



A Level Music Technology

Why study Music Technology?

Music technology plays a key role in Music across the world and, like other forms of technology, advances rapidly. Through the study of Music Technology, students are offered a practical approach to learning about the nuances of the recording industry, including the recording of live music, sequencing using software packages, producing and mastering music and composing using appropriate technology. Students, including those who do not play a traditional instrument, are encouraged to explore their musicality and create original material through the medium of technology and to gain a greater understanding of how technology is such an integral part of the music industry in this day and age.

What is the course structure?

The course has an emphasis on a wide range of practical work, extending skills of composition, recording and manipulation of audio through software packages such as Logic Pro X.

More information can be found by visiting the Edexcel website and downloading the course specification at:

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/content/demo/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/music-technology-2017.html>

During the A Level Music Technology course, students will complete the following:

A Level

Component 1: Recording 20% - Students are required to record a popular song provided by Edexcel, lasting between three and three and a half minutes. They will record at least 5 live instruments, including Lead Vocals, Backing Vocals, Electric guitar, Bass guitar and Drum kit.

Component 2: Technology based Composition 20% - Students are required to compose a piece based on a recording or brief provided by Edexcel and will be assessed on realisation of pitch and rhythm, choice of timbre and mix, musicality and music technology skills.

Logbook – Students will use this document to detail equipment and mixing techniques for Component 1 and compositional techniques used on their composition for Component 2.

Component 3: Listening and Analysing 25% - This is a 1 hour 30 minute examination, externally assessed, and is based on Popular Musical Styles since 1910 and an understanding of the principles and practice of Music Technology and technological break-throughs and advances. Section A will test students' aural perception of musical characteristics and features of a range of musical styles, including relevant technological aspects. Section B includes a question where students will compare the production qualities and techniques of two pieces and evaluate the impact of various musical and technological techniques.

Component 4: Producing and Analysing 35% - This assessment will take the form of a 2 hour and 15 minute examination. Section A will test students' music technology and sonic understanding, their ability to manipulate and correct recorded music and their ability to write commentaries on the technological process. In Section B, students will evaluate a recording session and the suitability of certain mixing techniques.

Which activities will I be engaged in during the course?

Music technology lessons are predominantly practical; listening, composing, arranging and learning to use software workstations. Students will also have the opportunity to take part in many activities including:

- Research tasks on different composers, musical styles, genres and eras.
- A hands-on approach to Digital Audio Workstations, learning how to sequence MIDI and record live audio
- Compositional techniques and tasks, including manipulation of sounds
- Analysis of popular bands, artists and styles that date from 1910 to the present day
- Evaluating their own and others' musical work in order to further develop their own musical understanding.
- Using different audio equipment to record, manipulate and adjust live audio recordings
- The opportunity for school visits to the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, music technology workshops and live performances by electronic artists.

How can I prepare for the course?

The following is a list of recommended textbooks and websites in preparation for studying A-Level Music Technology which will be referred to throughout the course:

- Soundonsound.com – the world's best recording technology magazine online. Visit for tips, tricks and different recording techniques used by the industry professionals
- Youtube offers an invaluable bank of tutorials on a plethora of technological processes, from applying reverb to effectively mic-ing up a seven piece drum kit
- Experiment with Logic Pro X

Further information: Danni Gooch (Head of Music)