BEECHEN CLIFF

Music Technology

Curriculum Booklet

2026 - 2027

Head of Subject: Mr S Thompson

Subject Curriculum Intent:

"Music has a power of forming the character and should therefore be introduced into the education of the young"

(Aristotle)

At Key Stage 5, we aim to nurture musicians that have a broad experience of musical creation, a competent use of technology and an extensive knowledge of many contemporary genres of music. This gives them the ability to record existing repertoire, create and produce their own original compositions using current software and hardware. In addition, through listening and analysis foster both their understanding of sound as well as experience the practical use of music technology, developing an understanding of contemporary music in a social, cultural and historical context.

The A-level music technology course builds on the knowledge and skills acquired at key Stage 3/4, in the classroom through the introduction of the use of music software and hardware. The course also draws upon practical music and technical skills that students may have been involved with (rock bands etc). Through the music technology lessons, students will explore a wide variety of studio recording skills, gain an extensive practical use of the latest sequencing software as well as cultivate listening and analytical skills utilising contemporary genres and styles. This will be explored through both academic study and practical work.

Students will undergo a 'bridging unit of work' to secure knowledge acquired at KS4 and to develop their music theory knowledge and the technical experience required to undertake the main focus of the syllabus. This will ensure students are well prepared and equipped for the requirements of the A-level Music Technology Syllabus. Consequently, students with both limited knowledge and experience can be accommodated as well as those whose experience on music and the use of technology may be more developed.

This qualification will support students in forming personal and meaningful relationships with music through the development of musical knowledge, understanding and skills, including recording, sequencing, composing, listening and analysis. Students will be encouraged to engage with the latest technology, develop their compositional ability and to develop more critical listening skills by studying a wide range of contemporary music genres and their musical contexts.

This qualification will also allow students to develop particular strengths and interests, encourage lifelong learning and provide access to higher education and university degree courses in music technology, digital music and production. It would also be valuable in relation to other media-based subjects and careers.

Subject Curriculum Implementation:

The A-level music technology course is divided into 4 main strands of music education: Studio Recording, Creative Composition, Listening & Analysing and Producing & Analysing. There are 6 lessons a fortnight that are all delivered by the subject head, supported by a technician. 4 of the lessons will focus on the technical and creative units and 2 lessons will develop students' listening and analytical skills. The technical and the creative units of the course will be monitored through weekly tasks developing into small practical projects. The listening and analytical elements are also visited weekly through listening exercises, discussion and essays. In addition, the ongoing use of student's journals and research files are maintained throughout as well as regular internal exams on theoretical work.

In the practical work, pupils will be tasked with capturing, editing, mixing and producing and audio recording of a song written during the last 70 years. Students will also be expected to compose their own original music, demonstrating their skills in audio synthesis, sampling and the use of effects. Their work must show an understanding of melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, timbre, dynamics and tempo. Listening work is developed by the musical and technical analysis of several pieces of popular music in both short answer and longer answer questions. The producing and analysing aspect of the course is explored by the introduction of MIDI and audio material that has to be analysed and both manipulated and produced to create a final mix. Finally, students are expected to analyse and interpret music technology data that in turn has to be evaluated.

In year 12, the students will be given a variety of smaller practical tasks, projects and take part in discussions including writing short essays. All these will introduce concepts and topics that will be developed further in Year 13 when exam coursework will be introduced.

The course is divided into 4 main units: Recording, Technology-based Composition, Listening & Analysing, Producing & Analysing. The first two units (Recording, Technology-based Composition) are non-examined coursework projects worth 20% each. The final 60% consists of 2 written and listening examinations, which take place at the end of Year 13.

Allocated Curriculum Time:

	Lower Sixth	**Upper Sixth**
Fortnightly lesson allocation	6	6

Course Information

Exam Board: Pearson Edexcel Level 3GCE
Specification: 9MT0

Lower Sixth

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment
1	**Name of unit studied** • Component 1: Introduction to recording and mixing • Component 2: Introduction to technology-based composition • Component 3: Introduction to the Component 3 exam • Component 4: Handling and mixing audio	
2	• Component 1: Recording acoustic/bass guitar and intermediate mixing skills • Component 2: MIDI and synthesis essentials • Component 3: Analogue technology and vocal production • Component 4: Theoretical and practical tasks focusing on MIDI, dynamics and distortion	
3	• Component 1: Exploring the mark scheme, recording percussion/keyboards and advanced mixing • Component 2: Exploring mark scheme criteria • Component 3: Detailed exploration of the question paper and focus on analogue synthesisers/electric instruments • Component 4: Detailed exploration of the question paper and specimen long-response questions	
4	• Component 1: Practice brief sessions, mixing practice and mastering • Component 2: Practice brief sessions • Component 3: Comparing analogue and digital effect • Component 4: Specimen questions	
5	• Components 1 & 2: practice brief project and logbooks Components 3 & 4: Final revision ahead	

6	• **A level students sit mock Component 3 & 4 exams** • Component 1: Drum recording and preparing A-level brief • Component 2: Preparatory work towards A-level set brief • Components 3 & 4: Exploring differences between the AS- and A-level papers	

