



# *MUSIC*

## Gordon's Sixth Form

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A LEVEL

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**A Level Music comprises three main sections which encourage you to enjoy developing your current skills whilst exploring new areas of study.**

## Composition

At A Level you are taken back to basics to have a look at how the experts compose and you will 'borrow' some of their techniques.

This is then put into practice with your own original composition. This can be in any style, so whether ska punk or classical string quartets are your thing then this is the course for you! Many students find great success composing for groups that they are already performing with.

The Eduqas course allows you to specialise in composition at A Level, with 35% of the marks available for keen composers, or 25% for those preferring to specialise in performance.

## Listening and Understanding

An open mind is what is needed for this area. You will be listening to music from every part of the world, and from every era of musical history. Nothing is left untouched! You will have the chance to research areas that interest you and learn to appreciate those styles which you find more challenging!

There are set works by Haydn and Mendelssohn, as well as a component on musical theatre.

## Performance

A great opportunity for all musicians, the performance paper offers you the chance to show off your party pieces. If you are already approximately Grade 5 standard then you will have no problem achieving an excellent mark. As well as solo performance you will have lots of fun becoming involved with the many musical groups we have to offer, as well as perhaps starting some of your own. The many performance opportunities at Gordon's include the Carol Services, Gala concerts, Informal concerts and the unique ceremonial parades.

## Why study Music at Gordon's?

- Great results
- Small classes
- Experienced teachers
- Leadership opportunities
- Arts Award
- Huge range of performance opportunities
- Support for further education and careers in the Creative Arts through our 'Creative Careers Day'

## Other Opportunities

We want you to make the most of your time at Gordon's. Below are just a few suggestions as to things with which you may like to get involved.

- Singing groups
- Theatre and Concert trips
- Foreign tours
- Workshops
- String groups
- Masterclasses
- Success at competitive festivals
- Ceremonial pipes and drums.
- Peer teaching
- Instrumental lessons on a choice of 18 instruments

## Good to Great – Creative Arts

Good to great is the name given to our extra-curricular programme for elite performers. Participation in the programme is by invitation/audition. Those involved will have access to the following opportunities:

- Ring-fenced rehearsal times in the week
- Aural and theory training
- Access to National level competition
- Mentoring

## Arts Award

As well as Music on the curriculum, Sixth Form students are encouraged to tackle the Gold Arts Award qualification. Similar to the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, this Award is solely based on developing skills in arts subjects.

**Part A: Personal Development in the Arts**

**Part B: Arts Project Leadership**

Arts Award is open to all students in the Sixth Form, whether or not they are studying an arts subject. On qualification, this award gains 16 UCAS tariff points (equivalent to B at AS level or Grade 7 on an instrument) for the student which can be used in conjunction with AS and A level qualifications to gain university entry.

## Questions

We've tried to answer some of your most frequently asked questions, but if you have some that we haven't answered below, then don't hesitate to contact us.

## Why should I do Music A level?

*Music is well regarded by universities as they appreciate the diverse range of skills students need to have to succeed. Music is also a very flexible subject which combines extremely well with many others. Many students opt to take music with maths and sciences, and it also complements English and languages. It's also a subject in which you can have a great deal of fun, and it can act as light relief from subjects which rely more heavily on essay writing. As long as you have enthusiasm and determination you will succeed.*

## What careers can I do with Music A Level?

*Like most A Levels, music can be seen as a route to any degree. If you wish to become a music teacher or work in the performing arts then it is essential. However, the high level of personal discipline, presentation and confidence that you develop during the course is recognised by universities and employers as being highly desirable for entry onto any course. Other areas that are increasingly looking for musicians include the Armed Forces, teaching, and all jobs involving sound recording, media and social media and film/video editing.*

## Will I be disadvantaged if I can't play the piano?

*Not at all. For composition it is often useful to be able to pick out chord sequences on a keyboard, but you do not need to be a fluent player. Music technology can be a great help to those whose first instrument is not piano as it can enable you to hear your compositions played back to you.*

## Do I have to be able to read music?

*You will find much of this course extremely challenging if you cannot read music at all. However if you have certain problem areas then with a degree of application you will be fine.*



## Course Details

**Examination:** The course is examined at the end of Year 13.

### Pathway A: Performance Major (35%) and Composition Minor (25%)

Students are required to give a performance consisting of a minimum of three pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. Two pieces must reflect the musical characteristics of different areas of study. The duration of the performance will be between 10-12 minutes and will be marked by a visiting examiner. Two compositions must be completed which will be worth 25% of the overall mark.

### Pathway B: Composition Major (35%) and Performance Minor (25%)

Students are required to give a performance consisting of a minimum of two pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. One piece must reflect the musical characteristics of an area of study. The duration of the performance will be between 6-8 minutes and will be marked by a visiting examiner. A portfolio of three compositions must be completed, one in a classical style and the others in a style of the student's choosing.

### Unit 3: Appraising

This unit is assessed through a written exam which will assess knowledge and understanding of music through two areas of study. Area of study A is the Western Classical Tradition, Area of Study C is Into the Twentieth Century and Area of Study E will be Musical Theatre. This unit also includes in-depth study of Haydn Symphony 104.

# MUSIC

## HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

Mrs R Brazendale

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### Exam Board

Eduqas

### Specification

A660PA | A660PB

## COURSE DETAILS

### Examination

The course is examined as a whole at the end of Year 13.

### Unit 1 and 2: Option A: 35% Performance and 25 % Composition

Students are required to give a performance consisting of a minimum of three pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. The duration of the performance will be between ten and twelve minutes and will be marked by a visiting examiner.

Performances should be at Grade 6 instrumental level or higher.

For this option students are required to produce two compositions, of 4.5-7 mins in length, with one being based on a brief set by the exam board. Plenty of opportunity is given during the course to practise these skills in both formal and informal settings. There is an expectation that students will be receiving tuition on their instrument or voice for the duration of the course.

### Option B: 25% Performance and 35% Composition

For this option students are required to produce three compositions, of 8-10 mins in length, with one being based on a brief set by the exam board and one fulfilling the characteristics of one other area of study.

Students are required to give a performance consisting of a minimum of two pieces either as a soloist or as part of an ensemble or a combination of both. The duration of the performance will be between six and eight minutes and will be marked by a visiting examiner. Performances should be at Grade 6 instrumental level or higher.

### Unit 3: Appraising

This unit is assessed through a written exam which will assess knowledge and understanding of music through three areas of study: Western Classical Music, Musical Theatre and Music Into the Twentieth Century. This unit also includes an in-depth study of the development of the symphony from 1750-1900.



## HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

Exam Papers Year 13	% of GCE	Details
<b>Unit 1:</b> Performance Exam	<b>25% or 35%</b>	This component is externally assessed by a visiting examiner between 1st March and 15th May. Students must present 6-8 (25%) OR 10-12 (35%) minutes of music at Grade 6 or above.
<b>Paper 2:</b> Composition Coursework	<b>25% or 35%</b>	This component is externally assessed by the exam board. Students must submit two compositions (25%) or three compositions (35%).
<b>Paper 3:</b> Listening and Appraising Exam	<b>40%</b>	Students must demonstrate understanding of the three areas of study: Western Classical Music, Musical Theatre and Into the Twentieth Century. Students are tested on their aural awareness and more extended written responses to essay questions.

## WIDER READING

- Steen, M (2004) Mendelssohn: The Great Composers. Icon Books Ltd.
- Block, G. (2009) Enchanted Evenings: The Broadway Musical from Show Boat to Sondheim and Lloyd Webber. OUP
- Everett, W (2008). The Cambridge Companion to the Musical. Cambridge







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