

MUSIC



EXAM BOARD: EDEXCEL COURSE DURATION: 2 YEARS

This course aims to develop students' musical skills in a variety of disciplines, including performance, composition and analysis. It covers a range of musical styles, including vocal music, instrumental music, music for film, which are more classical in their sound, as well as more contemporary genres like popular music and jazz, fusions and new directions.

A-level Music has both practical and written elements and, although it is not necessary to have taken GCSE music, students should understand musical notation, have knowledge of music theory and should be able to play an instrument to about Grade 5 standard.

PERFORMING Students perform in a recital either as a soloist or as a member of an ensemble. To prepare for recitals, students have access to the centre's rehearsal spaces, including a specialist music room and theatre. This component is assessed in the second year of the course.

COMPOSING Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of musical styles by composing two pieces of music: one composition to a brief and one on compositional technique. They will develop their skills in melody writing, harmony and writing for a range of instruments. To aid the composition process, students have access to Sibelius music software. These facilities are available outside of lesson time to assist extended study.

APPRAISAL Students develop their understanding of music through listening work and analysing music from a range of periods and genres, including classical music, jazz and film music. Students will also learn music theory and harmony to enhance their ability to analyse and write music.

OPPORTUNITIES There is a range of musical opportunities at Durham Sixth Form Centre. Students can be involved in drama and theatre productions and even set up their own bands. A range of instruments is available for students to use, including guitars and drum kits, and Durham Music Service provides individual instrumental and vocal tuition.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS The variety of musical styles and cultures studied on the course means Music combines well with other subjects from the humanities, languages, science and the arts. The analysis and theory side of Music goes well with the study of Maths.

CAREERS/HE INFORMATION Studying Music requires self-discipline and self-motivation, dedication, teamwork, creativity and analytical skills, all of which makes musicians highly desirable in any workplace. Many Music students have gone on to study Music in higher education, including degrees at some of the country's top conservatoires, and courses in jazz, music technology and community music.