**A level Music**

**Introduction – an outline of the course**

There are 3 strands to the course: **Appraising** music, **composing** and **performing** just as there is at GCSE. In the **appraising** music strand, you will be assessed on your ability to **analyse** and **evaluate** the music heard in the exam and demonstrate knowledge and understanding of musical elements and musical language to make critical judgements. Over the two years you will develop these skills and knowledge through studying **Baroque** **music**, **Romantic** **piano** **music**, **pop music and music** for **theatre**.

For **performance** you will begin to prepare A level-standard performance material (**minimum grade 6)**, working towards a minimum of 10 mins music to be recorded **in the first two weeks of March of Y13**. There is no maximum duration for performance. You can perform instrumentally or vocally and either as a soloist or in an ensemble.

Over the course you must **compose** two pieces. One composition must be in response to an **externally set brief** and the other composition is **freely composed**. You will look at how other composers develop their ideas and apply these skills to your work.

**What will we be studying in the first half term?**

In September you will start by looking at how to **analyse music** through studying **Baroque scores** and **musical theatre**. You will start by looking at **Purcell’s Trumpet Sonata** and the opening number from from **Les Misérables**. You will learn more about **harmonic analysis** and how to **analyse melodies** as well as **improve your vocabulary** when describing other musical elements.

You will apply this knowledge to your own composition work which you will continue to develop. You will be expected to be working on some performance material as well.

**What can I do that will help me prepare for A level Music?**

One of the important ways that you can prepare is to make sure that you are familiar with the musical **elements DR P SMITH** that you covered at GCSE. One of the files on the website- an AQA student guide focuses on these elements and melody in particular. As part of your gap work you will look at this more closely. Your ‘Musical Elements’ knowledge organiser from Year 11 will be a good resource to refer back to. The approach to these new music topics will be similar to GCSE at first, in particular the work that you did on the Mozart Clarinet Concerto and Little Shop of Horrors.

**Listening** to music is key and as part of your gap tasks you will be directed to listen to music from the Baroque era and from the pop artists that you are studying. You could also try and watch a BBC Proms concert over the summer. Tune in to Classic FM or watch a concert on YouTube. Even better get to hear some live music! Keep practising your instrument and/or singing and keep recordings for September. If you are song writing or composing, please keep these ideas too as they will be useful in September.

You should also look at some of the **Grade 5 Music Theory** resources on YouTube to upskill for September.

**Summer Gap Task and where to find this**

The best way to prepare for your A level Music is to complete the summer gap tasks that have been set. One task is based around Baroque music and one is based around Musical Theatre. Listen to the suggested pieces several times. Really immerse yourself in the sound world of both topics.

If you read the booklets and complete the tasks over the summer, then you will be using the skills that you have developed during your GCSEs. It is easy to let these skills lapse which will make the start of your A levels more difficult, because you will be trying to remember what you did at GCSE and learn new knowledge and skills.

On the [school website](https://www.guiseleyschool.org.uk/), if you click on Sixth Form and follow the list until you see Year 11 into 12 Gap Tasks. Click on this and find the 2 music task booklets, a more detailed breakdown of the course and an accompanying AQA student guide which relates to one of the gap tasks.

We are really looking forward to seeing you in September and working with you so that you achieve your goals and aspirations.