



Music FAQs

Will I enjoy the course?

You are likely to enjoy GCSE Music if you like:

- Performing music on an instrument or singing
- Composing your own music, either on an instrument or using music technology
- Listening to, analysing and appreciating a wide range of musical styles

What if I already play an instrument or take singing lessons?

That's excellent news! You can often use pieces you have already prepared as part of your controlled assessment. As a general guide, performing a piece suitable for a Grade 3 instrumental exam could achieve a GCSE grade 7 or 8 in the performance component if performed well.

What if I don't play an instrument or have singing lessons?

Performance is a significant part of GCSE Music. You must be willing and able to perform, but this can be on any instrument, including voice. While performance accounts for 30% of the overall mark, stronger performing skills often make the other areas of the course more accessible and enjoyable.

Please note that you will not be taught how to play an instrument as part of GCSE Music. It is expected that you are learning an instrument (or voice) alongside the course.

If you do not currently play an instrument but are interested in taking GCSE Music, please speak to Miss Thomas for advice.

What will the examination be like?

At the end of the course, you will sit a listening exam. You will respond to questions based on the Areas of Study, which explore music from around the world spanning the last 400 years. These are:

- **The Concerto Through Time**
- **Rhythms of the World**
- **Film Music**
- **Conventions of Pop**

The written listening exam is worth 40% of your total GCSE mark.



Is there any coursework?

Yes. Coursework makes up 60% of the overall GCSE and is completed throughout the course.

Performance (30%)

You will perform at least two pieces, either playing an instrument or singing, with a combined length of at least 4 minutes:

- At least one solo performance
- At least one ensemble (group) performance
- Pieces should ideally be around Grade 3 standard or above

All performances are recorded and assessed by your teacher and together make up 30% of your GCSE mark.

Composition (30%)

You will also compose two original pieces, with a total duration of at least 3 minutes:

- One composition will be written for your own instrument or voice
- The second composition will be written in Year 11, following a brief set by the exam board

The two compositions together are worth 30% of your GCSE.

Routes of employment

Studying Music helps students develop a wide range of transferable skills, including creativity, independence, problem-solving, reflection and the ability to refine work over time.

Students who take GCSE Music often go on to study Music, Music Technology or Performing Arts at college, sixth form or university, as well as a wide range of other courses.

A qualification in Music can lead to many career pathways, particularly within the creative industries, both as a performer and in behind-the-scenes roles. It is also viewed positively by employers across all sectors, as success in Music demonstrates long-term commitment, discipline and dedication.