial look at the set works.
- **Year 10:** Building knowledge of the set works studied, and continuing to practice and improve composing and performing skills.
- **Year 11:** Consolidation and continued examination preparation. Composing and performing coursework to be completed in the year of examination.

What can I expect to do in the course?

- We will develop knowledge and experience of Music with practical performing and composing projects, build up Music theory knowledge, and get used to using different types of Music technology to create music.
- There is therefore a mix of lessons where we might be performing in groups, composing individually or in pairs with instruments or the macs, or study lessons taking notes and listening and appraising music.
- If you have any questions please do email the Head of Music Mr Johnson at johnsonl@fullbrook.surrey.sch.uk