Upper Sixth

Term	Curriculum Foci Areas	Assessment
1	• Component 1: Exploring the mark scheme, multiple mic techniques and preparing/starting the NEA set brief • Component 2: Advanced MIDI and sampling and preparing/starting the NEA set brief • Component 3: The impact of digital and sampling technology • Component 4: Advanced MIDI in practice	
2	• Component 1: Mixing using advanced dynamics parameters and starting NEA brief • Component 2: Advanced synthesis techniques and starting NEA brief • Component 3: The impact of analogue technology • Component 4: Studio interconnection, microphones and acoustics	
3	• Component 1: Advanced audio editing, pitch/rhythm correction and continuing NEA brief • Component 2: Automating parameters and continuing NEA brief • Component 3: Identifying effects and their parameters • Component 4: Audio editing and manipulating advanced parameters with automation	
4	• Component 1: Supervised NEA sessions with skills-based starter activities • Component 2: Supervised NEA sessions with skills-based starter activities • Component 3: Mixing, mastering and comparing production techniques • Component 4: Focus on essay questions and evaluating production scenarios	

5	• Components 1 & 2: Moving towards completion with NEA brief and associated documentation • Components 3 & 4: Focus on exam technique and final revision	
6	**A level students sit Component 3 & 4 exams**	

Reading List

- Music Technology from Scratch. Mortimer Rhind-Tutt, Rhinegold Education, 2009
- AS & A Level Music Technology Study Guide. Rhinegold Education, Tim Hallas, 2017

Background reading/wider listening

- A range of articles on Sound, Production, Technology [Guidance is given in the classroom on specifics]

Studying/Revision Information

Ongoing Studying

Students should be regularly working with hardware and software using the workstations and studio facilities provided at the school. This should enable them to complete all practical assignments even if they don not have access to the appropriate equipment at home.
Students should be completing approximately 4 hours of homework/study per week.
Specific tasks are given on a weekly basis including deadlines for short practical projects.
Journals and files are provided for students that should be used on a regular basis.
Additional resources including articles etc are recommended by the Tutor on a topic basis.

Revision

Journals and files are provided for students that should be used on a regular basis.
Additional resources including articles etc are recommended by the Tutor.
Useful resources:

Recommended revision guide:

- Edexcel A-level Music Technology study guide. Published by Rhinegold

Final Assessment Structure:

Component	Weighting (%)	Content	Proposed Examination Date
1	20	• Studio Recording • Audio & Logbook	May of Upper Sixth
2	20	• Music Technology Composition • Audio & Logbook	May of Upper Sixth
3	25	• Written/Listening Examination [1.30'] • Paper submission	May of Upper Sixth
4	35	• Written/Production examination [2.15'] • Audio & Paper Submission	May of Upper Sixth

Please see Exam Board websites for up to date information:
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/music-technology-2017.html

Careers in the Curriculum

At Key Stage 5, our Music Technology curriculum is designed not only to develop students' practical competence with music software and hardware, recording, and composition, but also to equip them with key professional skills and studio experience that open doors to higher education degrees in music technology, digital music, production, and broader media-based careers.

Year	Careers Education in Music Technology
12	**Year 12: Practical Studio & Technical Foundation Skills** Understand how practical recording, synthesis, and mixing skills apply to professional studio and production contexts: • **Studio Recording & Production:** Capturing, editing, and mixing audio using workstation and studio facilities introduces core techniques for recording engineers and studio technicians. • **Technology-Based Composition & Synthesis:** Practical work with MIDI, synthesisers, dynamics, and sequencing software develops pathways into media composition, electronic music production, and sound design. • **Listening & Technical Analysis:** Analysing analogue and digital technologies alongside contemporary music genres builds the critical listening skills essential for audio engineering and acoustic analysis. • **Practical Projects & Documentation:** Completing regular practical tasks, short projects, logbooks, and research files mirrors industry-standard workflows and technical record-keeping. Students studying Music Technology at KS5 are also expected to take part in the Beechen Cliff Tech Team. This is a group of students that support the planning and technical delivery of live events throughout the academic year. This provides invaluable events management and live sound/lighting engineering experience that will help to equip students with the necessary skills needed to step into a professional performance environment. There are also other extra-curricular opportunities available within the music department, with various ensembles rehearsing weekly.
13	**Year 13: Advanced Production & The Professional World** Whether intending to progress to university degree courses in music technology, digital music, and production, or enter media-based industries, students gain a deep understanding of advanced production workflows: • **Professional Studio Practice:** Advanced microphone techniques, studio interconnection, acoustics, and pitch/rhythm correction prepare students for professional recording studio environments. • **Advanced Composition & Media Briefs:** Developing Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) coursework briefs using advanced MIDI, sampling, and parameter automation reflects professional industry production briefs. • **Commercial Production & Evaluation:** Evaluating production scenarios, mastering audio, and assessing the commercial impact of analogue and digital technology prepare students for mixing, mastering, and commercial audio roles. • **Portfolio Development & Research:** Independent NEA project work and ongoing research files equip students with a practical portfolio essential for university applications and freelance industry work. In addition to the extra-curricular opportunities as mentioned above, students intending to study music/music technology at university/conservatoire level will receive support and advice from music staff with regards to applications and auditions.

Possible careers in Music Technology

- Audio Engineer / Recording Engineer
- Music Producer / Digital Music Producer
- Sound Designer for Media & Games
- Mixing & Mastering Engineer
- Studio Technician / Acoustic Specialist
- Live Sound Technician
- Composer for Film, TV & Video Games
- Audio Software & Hardware Specialist
- Radio & Podcast Audio Producer
- Music Technology Educator / Lecturer

Careers links

- Careers in Music UK
- BBC Bitesize Music Careers
- UCAS: Music Degree Information
- Youth Music – Find projects and funding opportunities for young musicians