

# A LEVEL MUSIC

## INTRODUCTION

AS and A2 Music provides opportunities for various kinds of musician from the intending career performer to the young person who simply enjoys listening to and performing all kinds of music. In all cases, a student choosing Music at this level will have recognised the value of the subject as a creative discipline with important academic and practical skills which can be stimulating, challenging, enjoyable and rewarding and lead to a number of career and higher education paths.

The course builds on skills developed either at GCSE or in Associated board (or other) practical examination board work. Neither of these are essential and in exceptional cases where ability and commitment is clearly evident, a candidate with no formal experience may be considered. Candidates will develop their performing skills on one or two instruments and/or voice leading to an examined performance or recital. Aural skills are developed through structured listening and dictation tests which are worked at throughout the course.

Unlike GCSE there is an expectation that candidates will learn to read music fluently and apply technical vocabulary and knowledge of theory so that they are able to explain and appreciate a wide range of musical styles. There is a written paper where knowledge of Music history and a study of set works and composers is tested: a wide range of musical styles and cultures are explored throughout the course. Candidates will need to demonstrate their own creative ideas in the form of compositions. Candidates will learn to copy a particular style or to produce free compositions in which they develop their own stylistic characteristics (learn to write in the style of J.S. Bach or produce a contemporary dance theatre piece or jazz ensemble for example). Increasingly, the use of technology

is important and candidates will have access to computers, recording equipment and synthesisers to aid work in all areas of the course.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

AS/A2 music is increasingly linked with other subjects for combined honours degree courses at university and there are a wide range of discrete Music degree and diploma courses on offer including graduate courses in popular music, jazz and theatre performing as well as combined performing arts degrees. Universities and employers now widely recognise the importance of the creative, disciplinary, academic and social skills implicit in the study of music. In business and industry, scientists and mathematicians now look for evidence of creative interests and experience: AS/A2 Music is an ideal way of extending your knowledge and experience in a formal way, particularly if you already enjoy and are good at Music. If your intention is to enter a career as a musician, there are a wide range of openings in performing, entertainment, music production, recording industry, library and information, television and film, media, publishing, music management, etc., etc.

## ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

A good GCSE grade or Practical Examination result of at least Grade 4 or both: in some circumstances where clear ability and commitment are evident it may be possible to begin the course without either of these. Please discuss if you are in doubt.

## ASSESSMENT

A formal examination at the end of AS and A2 and coursework tasks in performing and composing, set in February.

**For further information see Mr M Ives**